

Estevan.

Three months ago this name was scarcely known to the people of Manitoba and the Territories and the town which bears it was not in existence. To day the name is a household word and the town is one of the best to be found in the country. Estevan is of too recent a birth to be found on any of the present maps of this country, but if any of our readers are curious to know just how it looks on a map let them take one of Manitoba and the Territories and go down into the southeastern corner of Assiniboia with a rule and pencil and measure 75 miles from the boundary of Manitoba and 13 miles from the boundary of the United States on the east bank of the Souris Valley and mark the spot. That is pretty nearly the location of Estevan. The railway which gives this district connection with the outer world is the Souris branch of the C.P.R., which runs from Kenney on the main line, west of Brandon, southeasterly past Souris, Napinka, Melita and Orbow. This road was built on a bonus from the Government of Manitoba for the purpose of tapping the coal fields which lie in the vicinity of the town, in order that a plentiful and cheap supply of fuel might be secured for the people of the province. This town is also the point at which the South short line crosses the Souris branch.

The history of Estevan is a very short one. Created and named by the C.P.R., with its streets and limits all laid out before there was a house built, it has had nothing to do since the lots were put upon the market but grow and expand. The presence of large gangs of railroad men during the months of August and September while the grading of the Soo line in its vicinity was being carried on aided quite a bit in making the place what it is, while its proximity to the coal fields promising the early establishment of substantial industries, has led many storekeepers and business men to settle in the town.

Mention cannot be made of Estevan without also calling to mind Major Leacock, the genial C.P.R. townsite manager. The Major has charge of the interests of the company in this district and has done much towards making the town what it now is.

THE COAL MINES.

The coal seams from which the people of Manitoba expect in the near future to be drawing their supplies of fuel, are all round about Estevan. A short distance to the west of the town the seam now being worked is situated. It is in the bank of a valley or ravine which runs into the Souris Valley a few hundred yards from the mines. The Dominion Coal Company of which Major Walsh is manager, are doing the mining. Two or three drifts have been let into the bank of the ravine and the necessary plant and appliances for getting out and loading the coal have been put in and the company were at the time of writing only waiting for the completion of the truck line from the drift to the tipples, where the coal is loaded, to commence operations. Of the coal itself, the writer, notwithstanding all that has been said of late to the contrary, has no hesitation in saying that it is a good article. It is fully all that Manitoba expected it would be when the arrangements for its development

were made. It has been said that a better coal could have been got at the Hazard mine, some thirteen miles east of Estevan, but that is not so as the two coals are according to the opinion of experts identically the same.

ITS BUSINESS INTERESTS.

Already the business interests of the place have assumed proportions far from insignificant. Some of the stores are large and very nicely stocked. Among these is that of J. R. Stockwell, formerly of Eastern Quebec, who is opened out in the grocery business.

Mr. Tom Bell, formerly of Rapid City, is carrying on a meat business. This gentleman came to the district in May last and has been interested in it ever since. At the time of his first visit he drove two hundred head of cattle all the way from Rapid City. Among the earliest comers were Messrs. Peterson and Rookes, who are now carrying on a baking and confectionery business. Gordon & McLeod are opened in the meat business; Mr. McLeod of this firm is also one of the pioneers; his wife was the first woman but one to come to the place. Stewart & Kelly's general store was among the earliest opened. They are doing a good trade. Other prominent business men are: Price & McKay, general merchants; Bradshaw, clothing; Dr. Scott, drugs, &c.; Geo. Wham, barber, another pioneer; Campbell boarding house; and Duncan & Bailey, livery stable. In addition to these the town has two lumber yards: a flour and feed store, a Chinese laundry, and another livery stable. Among the most recent additions to the town's business establishments is the boot and shoe and harness store of J. M. Bratty. One of the gentlemen who are aiding most in the advancement of the town is Mr. Carman, a real estate and general agent. He is interesting himself in the natural products of the surrounding country and has contributed considerable of the information now available regarding those natural products. Another of the town's most enterprising citizens is Mr. Kelly the hotel keeper. He has been keeping a lodging house ever since the town was opened and has a fine hotel building in course of erection. When it is completed and in working order Estevan will have as good hotel accommodation as any place in the country. The success or failure of the various enterprises which we have mentioned as forming the business interests of Estevan depends largely on the mining industry. If this is pushed with the rapidity which the demand for coal would warrant and the necessary plant and staff of workmen put in, Estevan will be one of the busiest spots in Western Canada. Other industries will of course spring up to, connected with the manufacture of the natural products in clays and minerals of the district.

