

THE COMMERCIAL

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

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

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D. W. BUCHANAN,
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THE B. C. MINING INDUSTRY.

A summary of the report of the minister of mines of British Columbia, which is published in another part of this issue of The Commercial, contains some instructive information. An industry which produces a revenue of \$17,803,550 in a province which has only 178,637 inhabitants, may be regarded as important and worthy of attention from all students of the economic condition of that province. As compared with the year 1901, the above figures show a falling off of \$2,000,230, but this is largely accounted for by the explanation that the falling off is in the value of the products rather than in their volume. As a matter of fact the quantity of gold, copper and coke, produced during the year was greater than in 1901, decreases occurring in coal, silver and lead only, and more particularly in lead.

The troubles of the silver-lead producing industry has been so widely advertised of late that it seems almost unnecessary to restate them. Unfair competition from the United States and falling off in prices are the immediate causes of the silver-lead troubles.

The coal mining industry of Vancouver Island suffered from the effects

years of expansion and extravagance were not the best years the industry has experienced, and many errors were made then which are now being paid for with interest. The result is that many people are interested in valuable properties, but are unable to develop them, and others who are able to operate are obliged to give some of the results of their labor towards paying for mistakes of the past.

The main lesson of the mining minister's report is that the industry is alive, healthy and is gradually getting into position where those who

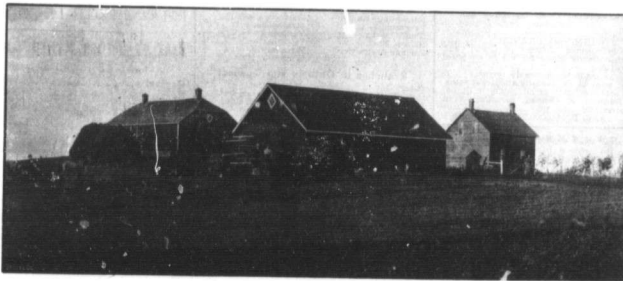
4,800 acres under rye, 2,357 acres under peas, 1,903 acres under corn and 27,734 acres under bromo grass. There must also be a considerable area under alfalfa, but this the bulletin has neglected to show.

Commenting on these figures of area the bulletin says that new land must be broken before the acreage can show further increase, and the prospect is that more breaking will be done this year than in any past year in the history of the province.

Seeding commenced this year about the first of April, was general from the 6th to the 15th, and con-

uncommon of people becoming disgusted with the task of finding locations owing to the annoyance to which these land sharks have subjected them and returning to their old homes without purchasing. There are perhaps to-day giving the country a bad name.

It would be a good thing if this practice could be stopped, but no process suggests itself by which this could be done. The nearest approach to a remedy is publicity. Constant warning by government officials, newspapers and legitimate real estate people against dealing with the speculator who has no enduring interest



MANITOBA FARM HOMES—DAVID STRONG, BOISSEVAIN.

have money to invest in it may do so with as much certainty of receiving returns upon their investment, as there is now in the case of any one of the other important Canadian industries.

THE CROP BULLETIN.

The June crop bulletin of the Manitoba department of agriculture appeared this week, and is summarized in another part of this issue. In one respect the June bulletin is the most important of the series annually issued by the government, as it gives the area under crop, with comparisons. This one shows that the wheat

continued in some sections until the 1st of June.

The number of cattle winter-fattened was 13,983, and the number of milch cows in the province is 126,846. The live stock wintered well.

The number of farm hands employed at seed time was 16,902 males and 3,990 females, and 5,158 males and 3,133 females in addition to those already employed, will be required for haying and harvest.

These are the main facts of the bulletin. In commenting upon the situation the government correspondents all agree that the prospects are excellent.

