

THE COMMERCIAL

The recognized authority on all matters pertaining to trade and progress in Western Canada, including that portion of Ontario west of Lake Superior, the Provinces of Manitoba and British Columbia and the Territories.

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D. W. BUCHANAN,
Publisher.

The Commercial certainly enjoys a very much
larger circulation among the business community
of the vast region lying between Lake Superior
and the Pacific Coast than any other paper in Can-
ada, daily or weekly. The Commercial also
reaches the leading wholesale, commission, manu-
facturing and financial houses of Eastern Canada.

WINNIPEG, DEC. 30, 1899.

THE CLOSING YEAR.

This is the last issue of The Commercial for 1899. We take the opportunity of wishing our readers each and all a happy and prosperous new year. The closing year has brought fulfilment of more than an average number of the good wishes which were so freely uttered at its inception and has been undoubtedly a prosperous one with the people of Western Canada. Its 12 brief months, which have slipped all too swiftly away, have brought in their train large additions to the population of these broad western lands and have witnessed many changes for the better in the condition of the people. New railroads have been built, new towns hurried into existence, new lands brought under cultivation and many new enterprises set afloat in the business and commercial world. The mining regions of Northwestern Ontario, British Columbia and the far-off Yukon gold fields have all had a share in the general development, and have added largely—particularly the latter region—to the wealth of their inhabitants. The opening of telegraph communication with Dawson City, Yukon, has been one of the notable events of the year. While all are proud of this development which has been so conspicuously shown by all parts of the west this year both in the more showy field of mining and the humbler pursuits of cattle-raising and agriculture we are more than ever impressed with the belief that this country has really only entered upon its era of development. The fact that so many of the large wholesale concerns of eastern Canada have extended their trading operations to all parts of the west and in some cases established large ware houses in Winnipeg for the better handling of their goods is a good in-

dication of the impression which western possibilities are making upon eastern business men. This year has been remarkable for the number of these who have travelled west, spying out the land and their testimonies as given in eastern press reports have been uniformly favorable and sometimes of an extremely rosy character. Railway extension on a large scale has been one of the many satisfactory features of this year's expansion. A great deal of new and valuable land has thus been brought within easy distance of markets. Altogether Western Canada is to be congratulated upon the growth made this year. We trust that the very promising outlook for 1900—the last year of this century—will be fulfilled, and that readers of The Commercial may receive if possible just a little more than a fair share of its good things.

THE MONTREAL ELEVATOR AGREEMENT.

The agreement which has just been arrived at between the Montreal harbor commissioners and the Connor's syndicate of Buffalo, New York, whereby the latter secure exceedingly important elevator privileges at Montreal is not meeting with by any means universal favor and many prominent Montreal business men and some of the public journals are not altogether pleased at the turn of events which has given the company its desired privileges. The contention has been set up and very well maintained that the powers granted are too important to give to any one company, and especially to this particular company. As a result of this opposition it was thought up to last week that the agreement would not be consummated. However, it has now gone through. It only remains for Canada to see that the spirit of the agreement is in every way adhered to and that the great interests which the new company lives to serve are properly protected and fostered. If this is done another long step has been taken in the direction of placing inland Canada in a position to compete with any other part of this continent in the exporting of food and other products.

The C. P. R. Souris Branch.

A special correspondent of The Commercial who has been visiting Southwestern Manitoba for the purpose of noting the growth and progress of that part of the great west, makes the following observations on the towns of the Souris branch:

The Souris branch of the C. P. R. stretches from Brandon on the main line to Estevan, a distance of 164 miles, where it connects with the Pasqua branch, which is part of the C. P. R. short line from the south. At Souris connection is made with the Southwestern branch and at Napinka with the Pembina branch. From Souris to Melita the country is well settled, but west of that there are sections

almost entirely uninhabited. Immigration, however, has been coming into this locality quite freely of late and the present prospects are that this part of the country will develop rapidly during the next few years.

At Estevan large deposits of coal have been found. These have been worked by different companies for a number of years, but until recently the grade obtained was not very good. A good quality has lately been discovered, however, a few miles from Estevan and two companies are now working these claims and are shipping large quantities of coal daily.

The first two towns we reach after leaving Brandon are Kemnay and Souris, mention of which will be made again.

Hartney has been visited once or twice by very bad fires, but these have



NEW PUBLIC SCHOOL BUILDING AT ONBOW.

indirectly benefited the place, as good brick buildings have taken the place of the frame structures and to-day Hartney has, for its size, probably as good buildings as any town in Manitoba. A couple of businesses changed hands since our last visit. Buettner Bros. have sold out their stock of hardware to G. S. Pettapiece, J. R. Anderson has purchased Hopkins & Pack's general store and the Union bank have opened a branch taking over the private banking business of E. K. Strathly & Co. W. Hopkins is building a brick block which is to be occupied by G. S. Pettapiece. The grist mill at this point has been overhauled and new machinery put in, the capacity being increased to 200 lbs. per day.

At Lauder there is but one store, that of H. C. Hamelin.

At Napinka the Pembina branch connects with this branch. The two general stores at this point have changed hands since our last visit. Halonquist & Co., having sold out to Graham & Co., and J. L. Nowberry to W. H. Belton. There are two hardware stores here, three hotels, a large lumber yard owned by I. E. Gaudin, G. Davis' drug store, W. G. Lock's bakery and implement and machine shops.

Melita has three hardware stores, two lumber yards, three general stores, two local newspapers, a branch of the Union bank and a number of other business places such as boot and shoe store, men's furnishing, etc., also a large flour mill owned by R. Bullock & Son. This is as far as the C. P. R. at present run a daily passenger train and the fact that they run to Melita shows that it is an important business point as Napinka being a divisional point and the end of the Pembina branch would seem to be the natural stopping point.

Elva has prospects of becoming a very good business point as it is surrounded by a good wheat growing country.