

# 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.

**Nineteenth Year of Publication**  
ISSUED EVERY SATURDAY.

Subscriptions—Canada and the United States, \$2.00 per annum in advance, or \$2.25 when not so paid; other countries, \$2.50 per annum in advance.

Changes for advertisements or stops should be in 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.

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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.

WINNIPEG, JULY 13, 1901.

## SOLVING THE DAIRY PROBLEM.

The extension of railways throughout the country seems likely to solve the dairy problem in Manitoba and the West generally. The great difficulty experienced in establishing dairy factories throughout the country is the sparse population. On this account it is difficult to secure a sufficient quantity of milk or cream in one district to render the factory a profitable venture. If a sufficient quantity cannot be obtained within reasonable driving distance of the factory, such a venture cannot be made a success. The plan of establishing large central factories, equipped with a full complement of up to date plant, is possible where the cream can be carried by rail to the factory, thus practically annihilating distance of travel, which is the great drawback to the successful operation of factories generally throughout a sparsely populated country.

Success, we may say, has now been achieved in the establishment of central factories. Four years ago S. N. Barre started a creamery in Winnipeg with the object of testing what could be done in the direction of building up a large central factory, which would be supplied by cream brought to the city by rail from the tributary lines. The Canadian Pacific railway authorities at once recognized the importance of this work to the country, as it meant a great deal in developing our resources if it could be made a success. Favorable arrangements were made by the railway company for delivering the cream in the city, and to Mr. Barre's enterprise, with the assistance of the railway authorities, may be attributed the great success of the undertaking. Mr. Barre started out with ten patrons and now about 800 persons are sending cream to the factory. The growth of the business has been especially rapid during the past year. To such an extent has this been the case that it has been found necessary to put in new plant. Last year a churn with a capacity of 400 pounds was sufficient. This was replaced a short time ago by a churn of 700 pounds' capacity, and now it has been found necessary to put in another churn of 900 pounds' capacity. Winnipeg has now a really large butter factory, and the success of the central creamery plan has been abundantly demonstrated. The

cream is brought to the city from points along the railways, some coming quite long distances. The one thing needed to further assist the industry, is refrigerator car service during warm weather, and this will doubtless be supplied in good time, as the railway companies have shown every disposition to encourage the development of the industry. In fact it is understood that the railway companies have agreed to provide such a service next season. What has been accomplished here can also be done at other points, where a sufficient number of farmers can be reached by rail, and we may expect that a number of large central creameries will be in operation in Manitoba within a few years.

## U. S. Boot and Shoe Industry.

A dispatch has been received at the British Foreign office, from H M embassy at Washington, transmitting copy of a report, drawn up by the British commercial agent in the United States, on the boot and shoe industry of that country.

The report calls the very particular attention of British manufacturers to the fact, as evidenced by the statistics, that the exportation of boots and shoes

be some important reason why the latter should cost less than the former. That America is a large exporter of leather to the United Kingdom shows that they can manufacture it cheaper. Considering that so much of the raw material has to be imported into the United States by the tanners, there seems no reason why leather should not be manufactured as cheap or cheaper in the United Kingdom. This applies especially to the finer qualities, such as patent leather, glazed kid, and others.

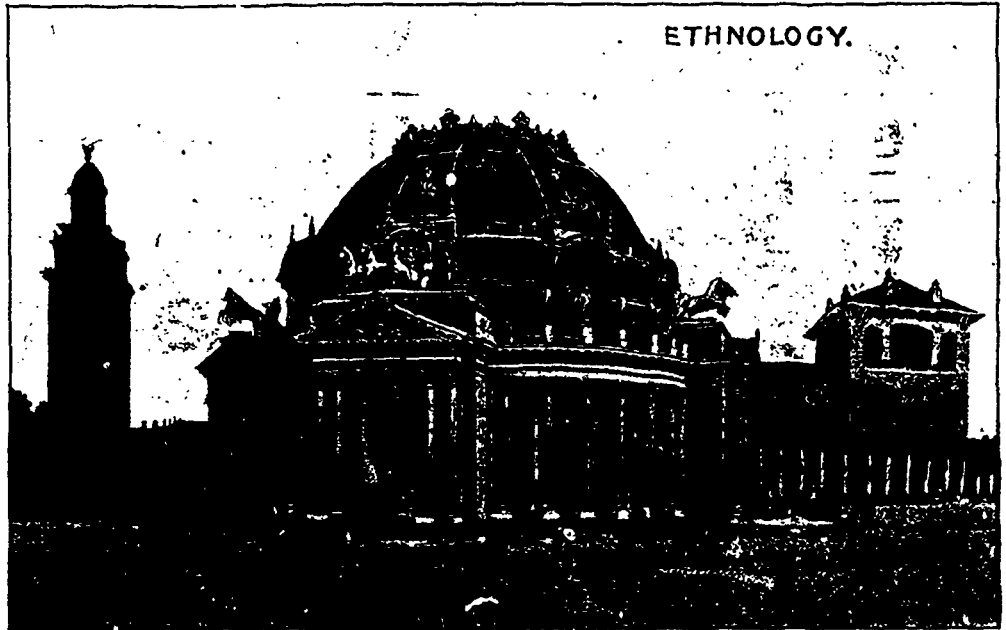
There is no doubt that as far as certain class leather is concerned, America possesses considerable natural advantages. There are plentiful supplies of suitable bark growing in the different parts of the country, and the tanneries have been placed at no great distance from it. The hemlock bark, which is that most used for tanning sole leather, is obtained from the forests situated in the States of Wisconsin and Michigan. It is also found in New York state and Pennsylvania, but not in such large quantities, and the supply is rapidly diminishing. The larger tanning companies in the west own large tracts of forest lands from which they draw their supply of bark. Oak bark, which makes the best leather, is not used in any large quantity in the eastern and central northern states. Oaks grow in the northwestern and southern states, but only sparsely in the others. It is consequently too costly to use in comparison with the hemlock. For tanning the finer qualities of leather, chemicals and

