

# THE COMMERCIAL

The recognized authority on all matters pertaining to trade and progress in Western Canada, and the only paper in Ontario west of Lake Superior, the Province of Manitoba and the Territories.

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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 a large number of business, commission, manufacturing and financial houses of Eastern Canada.

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## KEEPING TRADE AT HOME.

A bad case could be made out against a number of Winnipeg retail merchants with respect to dealing with transient traders as a result of a recent visit of a representative of a Toronto tailoring concern. We are accustomed to hearing the retail merchant deliver himself in the most forcible terms against the practice, which we regard to say is still quite common with western customers both in the city and country, of ordering goods from eastern mail order houses. We will not be inclined to extend so much sympathy to the retail man after this, since it has just been demonstrated in Winnipeg that when opportunity offers, become quite as diligent a shopper in this respect as any of our customers. A traveller for an eastern tailoring concern has just finished a canvass of Winnipeg in the course of which he must have looked several thousand dollars worth of orders from many of them from well known retail merchants. Some of these ordered two and three suits of clothes besides fall and winter overcoats. Their excuse is that the goods are cheap. They will probably prove to be cheap in all senses of the term and like every other kind of merchandise bargain, worth not a cent more than the buyer pays for them. We have an array of tailoring talent in this city which is not behind anything in Canada for its ability to fit and quality of workmanship, and, moreover, they supply a class of cloth and trimmings which is superior in every way to that supplied by the average eastern tailor. These local tailors are fellow citizens, they spend their money and pay their taxes here and so do the employees who work for them. It therefore fits becomes the business men of this city, and least of all, the retail merchants to be found among those who patronize the pedlars and periodically make a tour of this country in the interests of eastern tailoring concerns.

## A PHENOMENAL, SENEGA MARKET.

The market for seneca root has certainly developed astonishing strength this season. Prices have been higher throughout the entire season than has ever been the case before, and dealers have been nervous over values for some time back. They are now ready as if the top notch had been reached, and some in the trade put their prices

down 1 to 2c, and bought root at the lower figures, showing that sellers were also quite ready to believe that the market was high for it. Last week the market regained all that it lost the previous week and 4 to 5c more, making the quotation here 25 to 40c for best root. To-day we have to note the astonishing price of 55c for good root delivered at Minneapolis, and practically the same quotation is asked here. Seneca is to-day quoted at 45c for baled in New York. The mere mention of such figures for seneca root is enough to convince any one that the market must be in a most unusual condition, and diggers should continue their efforts in order to reap that advantage of the high prices. Country storekeepers should encourage their customers to dig all the root they can during the balance of this season. While it is hardly to be expected that the present high prices would continue long under the pressure of a large increase in receipts, the figure named will undoubtedly be paid for a considerable quantity, and a good price is assured for the remainder of the Canadian crop, regardless of the price it may amount to. A little friendly advice from country storekeepers to those whom they know can produce root if they may put quite a nice little sum of like money into their pockets before the end of the present season.

## Back From South Africa.

Jas. H. Dickie, who has been widely known among the commercial men of the west for a number of years, returned a short time ago from a trip to South Africa, where he visited his brother in East London, Cape Colony. Mr. Dickie expresses himself as glad to get back to Canada, although he enjoyed his trip very much. He states there is not much room for comparison between Canada and South Africa with respect to the natural resources or climatic advantages as Canada has decidedly the best of it. Its agricultural and grazing resources are vastly superior to anything seen in Cape Colony, although the grazing in some parts of the Transvaal. The wheat raised in South Africa is of poor quality and the milling facilities of the crudest kind. Mining appears to be not the profitable industry and will probably in time support a considerable population and yield large returns. At present the entire country is under martial law of the strictest kind and it is impossible to even land from a vessel without a passport, to say nothing of penetrating into the country. Cape Colony is seething with Boer guerrillas and no man is free to move about the country. Even the most widely known of the local subjects are obliged to carry arms with them by law and produce permits before they are allowed to travel. The negro population will find management in South Africa, especially in fortuitous, which are very dear there. The cost of most food and consumer is about three times what it is here. The oranges are not produced there to any extent and are very dear. One of the most serious drawbacks to the cultural operations is the locusts which when they appear in a district will completely wipe out every thing green. They become so thick at times as to cover the ground to a depth of several inches.

## Yukon Prospects.

Dawson, Y.T., Aug. 28.—Dr. Morley Wickett, special commissioner of the Manufacturers' association of the Yukon, in an interview regarding his views on the gold mining industry and his opinion of Mr. Hees' letter, which has been widely circulated in

the east, and has already had a very injurious effect, says:

"I was nearly a month's visit in the Klondike, during which time I have interviewed many of the important men of that district and learned that the leading mine-owners have been greatly impressed by the territory. Undoubtedly the country has a promising future, and it is not long before many years to come. As to Mr. Hees' letter to Industrial Canada, I wish only to say that it is a very poor one, and a more widely depressing effect than Mr. Hees perhaps intended. Just to give you an idea of the most astonishing report, two telegrams were handed me, querying the financial strength of the Yukon local banks and intimating that the banks outside were inclined to press for speedy payments. A letter was also shown me from a large shipper, stating that Mr. Hees' letter had made the writer nervous about making further shipments to Dawson.

