

# THE COMMERCIAL

A Journal of Commerce, Industry, Finance and Insurance, devoted to the interests of 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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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. By a thorough system of personal solicitation, carried out annually, this journal has been placed upon the desks of the majority of business men in the district designated above, including Northwest Ontario, the Provinces of Manitoba and British Columbia, and the Territories of Assiniboia, Alberta and Saskatchewan. The Commercial also reaches the leading wholesale, commission, manufacturing and financial houses of Eastern Canada.

WINNIPEG, DECEMBER 13, 1897.

## WINNIPEG AS A GRAIN MARKET

Winnipeg is a much larger primary grain market than many people imagine it to be. In the smaller Manitoba towns, the elevators are the most conspicuous features. In the busy grain season the writer could hardly fail to notice at once the business being done around the elevators, which are usually grouped together in an open space along the railway, where they are visible from almost every point of view. In Winnipeg the elevators are scattered along the railways a distance of two or three miles. A great deal of grain is also sold about the streets to retail dealers, livery stables or other large consumers. There is no particular spot where the farmers congregate to sell their grain. People who are used to the sight of a string of teams waiting their turn to unload at some country points, imagine that there is very little grain marketed in Winnipeg directly by producers, because they do not immediately see the evidences of a brisk grain market. The fact is that Winnipeg is one of the very largest farmers' markets in Manitoba for oats and barley. In some years it is perhaps the largest primary market for these grains in the province. Even in wheat it is not so very far down on the list. For the past few

weeks buyers say more wheat has been marketed at Winnipeg directly by farmers than at any other provincial point. While there is a great deal of vacant land about the city, farmers drive longer distances, to Winnipeg than to most other points, on account of the higher prices paid here. Winnipeg is a large consuming market, and farmers who can, haul their grain to the city, save the freight which is paid on grain brought in by rail from provincial points.

## POSTAL CHANGES

Two very important changes have recently been announced by Postmaster-General Mulock. First the public were informed that the department had decided that the present domestic rate of three cents on letters should carry a letter to any part of the empire. Aside from the great value which this will be to business interests, it may be described as another bold stroke by Canada in fostering the imperial idea. If uniformities in postal regulations can be secured throughout the empire, it will be a big step in the direction of consolidating the empire. Canada has been taking the lead in this direction, and the latest move along the same line is not by any means an insignificant one.

The second announcement is one of a purely domestic nature, namely, that the department has decided to allow advertising to be done on the face of postal cards. Heretofore, only the address has been allowed upon the face of the cards. This new move may popularize postal cards to such an extent as to materially reduce the revenue from letters.

## A DELICATE SITUATION

The serious state of affairs existing in the polyglot empire of Austria-Hungary might be taken as a lesson in Canada. It is a fight on the part of the Czechs to obtain equal official recognition of the race and language with the Germans of Austria proper and the Hungarians. While one official language for the nation would appear to be desirable, it is not always wise to attempt to enforce such a rule. The lesson the people of Austria-Hungary need to learn is tolerance. In Canada we have two races working together in harmony. Tolerance has worked well, and it is only by following along the same lines that matters will continue to work smoothly. In Austria they have not two but many races, necessitating great prudence and toleration in the management of national affairs. Of course it would not be practical to give every small faction official recognition of their language, but where a large division of the empire is held by people

largely speaking one language, the only way out of the difficulty will be to recognize their language. Repressive measures will only smother the troubles for a time, only to break out afresh when something occurs to renew the agitation.

## LARGE DEMAND FOR MILL FEED

There is an usually large demand for mill feed this winter throughout Manitoba. The country mills, which a year or more ago were obliged to burn their bran and even shorts, for lack of a profitable market, are now unable to supply the demand. Mill-feed is at present being shipped west from as far east as the Lake of the Woods Company's Kewatin mill, to country points in Manitoba, the prices obtained being more profitable than to ship to Eastern Canada markets. The Lake of the Woods Company on Tuesday refused to contract for 1,000 sacks of bran and shorts, for future delivery, at \$3 and \$11 per ton respectively, delivered in Winnipeg. This shows that the market is very firm.

## THE OATMEAL DUTY

The question relating to the tariff on oats and oatmeal was discussed again at a meeting of the council of the Winnipeg board of trade, held on Tuesday afternoon. On this occasion a deputation of oatmeal millers was present, and they no doubt helped the members of the council to a better understanding of the question. At a former meeting of the council of the board when this matter was discussed, the disposition seemed to be, according to press reports, not to take any action toward calling the attention of the government to the situation. There seems to have been some misunderstanding of the question, some supposing that the value of oats here would be reduced by a change in the tariff. This would not necessarily be the case. On the contrary, the price of oats has been somewhat easier of late, partly because the Manitoba oatmeal millers were not able to compete with the imported meal, and consequently they were not buying oats to any extent. The oatmeal millers are always active buyers for the finest qualities of oats, and for oats suitable to their use they will pay better prices than are usually paid for this grain for feed purposes. If the millers are shut off by tariff discrimination, there will certainly be less competition for oats in the local markets, with the result that prices will be easier, especially for the finer qualities.

The least that the government could do in this matter would be to equalize the duty on oatmeal, and we think the council of the Winnipeg board is fully justified in asking that this be done,