certain qualities of fine leather, and so on. In one they treat about 900 horse hides and 700 calf hides a day, and employ about 550 hands. They make nothing but the finer qualities of leather, and import most of their hides and material.

A visit to some of the boot and shoe factories in the United States will at once convince one that American manufacturers mean business, and are doing their best to overcome the difficulties of transport, etc., under which they labor, by producing an article cheaply and, at the same time, of a sufficiently good quality to please their customers.

All the latest designs of machinery are found in the workshops. With the exception of cutting out the materials used in making the upper part of the boots, practically none of the work is done by hand. Large and small sewing machines are, of course, largely used and are driven by power. Scalloping, skiving, folding, button sewing and self-feeding eyeletting machines are in universal use, also the usual sole-cutting and rounding machines, wire tackers, pegging and heel attaching, trimming and burnishing machines. It is impossible to give a list of all the machinery in use. The mere fact that from 300 to 500 hands are able to turn out from 1,500 to 3,000 pairs of boots and shoes per day is sufficient to show that practically all the work is done by machinery.

It is the use of so much of this improved machinery that enables the



from the United States is increasing at a rapid rate. The value of the exports of boots and shoes from that country last year amounted to £963,805, against £764,257 in the preceding year and £465,088 in 1898.

A glance at the following figures will show how American-made boots and shoes are being pushed with success in places where British-made goods ought to have practically the monopoly.

Table showing the value of boots and shoes exported from the United States during twelve months ended December 31.

To	1898.	1899.	1900.
United Kingdom	£72,714	£147,944	£224,057
West Indies and Bermuda	58,033	135,106	119,355
British Australasia	67,652	157,053	278,587
Africa	10,643	31,144	28,182
Total	£142,328	£323,308	£491,121

Table showing the exports from the United Kingdom during the twelve months ended December 31:

To	1898.	1899.	1900.
British West Indies	£59,387	91,210	79,339
" Australasia	359,955	329,076	381,241
" South Africa	630,752	581,641	614,898

Total . . . . . £1,022,094 1,001,927 1,075,478  
Why this state of affairs should be possible is not, at first sight, quite clear. It means, either the American made article is cheaper than the British made one, or, that it is of better quality. Taking it for granted that the British boots and shoes are not inferior to those of America, there must

extracts are used, a large quantity of which is imported.

The United States is a large importer of hides. There were imported during the twelve months ended Dec. 31, last, 307,257,924 hides, valued at £10,748,007, of which 152,792,232, valued at £4,815,987, were hides of cattle which pay import duty of fifteen per cent ad valorem, and 69,121,666, valued at £3,440,320, were goat skins, which are admitted free of duty. Of the total imposts, 124,255,261, valued at £4,288,707, came from Europe, and 66,212,792, valued at £2,191,451, came from the East Indies.

Those in the trade will doubtless be able to say whether the disadvantages of having to import this quantity of hides, bringing them from such great distances and paying fifteen per cent duty, paying higher wages than are customary in Europe, and heavy railway and steamer freights, are compensated for by getting cheaper bark; if not, then there must be something in the process of tanning that enables the American tanners to compete with other countries in their own markets. This is surely a question that tanners in the United Kingdom would do well to study. Needless to say, only the latest improvements in the general process of tanning are employed in the United States. Though there is necessarily a large amount of manual labor in the process, the latest thing in machinery is used wherever possible to save labor and time. Each tannery, as a rule, keeps to its particular speciality. One makes nothing but sole leather, another

American manufacturer to turn out such large quantities, and do it so cheaply.

Hand-made boots are almost unknown, as so many of the difficulties to be contended with formerly have been overcome. In consequence of this the public get a cheaper article in comparison with the quality than formerly, and the manufacturer obtains a correspondingly higher profit.

The machines are run at a rapid rate and the work is divided up in such a way that the workpeople are kept doing the same work continually. Payment by the piece is generally adopted, and the hours from 10 a. m. to 5.30 p. m., with half-an-hour interval in the middle of the day for dinner.

The organization as a rule leaves nothing to be desired. The factories in Chicago are generally in buildings of five or six storeys, fitted with electric light and elevators throughout. The leather is cut at the top of the building and passes down from floor to floor as the work progresses until it reaches the ground floor as a finished article. It is here packed and sent away. So systematically is the work done in many of the factories that a boot will pass down from the top to the bottom of the house without once crossing from one side of a floor to another until it goes to be packed.

During the week ended Saturday last there were 16 business failures in Canada, exactly the same number as during the same week a year ago.