"It will be very regrettable if the normal course of trade or credit in any way is affected. The Yukon is all right, and Canadian manufacturers and shippers should not let it out for their own sake. The Yukon market will only be too ready to take advantage of the situation. This fall prices will be higher and higher than for some time, and the large stocks laid in have every promise of being readily sold.

"The past season has been fairly dull, but the quiet is only a natural sequel to the most astonishing discoveries of gold that has ever been known, and the remarkable activity which followed. I may repeat that I have been greatly impressed by the confidence of the miners and merchants in the future of this new territory."

Your correspondent must say in addition that Mr. Hees' statements in the east have produced a profound sensation here. Mr. Hees was only here for a few days, and saw very little of the country, but never even saw the mayor of the city or merchants, who could have given him some very valuable information. The story about idle men is very misleading. There are always hundreds of men in the east, and many of them, but closer questioning would have shown that they were not loafers, but were engaged in various kinds of work, make renewals, getting outfits, and other business. Reports he gave for publication have already had a bad effect on Canadian trade, which Seattle and San Francisco firms are ready to take full advantage of. They are already doing so.

## British Columbia Fruit Growers.

J. C. Metcalf, president of the British Columbia Fruit Growers' Association, furnishes the following interesting details of the working of the association:

"In the first place," said Mr. Metcalf, "the organization was formed purely for educational work, and meetings were held, and methods of fruit culture, variety, modes of packing and related matters were discussed. I might say that the membership in this association has always been about 100, and the expenses of meetings, lectures, etc., have been covered by a grant from the association's purchasing fund under the control of the association. We have been finding during the past year that the interest rather than the purely educational work, and we have been trying to help the growers in other ways. For instance, we have succeeded in furnishing them with packages at a cheaper rate than the market, and shipping them in very large quantities and then selling them again to both large and small wholesalers at a profit which is about 5 per cent. less than the usual wholesale price to small growers. This attempt has been very much appreciated.

Another matter undertaken, which may be said to be of an educational and commercial in the securing and sending through the province of an expert fruit packer, who gives both theoretical and practical demonstrations of the way to pack fruit for export purposes and the marketing and weighing of the same. This instruction has been of immense value already, and it is to be hoped that the association, aided by the government, has been of incalculable benefit to the fruit growers of

the Pacific province and indirectly to the whole Dominion. We feel that the Northwest Territories and Manitoba are our future, and we shall do all in our power to cultivate them."

## Improved Mining Conditions.

Toronto, Aug. 28.—Mr. T. G. Blackstock, of Centre St. and War. Blackstock, made an important statement to-day in regard to our future as a province. New contracts for smelting have been reduced from \$6 to \$5 a ton on ore, and the cost of smelting of \$8.50, while on ores used in this grade the charges have been reduced from \$9 to \$4. The millers are to deliver 12,000 tons a month of high grade, and from 6,000 to 12,000 of low grade.

"But the most important feature of the development," said Mr. Blackstock, "is that the Goodfellow syndicate believe the problem of treating low-grade British Columbia ore of gold-copper has been solved." Mr. Blackstock says that the method of treating the low-grade ore by some process other than smelting. "As a result of our studies," he stated, "we have secured a mill at Silica on Sheep Creek, a few miles from Rossland, which has been reconstructed and enlarged to a capacity of about 100 tons a day. It is not intended to use the mill for anything except experimental purposes as a guide to us in erecting a larger mill of the capacity of 500 tons or more a day, which I will be proposing to erect next spring.

"I think that I can safely say that \$5 ore may be milled at a profit. For reasons well known to mining men, high-grade ores can generally be more cheaply treated for smelting. I am satisfied that in a few years we shall be able to treat \$4 ore at a profit."

## United States Grain Crop.

The New York Herald made a careful estimate of the grain crop in the Western states, with the following results:

"If the general proportion be in proportion to the wealth gathered from the statistics, the crop will be the most contentment and comfort for all classes. Millions more in mortgages will be paid in the West, and the thousands of farmers will be in a position to pay their mortgages in 1903 with a clean financial slate. From a compilation of the various figures of crop economists, one is enabled to say that the profits for the farmer this year will be \$2,000,000,000 more, or more, than has been realized upon corn and wheat. The calculation is based on the average of estimates of various statisticians. This average gives approximately the following results for the year: Wheat, 625,500,000 bushels; corn, 2,280,000,000 bushels; barley, 120,900,550 bushels; rye, 30,350,800 bushels; and oats, 75,128,724 bushels. Mr. E. W. Snow, one of the best known crop experts in the country, says that the total for the year will be 778,000,000 bushels. The same authority says that the year's corn harvest will be 2,400,000,000 bushels, or nearly double that of a year ago.

A new line of school scriblers has been introduced into the market here by Clark Bros., wholesale stationers, which should become very popular among the business population. They are of local manufacture, and have handsomely lithographed covers, the work being done in the United States by Seymour Mann Bros. The paper is of superior quality, and the name of the scribler in the line to be known by the names of "Triumph," "Knight-Down," "Challenge" and "Pleasant Pastime."

The New York Fur Trade Review is among the eastern papers which have been quoted in this city, and in by the fake interview in a Winnipeg paper with a visitor from the north. The Review is a well-known publication, and it is declared that Prof. Andree and his companions had been killed by Canadian fur packers who give both theoretical and practical demonstrations of the way to pack fruit for export purposes and the marketing and weighing of the same. This instruction has been of immense value already, and it is to be hoped that the association, aided by the government, has been of incalculable benefit to the fruit growers of