

# THE COMMERCIAL

A Journal of Commerce, Industry and Finance, especially 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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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, NOVEMBER 22, 1897.

## CORN FOR FEED

The Commercial a few weeks ago mentioned that if coarse grains kept up as high in prices as they were then ruling, it would likely lead to the importation of corn from the United States for feed. This is what is now happening. Corn can be imported into Canada free of duty, and as there is a large supply of cheap corn available in the United States, it is now being drawn upon to take the place of oats and barley here for feed purposes. The Winnipeg elevator companies have brought in considerable corn, which they are sending to country points to dispose of through their various country elevators to farmers. Other dealers have also been bringing in corn, for shipment to country points as well as for consumption in the city. Some of this corn is being ground here and sold straight, or mixed with mill feed or ground oats, according to the desires of consumers.

For the city trade the corn comes cheaper than oats, as it can be laid down here in car lots at a cost of 40 to 41 cents per bushel of 56 pounds, while 34 pounds (a bushel) of oats costs 32 to 35 cents in car lots on track here. The freight rate on the corn is 21 cents per 100 pounds from Minneapolis to Winnipeg. The same rate takes in points on the C. P. R. main line as far west as Portage la Prairie, as far as Carman on the

Southwestern and as far as Morden on the Deloraine branch. West of Portage la Prairie to Brandon, on the main line, the freight rate is 22 cents per 100 pounds.

The difference in the price between oats and corn is not so favorable to the corn at country points as at Winnipeg. Oats at Winnipeg have the local freight added from country points, while at country points the oats are not carrying any freight rate and they are quoted at 25 to 27 cents per bushel at the time of writing. Later quotations will be given in our regular market reports. Still a lot of corn is going to country points, in addition to the consumption of this grain in the city, where it is coming more largely into use every day.

## DEMAND FOR HORSES

There is likely to be a scarcity of horses in the west next year, of the class suitable for pack animals. Quite a number of horses have already been picked up to be used on the Edmonton route to Yukon. When the expected rush for the northern gold region sets in next spring, the available supply of horses will quickly be reduced, and the ranching districts south of the boundary will no doubt have to be called upon to replenish the supply. The rush to the northern gold fields has caused a demand for a class of horses which have been very slow sale for some years. The most desirable class of horses for the regular trade have not been bred on the ranges in many cases, and the result has been an over-supply of a class of animals which were not suited to requirements of the regular market. These horses, however, are just about what is required for pack animals, and being hardy and acclimatized to the western prairie country, they will be the most suitable horses obtainable for saddle or packing, for use on these northern trails. The opening up of this avenue for the disposal of horses, will let the ranchers out of a lot of animals, which under ordinary circumstances were very slow sale, and inclined to be a drag on the market.

## THE MOUNTED POLICE

A motion has been passed by the Territorial assembly in favor of an increase in the strength of the mounted police force. Recently the force has been considerably reduced, their strength now being placed at 650 men compared with 1,000 men as before the reduction. The wisdom of reducing the force at this time, with the great north country now demanding their attention, seems somewhat questionable. It is necessary that the

now northern gold fields should be strongly policed. The discovery of these gold territories, adds an enormous area over which it will be necessary to exercise police jurisdiction. In fact even aside from these gold discoveries the extension of police authority over the vast northern regions, for the protection of the fur trade and other important interests, has been foreseen as a necessity for some time, and was advocated by this journal before the great Klondike discoveries were announced. The legislative assembly is undoubtedly taking a proper step in voting for a large increase of the territorial police force.

## INSOLVENCY LAW

There is a very strong movement in Eastern Canada at present in favor of an insolvency law, and from the pressure now being brought to bear upon the government, it seems likely that an effort will be made at the next meeting of parliament to satisfy this demand. Canada has been without any general insolvency law for a long period. At present each province has its own provincial laws relating to insolvency. An insolvency bill was introduced at the last session of parliament under the late Conservative government, but it was held over for further consideration, and owing perhaps to the change of government the measure was not introduced at the last session of parliament.

Providing a suitable law were adopted, it would certainly be better to have a general insolvency law applicable to the whole country, than to have local laws, differing widely in the different provinces. It would be worth while making an effort to frame an efficient insolvency law, even if for no other reason than to attain uniformity in matters of this nature throughout the Dominion. Inter-provincial trade interests are exceedingly important, and it would be a very great convenience to have one uniform law for the entire country.

Aside from the convenience of uniformity, which is alone worth striving for, there are other important reasons for desiring a federal law governing insolvency. Not only is there a condition bordering somewhat on chaos, on account of the varied provincial regulations, but there are some very bad regulations relating to insolvency now in force in some of the provinces. In Nova Scotia, for instance, the law is such that the most bare-faced cases of swindling have taken place, under the guise of bankruptcy. Some of the cases in fact could simply be termed robbery by law. The law of course, is no doubt not intended to permit of such transactions, but it seems shameful that the law should be so framed as to enable evil disposed persons to take