

THE COMMERCIAL

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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 Canada, daily or weekly. The Commercial also reaches the leading wholesale, commission, manufacturing and financial houses of Eastern Canada.

WINNIPEG, MAY 28, 1898.

Business at Vancouver.

Vancouver, May 21.—Cooler weather is lessening the danger of Fraser river floods though fears in this regard are not yet at an end, meanwhile farm prices continue very good, an extremely limited supply of oats in particular realizing high prices with every prospect of a large early rise when the new crop comes in if business keeps up as present indications denote. Hay is rising in price and commands exceptional figures ranging between \$16 and \$18 a ton. In consequence of these things it is expected that the British Columbia oat and hay crop of the present season will embrace a larger acreage than has ever hitherto been devoted to such production in the province although even then the supply will probably be unequal to the constantly growing demand. Wheat has also stiffened up in fact the entire feed and grain market is very strong at advanced prices. The flour and feed men stated to-day that oats had certainly been bought up, all in slight, through some mysterious agency. The Klondike trade has revived somewhat on account of the recent arrival of Australian prospectors who have been securing supplies in the city, but there is as yet no revival of the boom. The lumber mills are exceptionally busy, most of the large concerns are working over time and benefitting by satisfactory advances in prices, which had not come before it was necessary in most cases. The cannery men are all preparing for a fairly active season, but a considerable loss has just been sustained by several local concerns as a result of the rusting of the ribs of a large shipment recently made from England.

Truro Condensed Milk Co.

An eastern exchange says: It speaks well for the enterprise and energy of the above company, that while the recent destructive fire at their factory was in progress, and it was seen that the machinery would be ruined beyond repair, orders were wired the principal manufacturers of the most modern and best machinery for an outfit and plant to take the place of that destroyed, says the Maritime Merchant. The energy and resources of the company will be taxed to the utmost in the endeavor to make the interruption to their business as brief as possible. Already work has started on the walls of the burned building, and its re-erection will be pushed forward vigorously, and it will only be a matter of a short time before pure and fresh goods will be on the market. Secretary McKay has had his hands full in looking after the various phases which are nearly always connected with a destructive fire in any industrial establishment. The new factory will be a model of the latest and best practice in condensing.

Freight Rates.

Chicago Trade Bulletin says: The executive committee of the eastern lines have decided to restore rates to the 20c tariff on flour and grain on May 30, Chicago to New York. This is about double the rate now in force. The restoration it is believed, is to brace up the lake and rail lines. Present rates on flour and grain are 10 to 12c. Ocean rates have declined sharply—1 1-2 to 2 1-2 per bushel on grain from the high point. The rate from New York to Liverpool is 4 to 4 1-4. Through rates from Chicago to Liverpool are 15 0/8c, per bushel on wheat and 14 7-8c on corn. Flour is 24 0/8 to 25c per 100 lbs and provisions 36 1-2 to 37c per 100 lbs. Lake and rail rates to New England are 16 1-2c per 100 lbs on flour, 9 1-2 per bushel on wheat, 8 1-2 on corn and 5 1-2 on oats. Lake rates from Chicago to Buffalo were steady with a fair business at 13 5/8c on wheat, 11 5/8 to 11 1-4c on corn and 1c on oats. Corn was taken to Kingston at 2 1-2c.

The average charge in 1897 for carrying a ton of freight one mile on the Lake Superior routes was .83 of a mill as compared with .99 of a mill per ton per mile in 1896. In other words, at the scale of charges of last year a ton of freight could be transported on the lake routes at the cost of 1 cent for twelve miles. At the same time, in connection with specific articles the actual rates were even lower. Wheat, for instance, was carried 1,000 miles for 13-4 cents a bushel and coal for 20 cents a ton for the same distance, while iron ore was transported from the docks at Duluth to Lake Erie ports at 55 cents a gross ton. Yet, even with these remarkably small charges the aggregate freights earned by vessels passing through the "Soo" canal reached the substantial total of over \$13,000,000 for the season on cargoes which averaged 841 miles of distance transported. The tendency upon the lakes continues to be to increase both the power and the capacity of the vessels engaged in traffic upon them. It is this process which has reduced the charges for lake transportation to such remarkable figures, and at present there seems to be no limit to the further application of the principle. In 1896, for instance, the largest vessels on the lakes were of the 5,-

000-ton class. Last year no less than eight of the boats using the "Soo" canal averaged over 6,000 tons capacity, and there were in addition twenty-eight ships plying between Lake Superior and the lower lakes capable of carrying loads of about 5,500 tons each. With the opening of the present season two or three vessels of 7,000 tons capacity will be in the service, and while the prospect is that the tonnage on the lakes will increase enormously, the growth of the facilities provided for the business seems to insure a continuance of the reduction in rates for the service.

The Lumber Trade.

Cedar, as a paving material, is rather passe, says a lumber trade paper. It is going out of style like pointed-toed shoes.

It is rumored that an English syndicate is negotiating to secure control of the sash and door industry in the United States.

Cedar shingles are quoted at \$2.10 to \$2.15 per thousand in the Minneapolis market. While the shingle market is weak, the market for fir lumber continues as strong as it has been all the year to date.

At the last meeting of the Northwestern States Lumber and Sash and Door Salesmen's association a member brought up the matter of the false branding of shingles. He cited an instance of where a dealer had quoted a price to a would be purchaser and then added that if he would take an inferior shingle he could brand them with the trade mark of the better shingle. The shingle business is not the only one in which this practice is common, and wherever it is in vogue it will eventually react to the injury of the trade. Like the apple business, the best shingles are frequently found at the top. The shingle that wears the brand may be an honest shingle and be what the brand calls it, but there is deceit in the bunch. If the inferior of the bunch is not too much off grade it will frequently go. The deception is not liable to be discovered until the bunch is sold to the final consumer, and then it is often in the hands of one who does not know the difference anyway. When it is discovered it teaches the retail buyer to be careful, and usually stamps the wholesaler or the manufacturer at least as a dishonest man and one to be avoided in future deals.

The McArthur saw mill at Birtle, Man., will be overhauled and a new boiler put in.

Dolge Felt Shoes.

The Dolge Felt Shoe factory is now hard at work getting fall orders made up. Owing to some outside difficulty which indirectly affected the company making this famous footwear, the factory was not in operation for some two or three weeks. On account of the greatly increased demand in this country for these shoes it became necessary to manufacture the goods for this trade in the earlier months of the year, before the home orders came in, and when Mr. Congdon, the Canadian agent visited the factory recently he found a large portion of his order completed, and the balance partly finished. The factory is now working overtime so as to get all orders filled promptly as usual.