

THE COMMERCIAL

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Office: 151 McDermot Street.

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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WORRIES OF BUSINESS.

Harm is often done in the country through wrong impressions getting abroad in regard to prices of various commodities. Sometimes it is a report that higher prices are being paid at a neighboring town for some commodity which the farmers have to sell. This is a fruitful cause of worry to buyers of grain, butter, eggs, and other commodities. Reports frequently get into circulation that a cent more is being paid for wheat at one point, or half a cent more for butter, than the local dealer is offering. We sometimes find farmers hauling their grain through one town and on to another, where it is reported a higher price is being paid, but usually it turns out that there is a mistake about the report somewhere. These reports are very often founded on an error, and arise in various ways, but this does not prevent them from being widely believed, consequently leading to much dissatisfaction in the community. For instance, a farmer may sell a load of grain in one town in his district for a certain price, and a few days later he may visit another town and get a cent or two more. He at once starts the report that the buyers at such a place are paying higher prices than at the other town. It may be that the grain has advanced in price in the meantime, or the difference may be accounted for by one buyer having considered the grain a little better quality than the first buyer.

In selling any article on sample, allowance must be made for the different views taken of the quality of the goods, by different buyers. Half a dozen buyers might each vary in their judgment as to the value of the goods, and no exact line can be drawn.

Another cause of trouble to merchants are the reports which frequently get into circulation to the effect that some staple line of goods is being sold at a lower price at some other place than is asked by the local dealers. In nine cases out of ten these reports are either entirely wrong, or they are founded on misapprehension. Often the report is simply an error, and if traced up would be found to have been manufactured in some such way as that of the three black crows, which we have all heard about. Very often the goods would turn out to be of different quality. Sometimes simply a cut will have been made, but this would not be sufficient to establish a regular quotation.

The local provincial papers sometimes inadvertently causes trouble to the merchants of their town by publishing reports of prices paid for produce or prices which goods are sold for, at some other town. This week we noticed an item in a paper published in a southwestern Manitoba town, to the effect that barb wire was being sold at another town for \$2.65. The editor may not have intended to cause any trouble to the local dealers of the place, but the probability is that the item will do harm. The farmers will see it and will want to know why their merchants are charging more. Of course barb wire cannot be sold at the price named in southwestern Manitoba, except at a loss, but it will be hard to convince the farmers who see this item that they are not being charged too much for their wire. Local papers could often avoid causing worries of this nature by investigating before they publish reports of this nature.

IS IT ALL CANADIAN.

Doubt has been cast, within the past few days, upon the statement that the Stikine is an all-Canadian route. The mouth of the river Stikine is in United States territory, but Canada enjoys the treaty right to the navigation of the river. This right, however, is limited by the condition that it is subject to United States regulations. Freight for the Stikine would have to be transferred from ocean to river steamers in United States territory, and by imposing restrictive regulations regarding such transfer of goods the United States government could greatly hamper the trade and largely destroy the value of the route. In fact rumors have already come from Washington that restrictions will be imposed on the transfer of goods at

Wrangel, for the Stikine route, with the object of worrying further concessions to the United States, from this country. In British Columbia, where the situation is best understood, there is a strong movement in favor of abandoning the Stikine river, and carrying the railway to a British Columbia ocean port, which would necessitate the construction of 175 to 200 miles of additional road, besides the 150 miles from Glenora to Teslin lake, or in all say 350 miles of road.

It may be well to wait a while before concluding that the United States will take any such action. As matters now stand, everything is in favor of the United States. Canadians are debarred from entering the United States for the purpose of mining. All rights there are reserved for their own citizens. On the other hand, United States citizens are accorded every right in Canada which our own people are entitled to, in regard to mining claims. It has been stated that 80 per cent. of the outfitting trade for the Klondike has been done at Seattle, 10 per cent at other Pacific coast points in the United States, and 10 per cent at Canadian Pacific coast points. If this be true, it simply means that about ninety per cent of those going to the Klondike are from the United States. They are going there not for the purpose of becoming citizens, but simply to secure all the gold they can and return to their own country. The admission of United States citizens to our gold territory on the same footing as our own people, while Canadians are barred from any like privileges in the United States, would seem to be a vastly more important concession than anything the United States is likely to be asked for in the line of transportation facilities through Alaskan territory. The request made at Ottawa by delegates from the United States, that the Canadian government should issue licenses to prospectors at United States ports, certainly seems like a very cheeky proposal. We not only admit United States citizens to all the rights accorded our own people, but we are asked to open office within United States territory, for the accommodation of United States citizens who wish to procure licenses to prospect in Canada. The Commercial believes strongly in encouraging in every way the most cordial relations between the two countries; but in this Klondike matter it would certainly appear that we are entitled to the most liberal treatment from the United States on account of the great concession to that country already made. If any attempt is made to hamper Canadian trade along the Alaskan coast, with the object of forcing further concessions, the way to meet it would be to shut out foreigners from our gold