

# THE COMMERCIAL

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

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D. W. BUCHANAN,  
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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 Can-  
ada, daily or weekly. The Commercial also  
reaches the leading wholesale, commission, manu-  
facturing and financial houses of Eastern Canada.

WINNIPEG, JANUARY 21, 1899.

## BRITISH COLUMBIA MINING LAWS.

The bill passed by the British Columbia legislature to prohibit aliens from owning placer mining claims in that province, is receiving a great deal of attention from the press all over the country. Some papers take the view that the bill is aimed at United States citizens. This is, of course, wrong. The bill has no doubt been introduced for the benefit of the province, and it does not discriminate against any particular class of foreigners. All are treated alike. The people of British Columbia, it may be presumed, know their own business best, and they seem almost unanimously in favor of this measure, as it was supported by both government and opposition members of the legislature. It is undoubtedly their belief that the measure is in the interest of their province. This is the sole object in adopting the measure. There is certainly no sentiment of hostility to the United States or any other country in the matter. Nor can the people of the United States complain that the action of the British Columbia legislature is unreasonable or unjust, seeing that the republic has always excluded foreigners from exercising ownership of mineral properties in their country. Many Canadian papers look upon the United States tariff as a measure dictated by hos-

tility to this country. This is all very absurd. The United States tariff policy is dictated by what the people of that country believe to be in their own interest, and that Canadian trade is made to suffer thereby is not a matter for consideration in framing that policy. It is just as unreasonable, as many Canadian journals take it, to suppose that the British Columbia mining measure was directed against the United States.

Neither can we consider it a hardship, against which we should retaliate, that Canadians have been excluded from operating mines in the United States. If the people of the United States consider it is a wise policy to exclude foreigners in this way, it is their own business, and we have no right to complain, any more than they will have a right to complain in the matter of the present action of the British Columbia legislature. Besides this, Canadians have the largest and richest undeveloped mineral country in the world. We have all we can attend to at home. There is ample scope within our own boundaries for the energies of those who seek investments of this nature. In fact it may be considered that the exclusion of Canadians from United States mines has been a benefit to Canada, as it has kept our people at home and compelled them to devote their energies toward developing their own country.

But while the people of British Columbia may be unanimously in favor of the new measure, it does not follow that they have adopted a wise policy. Looking at it from this distance there seem to be good reason for doubting the wisdom of this new policy. Canada, as we have already mentioned, has vast undeveloped mineral regions, a considerable portion of which is in the province of British Columbia. It would appear to be to our benefit to have foreigners come in to assist in the development of this wealth. The country is made richer and trade and industry are increased by the development of our mineral regions. Our own people get the benefit of the expansion that follows, though much of the development may be done by foreigners.

### Dry Goods Trade.

A Montreal agent writes: We beg to advise that owing to the rapid advance in the price of Egyptian cotton and the difficulty of procuring American cotton suitable for the purpose of manufacturing fine goods there is a strong probability of all classes of fine cotton stuff advancing in price.

Spinners of Oldham and vicinity had last year the best year's trade since 1890. All the companies excepting two have declared satisfactory profits. Many adverse balances have been wiped out, and several private firms have been put on their legs. Things are so promising that several new

mills are being erected in Rochdale, Oldham and Stockport.

It looks as if the long depression in the wool markets had about reached the low point. Prices in the United States are unchanged since December 1, and are now about 10 per cent lower than a year ago. There has seldom been a more discouraging year in the Canadian fleeces wool trade than that of 1898, says an eastern exchange, and holders will rejoice to learn that the long-enduring depression of the market shows signs of passing away.

The market for cotton goods in the United States continues firm, and prices are being steadily worked higher. A further advance in the prices of bleached cottons was made last week, while gray cottons are very strong. Print cloths are well reduced in stock, and selling agents have refused bids of 23-8 cents for 64 squares. Prices of printed fabrics are quietly being advanced, the finished fabric being below the basis of cost of the gray goods. Dress woollens are quiet, although a better jobbing call is being noticed. In men's-wear woollens trade is quiet. Where fall goods have been opened prices are 5 to 10 per cent lower than last year.

A Toronto report says: Important lines of clay worsteds in suitings and of beavers and kerseys in overcoatings for next fall have been recently opened up. On all these the prices named are lower than a year ago, 5c per yard lower in the clays than the prices made last September, but 13c to 19c lower than the prices ruling in June last year, beavers and kerseys showing declines of 10c to 12-1/2c per yard. There have also been opened some lines of fancies and of serges, and in each instance the decline from last year is on near a parity with the foregoing. The market prices of most staples have yet to be determined and agents profess to believe that the firmness of values will surprise merchants.

### Food Adulteration.

Ottawa, Jan. 15.—The annual report on the adulteration of food, issued by the inland revenue department, has been distributed. During the year 879 samples were analyzed. Of these 702 were found to be genuine, 87 adulterated, 61 doubtful, 6 sold as a compound, 19 not classed, and five sold illegally. Out of 76 samples of malt liquor only one was adulterated, all the others were genuine. Of 179 samples of milk, 133 were genuine, 22 adulterated and 24 doubtful. In 121 samples of aerated waters, four were adulterated, one doubtful and the remainder genuine. There were 66 samples of condensed milk, 54 being genuine, 3 adulterated, and 9 doubtful. Of the five samples of proprietary medicines, four were adulterated, and one doubtful; there were none of them genuine. About half only of the coffee samples examined were genuine; there were 34 genuine, 17 adulterated, 1 doubtful, 6 sold as compound and 4 not classed out of 62 samples in all. In butter 57 were genuine, 6 adulterated and 4 doubtful. Of the 106 samples of flour examined all were genuine.

The Montreal city council has decided to impose a special business tax upon departmental stores to the extent of 10 per cent. on each department.