

THE COMMERCIAL

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

Nineteenth Year of Publication
ISSUED EVERY SATURDAY.

Subscriptions—Canada and the United States, \$2.00 per annum in advance, or \$2.25 when not so paid; other countries, \$2.50 per annum in advance.

Changes for advertisements or stops should be in not later than Thursday morning.

Advertisements purporting to be news matter or which profess to express the opinion of this Journal, will not be inserted.

Office 219 McDermott St. Telephone 271.

D. W. DUCHANAN, 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, APRIL 13, 1901.

THE RAILWAY CONTRACTS.

But slow progress is being made at Ottawa with the measures introduced there to ratify the Manitoba railway contracts. Opponents of the measures now hope that they will be crowded out this session, as the time for prorogation is drawing near and a lot of business remains yet to be disposed of. The latest and most important feature to crop up since the passage of the bills by the Manitoba legislature, is the action of the Ontario government in connection with these contracts. The Rainy River section of the Canadian Northern, which Manitoba proposes to guarantee to the extent of \$20,000 per mile, lies entirely within the province of Ontario. Ontario has already granted a large subsidy to this road, and, therefore, has an important interest in the property, in addition to the fact that the road is in that province. The Ontario government naturally objects to the control of this road by Manitoba, and the interference of Ontario further complicates an already complicated situation. When the Manitoba government undertook to secure the control or a measure of control over railways outside the province, it is evident that the members of the government did not fully comprehend the difficulties in the way. The legal difficulties seem to be increasing as the contracts are advanced. The Ontario government, which certainly has a large interest at stake in this matter, will oppose, it is understood, any attempt by Manitoba to exercise jurisdiction over a railway in that province. If the opposition of Ontario to the contracts is manifested in strong form, the probability of the ratification of the contracts by the Dominion parliament this session would be reduced to a minimum. It now looks as though Manitoba might be saved from assuming this enormous responsibility, by circumstances beyond the control of our provincial authorities. We certainly hope that the measures will not be ratified by parliament this term, believing that time only is necessary to show the undesirability of entering into these contracts. If the country is given a year to discuss these measures, we believe there will surely be another attempt to push the contracts through in their present form.

RAISE MORE POULTRY.

It is a pity that the producers of this country do not pay more attention to the business of poultry raising. Manitoba, the Territories and British Columbia are annually obliged to send to Ontario for winter supplies of this necessary line of food products and although the quantity brought west last winter was not so large as in other years it was still a considerable item and the amount of money represented would have made a big difference in the circumstances of some of our farmers if they had had it distributed among them. The west could just as well as not produce this poultry. The feed is here and all the conditions are favorable for poultry raising. Those farmers who have been engaged in the business heretofore even if only to a limited extent, have done well out of it, especially if they have given sufficient attention to feed the stock right and have dressed it in attractive fashion. The principal line of poultry now being brought from the east is turkeys and these are just as easily raised here as they are in the east. If they are well dressed and sent to market in nice shape they readily command a premium over the price of eastern turkeys. For instance a lot of turkeys were received here last week from a western point, which

THE USE OF COPPERS.

The resolution adopted by the Retail Grocers' Association of Vancouver last week denouncing the use of Canadian and United States coppers as a medium of exchange in business and pledging the members of the association not to use them in the transaction of business must strike the ordinary person as a rather high-handed proceeding so far as its application to Canadian coins is concerned. It is easy to sympathize with those retail merchants in their desire to get along without the coppers if their introduction means further reductions in profits which are all too small already on many lines of goods, but the fact seems to have been lost sight of by those who put this resolution through that they have no option in the matter and are obliged by law to accept coppers to the amount of 25c the same as they would any other form of legal tender in payment for goods or in discharge of any sort of obligation. For United States money as a medium of exchange in any of its denominations Canadians have no use whatever, and it is only accepted in many places at a discount. We have plenty of better money of our own in Canada for all requirements and the retail merchants of Vancouver will certainly be doing a sensible thing if they decide to refuse

Another very noticeable change in the bicycle business now from what it was a few years ago is that riders do not change mounts so frequently, being now content to use the same wheel for several seasons. This is due partly to the fact that the new wheels differ very little from year to year, but the principal reason is, probably to be found in the fact that the larger proportion of those owning bicycles at the present time, especially in the cities, have them as a matter of convenience more than for the sake of exercise or recreation.

Jobbers report a tendency on the part of country dealers this year to hold off until they see how the season opens up, and they are, therefore, ordering in smaller quantities than in previous years, but the spring revival is being felt here also and the travellers are securing better orders on their second trip.

Dominion Revenue.

