THE COMMERCIAL

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

Twenty-First Year of Publication.

ISSUED EVERY SATURDAY.

Subscriptions—Canada and the United States, $1.00 per annum, in advance, or $1.25 when not so paid; other countries, $2.50 in advance.

Changes for advertisements, or stops, should be 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.

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.

Office, 36 and 37 Merchants Bank Building. Telephone 124.

D. W. BUCHANAN,
Publisher.

WINNIPEG, AUGUST 29, 1906.

DRY GOODS IN TORONTO.

The situation for domestic cotton goods is very firm, says the Toronto Globe in its weekly review of dry goods in that city. Canadian mills refuse to make price concessions. The uncertainties attending the cotton crop forbid anything of that kind. The mills are already sailing too close to the wind to allow of any such inducement to stimulate business, and anyhow there is no necessity, because of the fact that they have no surplus stocks on hand, and have all the business in on their books they are now able to take care of. Deliveries of domestic lines are generally fair. An exception is cotton blankets. Advices from a buyer for a leading house here who is now in the old country say that cotton goods there are very firmly held. Holders over there, in fact, appear to be stronger than Canadian makers. This is especially noticeable in fancy prints.

The uncertainty over the immediate future of the cotton markets is by no means over. The crop in the United States has got four weeks to go before it matures, and two of those weeks cover the most critical period of its growth. The supplies are now pretty well exhausted, except what is known as the contract cotton, which is not of the highest grade, and is used in connection with the speculative markets. Every mill, it is claimed, should carry a large supply of raw cotton, in order to have the raw material properly seasoned before using it. But many of the mills are practically exhausted their supplies, and in the New England States numbers of mills are idle, awaiting developments in connection with the crop. It is claimed that with a continuance of the present crop conditions up to the time of picking, the average price of the new crop is likely to be about 11c. It may be much more. Mill men seem to believe it cannot be much less than that price. The domestic manufacturers are holding very firmly to values. They have not pursued the policy of the American makers of cotton, who have closed down. They prefer to continue their mills in operation, limiting their advance to the minimum allowed to cover the additional cost of the raw material, pending further crop developments. They have not in any case been closely following the advances made by makers in the United States.

The merchant tailors throughout the country are taking a rest now, but not through lack of business. Many have been rushed for months and are glad of an opportunity for holidaying now. The future is exceptionally bright. Buyers are less particular about prices than they are about style and the prompt execution of orders. There is still a scarcity of labor, and some difficulty is experienced in getting work coming to hand turned out as quickly as desired. This scarcity of labor is likely to be an important factor in the trade the coming fall, when buyers are being urged to get their orders in hand as soon as possible if they would avoid delays in getting the goods. Styles are largely of a tweedy nature, though there is a good demand for fancy worsteds for the fall. This is because the worsted makers are turning out goods of a tweedy pattern. The patterns that seem to be most in demand are those of an oblong strips and check design. There is a good deal of bright color on black and dark and other ground, and dark grey on black and dark grey ground. In overcoats the styles will be longer than last year and the cut more baggy. In fact the extreme fashion, as described by a dealer in woollens here, will be more like a bathrobe than anything else. The cloth used will be of a soft nature. At the same time business men who do not favor the extreme styles in dress will use a black or grey melton. Orders for the better quality of these goods are in excess of last season's demand. Vestings promise to be a feature of the coming season to a greater extent than ever before. A novelty in vestings will be a silver spot on goods similar in other respects to the trousers and coat.

THE CROPS OF ONTARIO.

The farmers of this province are now reaping a bountiful harvest. Last year, contrary to the expectation of the citizens of town and city, who complained much of the continuous rains, there was a harvest unequalled in a quarter of a century. The crop bulletin just issued by the Ontario Department of Agriculture gives the very pleasing information that this year's harvest will be little, if any, behind last year's. Two bountiful crops in succession, with fair prices for farm products mean that the prosperity of Ontario is assured for the next twelve months.

Many people have not yet learned that wheat has diminished very materially in the scale of important factors. Pasture and hay form the first item on the list of farm crops, and these are the maximum this year. The dry weather of early summer threatened a shortage, but the abundant rains of midsummer have worked wonders. The hay crop this year is as abundant as it was last year, and is exactly 50 per cent greater than the average of the past twenty years. Put an average market value on the million tons of hay and you will have half enough to build a transcontinental railway.