NATURAL PRODUCTS OF THE DISTRICT.

The valley on the edge of which Estevan has been built is very wide and deep, and has scattered through it a great many large and small mounds of peculiar shape and appearance. It is supposed that this valley has been formed by the burning out of an immense coal bed in ages past, and that these mounds are deposits which the fire could not consume. They appear to be principally clay and stone. It is in this valley that the much talked of fire brick is found and the mineral paints, and all the other

natural products of the district. The following is a list of such products as have already been discovered: Limestone; white brick clay; red brick clay; mineral paints; petrified wood of 14 different varieties, in large quantities, much of which can be easily manufactured into ornamental clock stands &c.; sandstone of a reddish blue shade; building stone, granite and freestone of such varieties that it is hard to imagine how they ever got there; sulphur; iron, but not in sufficient quantities to justify development; pumice in considerable quantities and of good quality; fire clay in large quantities; cement in fairly good quantities, pronounced by experts to be identically the same as the Portland article.

SURROUNDINGS.

Enquiries made at the time the matter for this sketch was being gathered elicited the information that Estevan district is not so wholly devoid of advantages of an agricultural nature as reports have led us to believe. The soil is a lighter kind of sandy loam than any found in Manitoba, and well watered in some places. It is said to produce wheat of a good quality and yield. There is abundance of good mowing land to the west of the town, the Yellow Grass marsh which commences a few miles out in that direction and extends for a long distance west and north, is famous for the abundance and luxuriance of its hay. The Mounted Police headquarters for south western Assiniboia are at Woodend, about 9 miles southeast of Estevan. There are generally about 30 or 40 constables and officers stationed at that point. The government intend building a new barracks at the town shortly and making it the headquarters.

It will be seen from what has been said that Estevan is really a substantial place, and that with proper development of its resources it will soon climb to a position among the leading towns of western Canada.

The Growth of Cities.

The following figures from the census of 1890 show the growth in population of American cities during the past twenty years:—

	1870.	1880.	1890.	Ratio of increase 20 years.
New York ..	1,514,401	1,970,320	2,146,202	51.6
Chicago ..	1,048,576	1,507,145	2,146,202	267.4
Philadelphia ..	1,014,831	1,417,170	1,740,022	55.9
Brooklyn ..	548,312	666,683	926,027	103.5
St. Louis ..	452,215	550,518	710,564	44.8
Boston ..	446,507	562,323	750,526	73.2
Baltimore ..	431,131	532,313	667,344	62.4
San Francisco ..	297,920	332,222	442,472	62.4
Cincinnati ..	216,590	255,182	318,231	37.0
Cleveland ..	261,546	300,146	392,822	51.7
Buffalo ..	231,457	255,131	317,711	37.4
New Orleans ..	211,971	216,023	291,418	29.4
Pittsburgh ..	233,473	255,132	328,076	42.0
Washington ..	227,746	247,231	301,122	33.4
Detroit ..	200,669	216,310	279,577	39.5
Milwaukee ..	200,272	216,310	279,577	39.5
Newark ..	181,518	216,310	279,577	39.5
Memphis ..	161,735	216,310	279,577	39.5
Jackson City ..	163,287	216,310	279,577	39.5
Louisville ..	161,003	216,310	279,577	39.5
Omaha ..	129,526	216,310	279,577	39.5
Rochester ..	128,927	216,310	279,577	39.5
St. Paul ..	133,156	216,310	279,577	39.5
Kansas City ..	132,416	216,310	279,577	39.5
Providence ..	132,042	216,310	279,577	39.5
Indianapolis ..	107,415	216,310	279,577	39.5
Denver ..	103,670	216,310	279,577	39.5
Allegheny ..	101,967	216,310	279,577	39.5

The ratio of increase of population for ten years to 1890 is 24.86 per cent., but in assessed valuation 43.46 per cent.

It is reported that the Bank of Montreal contemplate opening a branch at Nanaimo.