

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

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## THE OATMEAL BUSINESS.

A controversy has been in progress for some time in Canada in regard to the relative amount of protection which should be given in the customs tariff of the Dominion to oats and oatmeal. This has found expression in Manitoba in the dispute which has been waiting settlement by arbitration for several weeks as to the basis upon which the duty on oatmeal coming into this city should be levied. Whether the price at Chicago or point of shipment should be used in figuring out the duty. Perhaps this matter does not fully exemplify the broader question of Dominion duties, but it is a phase of it and an interesting phase too. Owing to the poor crop of oats produced in Manitoba last year the oatmeal mills of the province have not been able to secure enough of milling quality to make it worth while to start up and they have remained idle all through the winter. Dealers have accordingly been obliged to look elsewhere for oatmeal with the result that United States millers have been called upon to supply the market, their prices even with the duty added, being less than Ontario meal could be laid down for. Some Ontario meal has been brought in, of course, but no regular business has been done. Mills in different parts of the northwestern states have been shipping meal into this province with the result that the customs authorities have had a number of different invoice prices before them always, upon which the duty had to be figured out. At this stage the collector ruled that Chicago prices were to be the basis upon which oatmeal duty would be collected regardless of where the meal actually came from. To this the millers, through their brokers here, objected as they claimed that Chicago was not an oatmeal market and only one Chicago mill was known to be shipping to Manitoba. The other mills doing business here were located at other places where prices frequently rule much lower than at Chicago. Arbitration on this point was arranged, the customs people meanwhile collecting duty according to their own ruling. This all happened several weeks ago and it is only recently that the appointment of arbitrators has been completed. The work of examining evidence has not yet commenced. What the outcome will be it would not be wise to attempt to say. It will be a satisfaction to the trade in any case

to know just how the duty is to be fixed. In the meantime consumers have been paying more for their oatmeal for several weeks past than they would if the old method of collecting duty on invoice price had been continued.

On the broader question of oatmeal duties generally it does not seem that Canadian millers have been given quite a fair deal so far as the relative duties on oats and oatmeal are concerned. The duty on oats is now 10c per bushel, and to that no one seriously objects, but when it is considered that the duty on oatmeal is only 20 per cent. it will be seen that there is a large discrimination in favor of the unmanufactured article which is a reversal of the usual policy of protecting Canadian labor and industry. Under the low oatmeal duty the American Cereal Trust and other United States concerns have been able to come into Canadian markets and undersell our millers both in Ontario and Manitoba and these were powerless to protect themselves. Efforts have frequently been made to induce the Dominion government to equalize the duties, but so far without success. The Winnipeg board of trade has several times asked that these duties be equalized, but left it for the government to say in what way this should be accomplished. The result of these difficulties has been that the Canadian oatmeal milling industry is to-day almost at a standstill and the United States millers have possession of our markets.

## HOLDING OUR OWN.

An editorial article in the last issue of the Nor'-West Farmer calls attention to the necessity for developing a trade in the commodities which they each produce between the prairie regions of Western Canada and British Columbia. The writer states what is a well known fact that much business in this country in fruit and produce, which should properly be kept at home; and instances a shipment of 10 carloads of eggs from a point in Iowa to British Columbia as a case in point. There is a good deal of truth in the contention that there is room for increase in the exchange of commodities between the prairie and Pacific provinces, and the less hold we allow the farmers of the United States to secure upon the profitable markets of British Columbia the better it will be for Manitoba. A little care in the handling of the goods, prompt shipments and closer selling, added to the advantages of a moderately high duty upon everything which has to cross the boundary to get into these markets should ensure the people of the west a perpetual hold upon their own markets against all comers. It is suggested in the article referred to that some governmental scheme of gathering eggs and other perishable products be established so that they could be placed in the hands of consumers quicker than at present. This is really one of the difficulties of the present in regard to Manitoba produce and the B. C. market. The goods are held by producers and country storekeepers so long that they practically become unsaleable before they get to the consumer. If the produce men here have learned anything from the past with regard to this trade it is that British Columbia will not buy anything but choice, fresh goods, and for such top prices can always be obtained. The problem is to get the goods there in that condition. If they can be laid down at low prices so much the better.

## EDITORIAL NOTES.

A writer in The Miller, of London, England, discussing the question, "What is strong wheat and which wheats are strong?" states that the quality of wheat grown in England has degenerated and that its character has changed so that it cannot any longer be regarded as a strong wheat in the sense in which that term is used in these days. The argument is that English wheat is strong in only one of the constituent parts of gluten which is the basis upon which calculations as to the relative strengths of wheat are made and that in order to produce good flour from it a mixture with some other wheat which contains a preponderance of the other property which goes to make up gluten is necessary. This, in his opinion, is best found in the wheat of Western America.

The Dominion revenue continues to increase at a very rapid rate and with the governmental expenditures. During the seven months ending January 31 last the revenue increased \$1,073,359, and the expenditure \$771,004. The total revenue for that period was \$29,809,000 and the expenditure \$24,167,157. Expenditure on capital account amounted to \$5,658,000. Railway subsidy payments have gone up when compared with the same period of the previous year from \$695,000 to \$1,950,000.