It would be as well, perhaps, to remark, before dismissing this subject, that this bulletin applies exclusively to the province of Manitoba. It does not deal at all with the neighboring fields or farms of Assinibola, which include an important part of the western grain areas. Some people living in the east and other distant places are inclined to make the mistake of supposing that Manitoba is the whole country, and that the Manitoba bulletins deal with the whole crop situation in the west. This is, of course, a mistake. Assinibola will this year have a crop equal to at least 25 per cent. of that of Manitoba, and those who would like to approximate the whole wheat production of the west this year may do so on that basis.

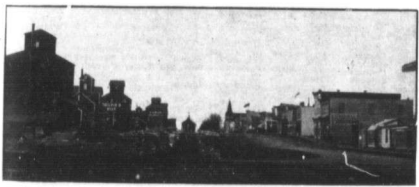
THE LAND SHARK.

Complaints are quite numerous that crooked work is going on among the real estate speculators who are operating in the west. Settlers attempting to locate themselves are set upon by these sharks who pretend to know where the best lands are situated and for a consideration are willing to pilot the settlers to some exceptionally choice location which turns out after all to be anything but choice; or who have themselves land to sell which the settler finds after making payment upon it, by no means the bargain it was represented to be. Cases are not

in the country and who manifests any undue anxiety to unload property upon the newcomer should do much to remedy the evil. It is to be feared that many good people have already been betrayed in this way and probably many more will be before the expansion movement spends itself, but it is nevertheless the duty of everyone who has a voice to warn the land seekers of this danger and so far as possible see that the best available sources of information are pointed out to those who come to find homes for themselves and their friends in the west.

PACIFIC OCEAN RATES.

R. P. Ribbet & Co., say in their latest circular: The spot grain freight market is extremely dull, last year's crop being practically cleaned up; the rate for new crop loading also shows a decided weakening tendency, owing partly to less favorable crop conditions, and partly to the increasing tonnage list heading to this coast, mostly with Australian coals to cover shortage from British Columbia mines caused by labor troubles. The lumber freight market for the past month has been quite active, and our list of engagements is greater than for some time past. Rates remain steady, except an increase of 5s in the South African voyage. We quote freights as follows: Grain—San Francisco to Cork, £ s. d. 18s 6d to 19s 6d, Portland to Cork, £ s. d. 22s 6d, Tacoma and Seattle to Cork, 20s. Lumber—British Columbia or Puget Sound to Sydney, £ s. d. 32s 6d to 35s 3d, British Columbia or Puget Sound to Melbourne or Adelaide, 40s. British Columbia or Puget Sound to Port Pirie, 37s 6d, British Columbia or Puget Sound to Fremantle, 47s 6d to 50s. British Columbia or Puget Sound to Shanghai, 37s 6d to 40s. British Columbia or Puget Sound to Kiao-Chau, 40s. British Columbia or Puget Sound to Yaku, 40s to 42s 6d, British Columbia or Puget Sound to Vladivostok, 40s. British Columbia or Puget Sound to West Coast, £ s. d. 22s 6d to 35s. British Columbia or Puget Sound to South Africa, 37s 6d to 41s 3d, British Columbia or Puget Sound to U. K. or Continent, 50s.



MAIN STREET, BOISSEVAIN.

of a new form of competition in this important market, California. There the field has been invaded by fuel oil, produced in the state itself, and to this fact, coupled with strikes in the Crown's Nest Pass collieries and a disastrous explosion at Fernie, may be attributed the troubles of this branch of the mining industry.

As against these discouraging features of the British Columbia mining situation, we may place the fact that the industry has been undergoing of late a pretty thorough system of purging, and has been reduced in the process to the most business-like basis upon which it has ever rested. The

fields of Manitoba have been increased to the very satisfactory amount of 402,481 acres, making the total now 2,442,873 acres. This is a larger increase than was expected. The area under oats has also made a substantial gain, being now 855,451 acres, or 130,371 more than last year. Barley shows a decrease of 3,253 acres, the area under that grain being 326,337 acres. Flax now covers 35,900 acres as against 22,005 last year. The root area remains about stationary. The bulletin indicates that these changes are about evenly distributed over the province. It is interesting to know that Manitoba has this year