

THE COMMERCIAL

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

WINNIPEG, MARCH 26, 1898.

THE ELEVATOR REGULATIONS.

Considerable discussion of the elevator situation in Manitoba has been going on again recently, owing to the introduction of a bill at Ottawa to compel the railway companies to abolish the elevator restrictions. The matter has been discussed in the provincial legislature, with the result noted in another column of The Commercial this week. When the alleged grain combine was formed last fall The Commercial said at the time that it would likely lead to another agitation. This has now come in the form of a demand to have the elevator regulations abolished. It is really just the same old story of human nature over again. Deprive a person or a community of some right which he or they believe themselves entitled to, and there will remain a sore which will refuse to heal. The forbidden fruit may be of little or no value but that will not make any difference. The farmers believe they have the right to load their wheat directly upon cars, without putting it through the elevators. This right may be of little value to them, but so long as they are deprived of it there will be unrest, as well as encouragement for the professional agitator and political truckler to get in his work.

The Commercial has always con-
tended that the elevator regulations
have been of great value to the grain

trade, and therefore to the grain producers of Manitoba. At the same time, the removal of the restriction as to loading upon cars, would not, we believe, materially affect the elevators. At points in Manitoba where these restrictions are not enforced, the farmers do not appear to take advantage of the privilege of loading their wheat directly into cars to any extent. Loading wheat into cars is in fact impractical except in special cases, and if the restrictions were removed, it would make very little difference to either the farmers or the elevator men. It is a matter for regret that statements calculated to injure the country, some of them absurdly false on their face, have been made in and out of parliament in regard to this matter. The fact that the farmers have themselves formed a large number of elevator companies, and built elevators at many country towns, including some points where elevator restrictions have not been enforced, indicates that the farmers are generally in favor of using the elevators. It seems a matter for regret that this elevator question was not settled in some way before the present agitation was started. If the farmers had been allowed the right to load into cars, with reasonable rules as to time of holding cars, etc., it would probably have settled the trouble. Now it is possible that some legislation inimical to the elevators may be passed, which would be a matter for regret. No country in the world has better grain-handling facilities than Manitoba, and it is not desirable that any unreasonable regulations should be enforced against the system. The regulations under which the elevators are now working have greatly aided in building up this splendid system of grain handling in Manitoba, without which the grain producers would be in a truly bad position.

LAND SALES.

While the settlement of our vacant lands is not progressing as fast as we would wish, it is nevertheless quite apparent that the sales of farm lands has been steadily and rapidly increasing during the past few years. The reports of all the large land companies show this. The land sales of the Canadian Pacific Railway company show a large increase the last couple of years, and the present year bids fair to show a far greater expansion of land business than during the previous year. The report of the Northwest Land company, recently published, may be taken as an indication of what has been going on in the land business. The company's sales for the last four years compare as follows:

Year.	Acres sold.	Avg. price.
1894	3,305.00	\$5.00 per acre
1895	8,034.00	5.26 per acre
1896	20,927.00	5.69 per acre
1897	38,924.07	5.40 per acre

This and other reports indicate that our vacant lands are being taken up more rapidly than many have imagined. Our country is of such vast extent and the quantity of land available so great, that a few thousand new settlers each year are hardly noticed. In many of the older settlements, however, good farms are even now hard to pick up, except at a price which would tempt some of the older farmers to sell out, with the hope of picking up a new farm in another locality, at a lower price. Of course there will be abundance of land in new districts for many years to come, but the present seems to be about as favorable a time as we are likely to have, for obtaining land in districts now partially settled and possessing good markets and other conveniences.

LIQUOR IN YUKON.

The government is no doubt taking a wise precaution in sending troops to the Yukon. The present police force in the country would be utterly unable to cope with any serious disturbance. Even the additional force which it is proposed to send seems insignificant in comparison with the extent of country through which law and order will have to be maintained, especially when we consider that thousands of the roughest element from the United States are crowding into the north country. Of course thousands of sturdy and reliable Canadians are also going to the Yukon region, who could be called upon to assist the military in case of rioting or mob lawlessness. At the same time a sufficient force of regularly organized and disciplined men is always a better safeguard than an emergency force.

We hear rumors about large quantities of liquor being taken to Yukon. In the face of possible disturbances, it seems that a great mistake is being made in allowing the shipment of liquors into that country. Even though actual rioting may not be feared, the presence of so many of the rougher element would indicate the wisdom of banishing liquor from the district. In a country situated like the Yukon region, with few avenues of ingress, it should be a comparatively easy matter to prevent the importation of liquors, and it seems that a prohibitory experiment in connection with the Yukon excitement, would be well worthy of a trial. The importation of liquors into the Territories was prohibited for years, though there was less reason for it than there is in the case of the Yukon district. In the case of the Territories too it was much easier matter to defy the pro-