The oat crop has year by year spread out and increased. Until this year we are promised 110,000,000 bushels, a yield of 40,000,000 bushels above the twenty years' average. Barley, that once played so important a part in our marketing, is coming back again. This year it is a remarkably fine crop, 7.6 bushels per acre above the average. The change in our farming is very noticeable here. This year's barley crop will be turned into pork and bacon instead of being converted into make beer, as was the case twenty years ago. With luxurious pastures, heavy yields of rich timothy and clover hay, and a superabundance of such grains as oats, barley and peas, our live stock will continue to produce beef and bacon, butter and cheese, and thereby make sure the prosperity not only of the farmers of Canada, but of the citizens of all Canada. From the farms of Ontario comes the wealth of the province—$20,000,000 worth of beef $20,000,000 worth of pork and bacon, and $25,000,000 worth of butter and cheese. The products are all on the up grade, and the latest information is of the most encouraging nature. Good times are assured, for our crops are all right.—Toronto Globe.

WINNIPEG CITY COUNCIL.

The Winnipeg city council met in fortnightly session on Monday evening. The estimates which were under discussion when the previous meeting adjourned were not taken up, but will be considered at a special meeting. A by-law to raise $50,000 for the purchase of a suburban park was discussed, but not voted upon, the council wishes to look into the question of combining this park with exhibition grounds. The Exhibition association represents that its present grounds are not entirely suitable for its purposes and a scheme to amalgamate the new park with new exhibition grounds would be favorably considered.

The question of new fire halls was dealt with. A site was selected for the new ward 3 hall, and tenders were accepted for the erection of four new halls in wards 1, 3, 4 and 6. Each of these halls will cost with equipment $14,000.

The application of the Street Railway company for power to cross Maryland street bridge was referred back to committee for arrangement as to maintenance of bridge.

The tenants of the city market asked the council to reconsider the recent advance in market rents.

The following resolution regarding the hospital grant was passed: "That the legislative committee be instructed to procure legislation authorizing the issue of debentures to the extent of $60,000 for additions to the Winnipeg general hospital without again submitting same to the vote of the ratepayers.

The works committee reported recommending the construction of a number of new sidewalks, pavements, sewers and boulevards.

The fire, water and light committee recommended:

That the following tenders for erection of fire halls be accepted: For carpenter work, S. McComb, at $4,400 each; for masonry and plastering, R. Watson, at $7,225; for plumbing and heating, Cotter Bros., at $1,283; for galvanized iron and tin work, J. W. Wright, at $565; for painting, J. D. Nisbet, at $425 each; and that an interim appropriation of $25,000 be adopted for completion of the four halls and building for hook and ladder truck at the south hall.

That the following tenders be accepted: For supply of cast iron pipes and specials, the Lartshom-Thompson P and F Co., at prices stated in tender; for supply of lead pipe, Jenkins & Hardy, at $4.60 per 100 lbs.; for supply of brass goods, The Mueller Mfg. Co., for items Nos. 1, 2, 4, 6, 7, and 10, at $928.75, and The Robert Mitchell Co. for items Nos. 3, 5 and 8, at $792.65.

TO PROTECT THE SALMON.

Vancouver, B.C., August 26.—The following self-explanatory message was sent to the minister of fisheries to-day by the Fraser River Canners' Association. It indicates the almost total failure of this year's salmon canning industry in British Columbia:

"Hon. Raymond Prefontaine, Ottawa.

"The Fraser River Canners' association, in view of the lamentable short run of seines on the Fraser river, and the entire absence of salmon from the spawning grounds, respectfully pray that your department will prohibit all fishing on the Fraser river from August 29 to September 12 inclusive, in order that the balance of the sockeyes remaining outside may be allowed to reach the spawning grounds, and the hatcheries get some supply of spawn.

"If the close season is not ordered, the fate of the industry is seriously threatened. Immediate consideration and a favorable reply by wire is earnestly requested in the interests of the canners and of the fishermen. (Signed) Burdish, secretary."

The total pack for the Fraser is officially announced to-day at but 177,992 cases.

WHEAT BETTERMENT.

