

THE COMMERCIAL

The recognized authority on all matters pertaining to trade and commerce in the territories, including that part of Ontario west of Lake Superior, the Province of the Yukon and British Columbia and the Territories.

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The Commercial certainly enjoys a very large circulation among the business community of the vast region lying between the St. Lawrence and the Pacific coast than any other paper in Canada, and it is a fact which is amply demonstrated by the leading wholesale, commission, manufacturing and financial houses of Eastern Canada.

WINNIPEG, NOV. 9, 1901.

PROPOSED ISTHMUS CANAL.

It has been freely reported of late that Great Britain and the United States have arrived at an understanding regarding the proposed Nicaraguan canal. Statements to this effect have emanated repeatedly from both Washington and London. As the British ambassador has now arrived at Washington, it may be expected to learn something more definite very shortly, regarding the position of this question between the two governments. Any agreement which may have been arrived at between the respective governments would be subject to ratification and rejection by the United States Senate, which body so summarily disposed of the late Hay-Pauncefote treaty agreement.

Whatever may be the present status of the question, it is to be hoped that a treaty will soon be found for the construction of the proposed canal by the United States which will be satisfactory to the British government. This is a matter in which we think the British government can well afford to yield a point or two. The United States is evidently set upon building and controlling the canal alone, and so long as reasonable assurance is given that the commerce of all countries shall have impartial treatment in the use of the canal, we can see no very good reason for withholding consent, which, under the terms of the Clayton-Bulwer treaty the British government has a right to do.

The construction of an isthmus canal, resulting in an essentially beneficial effect upon the commerce of the world. The United States, with her extended coast line on both oceans and the Gulf of Mexico, and her proximity to the proposed canal, is at once the most interested and the best situated to construct and operate the canal. Canada is also greatly interested in the matter. Transportation by water between our Atlantic and Pacific ports would be greatly facilitated by the construction of the canal, and the transatlantic railway rates would be materially reduced, also, in many commodities. Even now, some classes of freight are carried by water around Cape Horn, between Atlantic and Pacific ports of both the United States and Canada. With the canal route reduced by more than one-half there would certainly be a great change in the situation as regards freights between Atlantic and Pacific ports.

Some Canadian journals have decried that Great Britain should stand firmly upon her rights under the Clayton-Bulwer Treaty, assuming that in some way Canadian interests will be sacrificed by allowing the United States to build and control the canal. We do not think that Canadians are very anxious for any share in building the canal. The construction of the canal will be a benefit to Canada commercially, second only to the benefit which will be derived by the United States from the work. All we want is the guarantee that our commerce will not be hampered or restricted against by those in control of the canal. To the United States we are quite willing to leave the work of building and controlling the great undertaking.

TRANS-PACIFIC TRADE.

Canada is likely to experience an immense increase in her trade with the trans-pacific nations in the course of the next ten years. It is a certainty that out of the disturbances which have recently shaken the Chinese empire its foundations show good will ultimately come that a more enlightened policy will be pursued by that country with the result that more trading will be done, especially with the manufacturing nations. This will give Canada an opportunity to occupy the markets of that country with her products of various kinds. A few dollars per capita increase in the import requirements of China would mean a tremendous increase in the aggregate amount of trade. The other nations which border the eastern shores of the Pacific are also likely in the near future to prove good customers of this country as they are annually increasing their import trade.

Not only is Canada in a position to handle a share of all this trade on its own account but the splendid transportation facilities now afforded by the Canadian Pacific Railway Company, both across this continent and across the Pacific make it possible to handle the trade of Europe with the Orient most economically.

TRANSPORTING THE GRAIN CROP.

Considering the very heavy traffic, complaints of scarcity of cars have not been as prevalent in Manitoba this season as might have been expected. There have been some complaints. It is true, but it would be unreasonable to expect the railway companies to be able to meet every demand at a time like this without some delays. There are some complaints from farmers that they cannot secure cars to load direct and that the railways are favoring the elevators. It is quite natural to look for complaints of this nature. A farmer may order one car and an elevator at the same place may ask for twenty or more cars. If the farmer does not secure his one before the elevator secures some portion of the twenty or more cars ordered, he will at once conclude that he is being discriminated against. The elevator will load a whole train of cars in much less time than the farmer will load the single car. The farmer will allow the twenty-four hours to load a car. What would be the effect on the trade of the country, if a large number of farmers were to desire to load their grain direct to cars, and the railways were compelled to give them the preference in supplying cars? It is not likely that the entire traffic of the country would be blocked. Not only the grain trade, but traffic of all kinds would be de-

layed. In fact trade of all kinds would be paralyzed, and an intolerable situation would be speedily created. It is only by the greatest expedition in handling grain at interior and terminal points, that the traffic can be moved at all. The crop of the present season could not be handled in twelve months, if a large portion had to be loaded direct to the coast. The great value to the country of our present unsurpassed elevator system, without which we could not produce and handle grain to anything like the present extent. Until some better system is devised, we will be compelled to use the present elevator system, or else to reduce our grain production by one-half or more.

Higher Duties Wanted.

Montreal, Nov. 6.—The feature of today's session of the Manufacturers association was the adoption of three resolutions that would directly affect the people of the west. They were approved in principle in the various sections as follows:

Agricultural implement section resolves unanimously to urge the general association to endorse their action in strongly urging the government to increase the duties upon agricultural implements.