The Dominion estimates which were presented to the house a few days ago show a decrease when compared with the total for last year, but as the supplementaries are still to come it is likely that the difference will be more than made up. In the west we are more particularly interested in the appropriations for expenditure in this country. These are a growing quantity each year but are still a very modest sum when compared with what the rest of Canada is given. The most interesting features this year are the increased amounts allowed for Territorial government purposes, cattle quarantine, prevention of tuberculosis in cattle and protection of timber. This latter appropriation now amounts to \$15,000 as against \$10,000 last year, but even this looks very small in comparison with the vast sums of money which are annually lost to the country by destruction of timber.

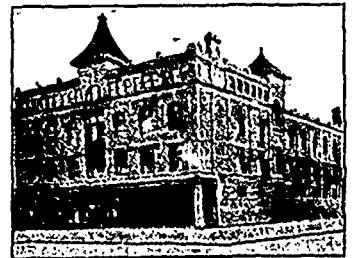
## New Y.M.C.A. Building.

The new building of the Young Men's Christian Association at Winnipeg, which was formally opened on the 17th of last month, is one of the finest association buildings in Canada. It is situated on the corner of Smith street and Portage avenue and is a four story brick structure costing \$90,000, including the furnishings and the land on which it stands. Four stores and the main entrance to the association rooms occupy the entire front of the ground floor, the rear portion forming part of the space allotted to the gymnasium. The first floor is reached by a flight of wide oak stairs leading to a spacious hall. The general offices of the secretaries face on this hall, and adjoining these is the large public reading room, facing on Portage avenue. Across the hall at the other side of the building is a large parlor which also faces on Portage avenue. This is a particularly fine room, well lighted and finished and very tastefully furnished. A fire place, of which there are several throughout the building, adds greatly to the cheerfulness of the room. Next comes the lecture room, in which the Saturday night and Sunday afternoon meetings are held. This can be reached either from the hall or the parlor. It has seating capacity for 150 and is furnished with movable folding chairs. Leaving the hall and ascending five or six steps the gallery of the main auditorium, or "Association Hall," is reached. The floor of this hall can be reached from the entrance hall by descending a few steps and also from

the Smith street entrance, where a box office has been placed. Association hall is well lighted and ventilated and contains modern opera chairs to the number of 527.

The stairs to the second floor brings us into another large hall. To the left are seen the boys reading room and parlor containing the usual fireplace, and across the hall is the boys' meeting room. On this flat also are rooms which will be used for the educational classes, library and board room of the directors. To the rear are a number of large well-furnished bedrooms for young men, and the top flat is also devoted to this purpose, each flat having bath and wash rooms.

The gymnasium is practically an annex to the building. It is 43x66 feet and contains a padded running track, which is 33 1/2 laps to the mile. The gymnasium outfit is a very complete



New Y.M.C.A. Building, Winnipeg.

one and is said to be among the best in Canada. To one side of the "gym" is the physical director's office, where all using the gymnasium must first come for physical examination. In the basement is the swimming bath, which is 15 feet wide, 35 feet long and from four to seven feet deep, with shower and needle baths in connection. At the back, and extending the whole width of the building, are the two bowling alleys. Numerous lockers for the use of gymnasium members, are also provided here.

The finishing of the building is in oak and redwood and everything has been fitted up in such a comfortable and homelike manner as to make it a very attractive place to a young man in which to spend his evenings.

## Comparative Prices of Staples.

Comparative prices of leading staples at New York are given as follows by Bradstreet's:

	Feb. 8, 1901.	Feb. 9, 1900.
Flour . . . . .	\$3.40@3.55	\$3.40@3.65
Wheat . . . . .	73 1/2	76 1/2
Corn . . . . .	48	41
Oats . . . . .	30 1/2	28 1/2
Rye . . . . .	60 1/2	64 1/2
Cotton . . . . .	3 1/2	\$ 9.16
Printed cloth . . . . .	3 1/2	3 1/2
Wool, Ohio . . . . .	21@25	33@34
Pork, mess. . . . .	\$13.75@14.50	10.75@11.50
Lard . . . . .	7.75@7.50	6.40
Butter . . . . .	22	26
Cheese . . . . .	12	12 1/2
Sugar, gran . . . . .	5.50	5.20
Coffee, No. 7 . . . . .	7 1/2	6 1/2
Petroleum, red . . . . .	7.70	9.90
*Iron, less, pig . . . . .	33.75	24.90
*Steel billets . . . . .	20.50	33.00
Steel rails . . . . .	25.00	35.00
Copper, lb. . . . .	37.00	16.25
Lead, lb . . . . .	4.37 1/2	4.70
Tin, lb . . . . .	26.25	29.25
*Pittsburgh.		

The Montreal Trade Bulletin says: A carload of Manitoba hogs was received a short time ago, and the quality gave good satisfaction, the weights being a pretty light even average. Another carload has just been purchased at \$9 laid down here to arrive."

A Chicago morning paper states that N. K. Fairbank, who has been one of the most active and prominent members of the board of trade of that city for over forty years, and was among the best known of its presidents, sold his membership last Thursday for \$2,000. Fairbank was one of the largest operators on the board from 1850 to 1880. His specialty was lard, and he was considered the lard king.

The following advances were noted in Minneapolis prices current last week: Hogs, 1/4c; veal, 1/4c; celery, 5c per dozen; turkeys, 1/4c; chickens, 1/2c; onions, 15c per bushel; apples, 25c per barrel. The declines were: Roll and print butter 1c per lb strictly fresh eggs, 2 1/4c; creamery butter, 1c; beans, 15c per bushel; Armour's corned beef, 10c lower per dozen cans; Sultana raisins, California, 1 to 1 1/4c lower.