We want better English wheat; of that there is not the slightest doubt, says the Miller, of London. We, in this country, grow quantity, and this is an undoubted gain. But we know no quality—or what is understood as quality—we are supposed to be a long way behind. In our native sorts we have color, flavor and yield, and we yearn after strength in addition. American, Canadian and Russian wheats have strength and color in a pre-eminent degree, but they lack flavor and yield. The question that requires settling is whether existing conditions or attributes are to be left as they are, or shall we make an effort to add the remaining and chief ingredient to English wheat? We have already done something, and it must remain for the future to disclose further possibilities.

There will always be a demand for weak wheats which are also colory, but when we consider that the demand for strong flour is constantly increasing, and that the supply of strong wheats is limited in a geographical sense, then the subject begins to look important. As an offset to the last statement we may take it that Canada will increase her supplies of strong wheat, but as a counter offset America proper bids fair to send us less year by year. Regarding the progress which has already been made in the wheat-growing experiments at present under supervision, we would like to put a few facts before millers, in order that they may the more easily understand the great difficulties which our scientists have to encounter. We do not believe that it will ever be possible to grow really strong wheats in this country; but so long as there is hope and chance of materially improving upon the very low average of glutinous property we think the experiments sanctioned and supported by the National Association are abundantly justified. What we understand as strength in wheat is the presence of that subtle element which will hold the gases evolved during the fermentation and baking stages in imprisonment. A well piled loaf is a strong loaf, because the tissues which constitute the cells in the dough have not burst during the different processes; therefore, the whole body of baked bread is held up in the approved fashion. Whether the fashion will change, and the public taste veer round to the bread of a former generation, we do not stay to enquire. This subtle element we call gluten. Gluten is present in all wheats in quantity, but what the present investigations are intended to reveal is the actual composition of this gluten and the relative quantities of its component parts. In giving attention to this subject we are desirous of emphasizing one or two points. These points are well known to those who are engaged in the work, but they will bear repetition on this page for the benefit of others. Let it be first understood that as yet comparatively little is known, and nothing is settled, except the barest outline of knowledge regarding the possibilities before us. Wheat grain we say contains gluten, but when we remember that soil, that the wheat itself, that the vagaries of a season are each capable of upsetting everything relating one to the other, we are constrained to almost pity the men who have undertaken such a great task. There is not yet enough known regarding gluten itself, and there are too many possible upsets to every given rule that it seems as if the fixing of the proper ratio of each ingredient constituent under so many different circumstances could never be accomplished. As we write there are other thoughts crowding upon us also. We have recently been told that even the flour granules are not dead particles. There is a great truth underlying this statement, and we subscribe to it entirely. There is certainly life in fermentation, there is a response from the flour granules, and what is the real cause of this combination or restarting of latent life we may have some more or less direct bearing upon the formation and the development of glutinous or nitrogenous substances. We do not think a great deal is to be said upon the question of the state of the wheat when cut. On the whole we do not favor cutting green wheat. We do not fully understand what to gather from what is said to be over-ripe wheat. There is a complete life to be gone through by the berry, and when it is ripe, dead ripe, or dead and ripe. It is resting. Growth has proceeded through its ending stage, and is then arrested. Whether over-ripe means anything except that the wheat sheds out and so gets wasted we do not know.

We do not agree that green-cut wheat may be classed as stronger than fully-ripe wheat. We have never found it so. Rather do we incline to the contrary. This is easily understood when we say that the wheat is not fully developed, the process of concentration and chemical change are not complete in a natural sense, the influences of sun, heat and light have had no proper opportunity of exerting themselves upon the fruit, and as the strongest parts are nearest the outside this lack of development must tell against the total fitness of the strength element.

In these few words we have endeavored somewhat to refer to a few points which require more study, and we wish to say that in this important matter over-confidence is to be avoided. There is a great future before us, and it behooves us to be fully prepared. It is possible that, rightly backed, those who are now engaged in the work will evolve and prove something of immense value to the milling and farming trades, but—and here is the note of discord—a great deal more money will have to be provided. The government is woefully behind on the food question, and should be made to see it in some way. It is not too much to say that a cabinet minister's salary is what the question demands, and if the powers that be cannot be drawn they must be pushed.

H. G. Brunton, who has been in Manitoba and the Northwest Territories for some considerable time, has engaged with Fred. J. Holland, insurance agent, Winnipeg, as travelling inspector and leaves Monday to cover the territory of Southern Manitoba.