The following resolution as regards the tariff on saw timber (timber) was passed: "White pine, red (Norway) pine, hemlock, tamarac, spruce, fir, etc. 10 cents per thousand feet; shingles 30c per thousand; laths, 20 cents per thousand. Government contracts that will always use Canadian material when possible and specify it in contracts. That all provincial governments be urged to insist that all timber sold by them be manufactured in the country."

The Woolen manufacturers' committee ask the association to endorse their request to the government for a new tariff on the woolen goods of the preferential tariff of not less than thirty per cent or its equivalent, upon all classes of finished, woven, knit and knitted goods and carpets, and of twenty per cent, or its equivalent, on all classes of unfinished, woven, knit and knitted goods, and of twenty per cent net and on yarns of a duty of thirty per cent gross or a twenty per cent net.

The following resolution was also passed: "The Manufacturers' association urge upon the government the necessity of changing the duty on oatmeal from an ad valorem duty of twenty per cent to a specific of twenty cents per one hundred pounds. That duty of sixty cents per pound be charged upon linograph covers on all packages."

The committee on tariff on shirts, collars, cuffs and blouses unanimously reported that the only practical measure of relief in view at the present time is the reduction of the present tariff, that the association desire to be represented in this regard by the ad valorem duty to be at the same rate as paid on their new material, plus the specific duty of 24 cents per dozen on collars, 48 cents per dozen on blouses."

Resolutions were passed favoring a preferential trade between the Australasian Commonwealth and Canada and all parts of the world, with such arrangements can be effected to mutual benefit and by which each receives most substantial benefits.

The members of the association brought their annual convention to a close by moving to the Hotel Marlborough. It was a fitting climax to the most successful meeting in the history of the association. The grand dining room of the hotel presented a brilliant scene. At the head of honor were the prime minister of the Dominion, the high commissioner of Canada in London, the minister of the interior, the minister of His Majesty's opposition, the chief magistrate of the city of Montreal, the president of the board of Montreal trade and navigation organizations, the representatives of Canada's educational interests and several chief officials of the association. Around the tables were assembled nearly 400 members of the association and several added variety to the scene, the galleries being filled with ladies who were interested listeners to the speeches.

His speeches were all on a high plane, dealing principally with the industrial interests and the manufacturing industry carefully avoiding all topics of a controversial or political nature.

After the last of the "banquet" had been joyously honored, it was regretted as a matter of course that it was not possible to attend were read. In his speech the minister of the interior spoke of trade announced that this year Manitoba would produce the greatest ever. He stated that the world had never seen.

Mr. Wilfrid Laurier made several important announcements in the course of his remarks, one of them being that there would be no more delegations to Washington in the near future, but that the American delegation would come to Ottawa, which would be a great advantage. He also said that the manufacturers were satisfied with the present tariff arrangements, where there was a storm of protest from all sides and cries of "No, we are not satisfied." Mr. Wilfrid Laurier also expressed himself in favor of a closer trade arrangement between the component parts of the empire, as he believed that the safety of the empire depended on such a policy. The premier said that during his recent Northwest tour he had noticed a remarkable change. During the past sixty years the movement of population in the West had been from north to south but now it had changed from south to north, and the hardy yeomanry of the West were flocking into Manitoba and the Northwest. Lord Strathcona and Mount Royal and Mr. J. C. H. Hamilton, the executive leader, also spoke advocating closer trade relations within the empire.

The National Debt of England.

Every great nation, like every small church, has a debt. England's debt is a good-sized one, which is counted as the debt of such a country should be, and it also is of ancient beginnings.

The English national debt, in its present form, is over 240 years old. Its beginning can be traced to a breach of faith of Charles II. He had borrowed money of the king monarch who was undoubtedly familiar with the practice of borrowing, but they were not to be repaid. In some terms, generally a few months, or perhaps a year, and they always paid back. The money was not repaid, and borrowings is so full of interest that it may be worth while to dwell for a few moments upon the history of this essence, these borrowings by the earlier kings of England were only anticipations of the debt which is now very form in which the loan was contracted is incidental evidence of that fact. From the time the government commenced, it was the practice of the exchequer to acknowledge the receipt of money by means of a wooden tally. A tally (French, *taille*) is a stick split down the middle and cut across the cleavage with a series of notches.

Moving Threshing Rigs.

The Winnipeg board of trade has taken up the question of having operators of threshing rigs to move their machines to districts where there is much threshing to be done. In some sections threshing has been about finished and the machines are being laid up in order that the work of threshing remains yet to be done. It was thought that by securing special rates, threshers might be attracted to their districts, might be induced to drive to other districts, and much work remains to be done. With this object in view, the board approached the railway companies with a view to securing low rates. The Canadian Pacific Railway Company offered to move the rigs at one-third of the usual rate, and give a special rate of one cent per mile to the men who accompany the rigs. The Canadian Northern offered to transport the machines free and give the one cent rate for the men. In order that the rigs who are through in their districts, can therefore now receive these very favorable rates. It is thought that it was decided to issue a circular to postmasters and others giving particulars as to the rates. It is thought when it was decided to issue a circular to postmasters and others giving particulars as to the rates. It is thought that threshers who have completed their work will be willing to move their rigs to other districts.