Ottawa, April 6.—The statement of Dominion revenue and expenditures for the month of March last was issued by the finance department today. The revenue for the nine months ending March 31st was \$37,918,017 or \$1,007,919 of an increase over the same period for the last fiscal year. The expenditure for the past nine months was \$28,627,612, an increase of \$2,576,000 over the nine months in 1900. The difference between revenue and expenditure on ordinary account shows a normal surplus of \$9,290,000, but there was expended in the nine months \$7,301,258 on capital account, or an increase of about \$800,000 over the same time last year, and of this is added to the ordinary expenditure. Then there would be nearly \$2,000,000 left to the good.

The revenue for the month of March shows a decrease of about \$280,000 over March, 1901, which would indicate that Mr. Fielding was pretty accurate in his prediction in the budget speech that Canada was on "the crest of the wave" financially. The expenditure for March was \$900,000 more than for March, 1900. This is largely due to the expenditure for the session, parliament having met earlier this year.

New Ontario Railway.

The Ontario government has made a bargain for a railway in the northern part of that province, the chief features of which are as follows: That in consideration of the building of 285 miles of railway, opening up a new district, the province grants 2,542,000 acres of wild land.

The company on its part agrees to give the province full control over its rates.

It agrees to give the Canadian Pacific Railway, the Grand Trunk Railway, or any other road, running powers on fair terms over its lines.

It leaves the province the option of acquiring the railway within fifteen years, and for the purpose of arriving at the actual value thereof it agrees to furnish in satisfactory detail the cost of construction and all other outlays, the cost of operating, and the earnings of the road. Six per cent. cumulative interest shall be added to the cost thus arrived at, after deducting the provincial subsidy at a valuation of fifty cents an acre, the traffic receipts, and 50 per cent. of any subsidy which may hereafter be obtained from the Dominion government. The name of the road receiving this aid is the Manitoulin and North Shore.

Railway and Traffic Matters.

An extraordinary general meeting of the White Pass and Yukon Railway Company, Limited, was held in London a short time ago, when the matter of a new issue of shares was brought up. Close Brothers & Co. agreed to finance all liabilities falling due by the company up to June 30th, on the terms that they should have the call of the £255,550 shares at par up to December 31st, 1903. With regard to the new issue of £100,000, the above firm had agreed to underwrite the issue for the moderate commission of 1 per cent., payable out of profits. Resolutions were passed empowering the directors to increase the capital by the creation and issue of 70,000 new ordinary shares, and for the alteration of the articles of the association, so as to bring them in accordance with the Companies' Act, 1900, and to enable a bonus distribution of shares to be made.



Manitoba Farm Homes—Buildings of D. Febr, Rosenfeld

were beautifully dressed and put up, they were not in warehouse thirty minutes before they were snapped up by a leading buyer at 13c per pound. The same buyer would take large quantities of fresh killed turkeys regularly at outside prices if they were obtainable and there are many others who would do the same. It is certain that if the farmers knew how quickly choice lots of poultry are snapped up at good prices they would pay more attention to the business. It takes a little time, of course, to become familiar with the requirements of the market, and it may happen that first shipments have sometimes to be sold by commission houses at less than current market prices owing to defects in the dressing or manner of handling, but these can readily be overcome if attention is paid to instructions which are generally sent out by commission houses to those who regularly ship to them. We venture to say that there is not a commission house in this city which will not gladly at any time go to the trouble and expense of answering letters of enquiry as to how poultry should be put up in order to secure the largest of the best buyers. In fact they are glad to have their advice solicited in this way. A little attention to this business in the future on the part of western producers will result in profitable returns to all concerned.

United States coppers altogether, but the case of Canadian coppers is different and we do not see how they can give effect to any agreement among themselves not to use them, so long as they remain legal tender. It would be wiser for the merchants on the coast to do as those in Winnipeg and other western places of business have been doing since the one cent piece found its way to the west of the great lakes, that is to accept them quietly and endeavor to make them the servants of trade instead of allowing them to become its master.

The Bicycle Situation.

The fine weather of the past week has proved a great stimulus to the bicycle trade and jobbers and retail dealers at Winnipeg report business as being very satisfactory. The demand for bicycles shows no falling off, and it is expected that the business this year will be fully as large as that of 1900. Dealers who have been in business in this country for a number of years report a considerable change in regard to the class of wheels being bought. Some years ago the demand was principally for racing or light roadster bicycles and the drop handles, of the "rams horn" style, were in great favor. During the last year or two, however, the demand for this class of mount has been dying out and is being replaced by a heavier machine with the up-turn handles, which enable the rider to sit in a more comfortable position, speed being no longer considered the one thing needful.