

its influence on the side of granting the Corbin charter, which is being applied for during the present session of the Dominion parliament. The Board of Trade of Winnipeg, I apprehend, was influenced by considerations similar to those which prevailed among the members of the Victoria Board of Trade. The reasons were legitimate and palpably cogent—they were trade reasons. As one who is deeply interested in trade matters myself, and who has paid close attention to commercial development in British Columbia, I have to question, however, whether such action was a wise and far-seeing one. Winnipeg and Victoria merchants very naturally seek an alternative route into the boundary country, and to them it is a matter of little consequence whether their merchandise goes through Canadian or United States territory, so long as it gets there. There is very little sentiment about trade, even though it is popularly supposed to follow the flag.

There is, however, a point of view which has been overlooked, and which in the long run is in my opinion a more important consideration. It affects commerce very seriously.

Southern British Columbia is essentially a great bed of ores. It has little else comparable in value, except timber, and that is useful mainly for mining purposes, and local demands created by mining. Its future, therefore, wholly depends upon the industry arising out of the minerals there; and as a corollary of this proposition the interest of the mercantile community depends upon the population to which such industry gives employment and maintenance. The two things are closely and indissolubly allied.

The projection, as is now proposed, of numerous lines from the United States into southern British Columbia through the river valleys and easy routes north and south may be regarded as a matter for congratulation but it means that they come for the ores which are to afford them traffic. It is needless to say that smelting and refining are the principal industries arising out of mining, greater than the process of mining itself, and with their facilities for shipping ore south, these five or six railways, which tap or will tap the principal mining camps at the most available points, and the greater part, or at least a very great part, of the, especially silver-lead, ores will be carried away to be smelted, just as the timber of Ontario was carried away to be sawn in mills in Michigan. You have read about the formation of the great smelter trust on the Pacific coast or mining states of the union, with its \$65,000,000 capital, and its object of controlling the ore supply of this continent. Two smelters in British Columbia have practically closed down owing to American competition, and if the Trail smelter was not backed by the resources and brains of the C. P. R. it could not exist either. The conditions necessary to success in smelting are large supplies and large variety of ores. We have heard a great deal about encouraging the smelting of ores in Canada, but it is simply an impossibility under present conditions. The ultimate effect of competition in railways from the other side, therefore, is to lessen the industry, which give rise to population and trade. From that point of view Canadian merchants are simply cutting off their nose to spite their face in endeavoring to assist in the introduction of

American railways and build up great rival cities in the States like Spokane.

But there is another point of view of equal importance. These railways bring British Columbia into close touch with and easy reach of Spokane as a commercial centre, and with the great agricultural producing section of eastern Oregon and Washington Territory. As to the commercial aspect, notwithstanding that it is asserted nearly all the trade of that country is handled by Canadians, and American railways simply divide the traffic, last year one million and a quarter dollars worth of American goods were entered at Rossland, Nelson and Kaslo. The whole of West Kootenay is largely supplied with American agricultural products.

The Northwest and British Columbia, as contiguous territories with diverse products are the natural complement of each other, and it means a very great deal for your vast territory, of which Winnipeg is the metropolis, to have the market of Kootenay and Boundary, two districts of great present progress and immense possibilities. It is to the manifest self-interest of these two great territories to foster and develop each other's resources to the fullest extent, and to, as far as possible, reap the benefits therefrom. For all time to come they must find in each other the greatest and most profitable outlet for their respective wares. It seems to me that merchants, farmers, manufacturers are all equally interested in conserving the trade and industry of British Columbia for Canadians. That is not a sentimental view of it—it is a purely business proposition.

### Hides and Wool.

Minneapolis Market Record: "We have previously told our readers that the hide market was very dull and from all indications they would soon rule lower. March hides are the poorest of the year. The tanners are staying out of the market and as they are declining of their own weight, they are nominally quoted at 1-4c lower, but in reality they are 1-2 to 3-4c, because they can not be sold to realize a profit at present prices. No dealer knows what he can expect to get when the tanners do again enter the market, it is an unsatisfactory market for the dealers. There are rumors that the upper leather tanners are going to combine as did the sole leather in one gigantic trust and the absence of buyers seems to indicate there was something in the rumor. If they do, it would not be unlikely hides would go down a cent or two per pound, scarcity would not make any difference, might make right (with the greedy)."

"Wool market extremely quiet. It has been stated from time to time that the lack of demand was due to the stock brought in previous to the passage of the tariff. No doubt this is a strong factor, but there is another—the wily importer worked that wool schedule so they get in skirted wool from Australia as ordinary unwashed wool in the grease. Now this skirted wool leaving only the choice part, the very cream of the fleece in quality and cleanliness, is really equal to our fleece washed wool. It is thus they nullify the tariff."

## GRAIN AND MILLING

### MIXING WHEAT.

The last issue of "American Elevator and Grain Trade" — a Chicago paper published in the interest of the grain trade—contains a series of articles on a subject which is attracting special interest in Manitoba at the present time. This is the question of mixing grain. The consensus of opinion expressed in the letters is to the effect that mixing and cleaning elevators are a benefit to the farmer. This is no doubt quite true up to a certain point. One writer says: "It enables them to receive much better prices for off grade grain than they would otherwise receive. Another says: 'They (the mixing and cleaning elevators) provide a market for off-grade grain.'" Another says. "It helps the price of low grade grain, from 3 to 10 cents per bushel."

These expressions voice the general opinion expressed in the letters. Some of the writers, however, think that mixing elevators should be under the supervision of a public official. Some letters from millers show that they are entirely opposed to mixing. The paper in which the letters are published, in referring editorially to the question says. "The opinions, as usual, are varied. The millers condemn the practice as unqualifiedly as do the most radical of the Winnipeg shippers, but from the standpoint of the grower and shipper there is little question that the system of mixing is a benefit to them, in so far as it makes a market, at a price, for inferior grain."

The reference to the Winnipeg shippers, in connection with the controversy on mixing, going on in the Chicago paper, is somewhat misleading. The Winnipeg dealers have not resolved against mixing, as it is understood and discussed in the journal referred to. There has been no attempt among the trade here to interfere unduly with cleaning and mixing elevators. The resolutions adopted by the Winnipeg trade refer to the mixing of cargoes in shipping from public elevators, which is quite a different subject from the treatment of off-grade wheat in private elevators. The Winnipeg dealers have asked that the custom of giving a straight government certificate for a cargo of wheat composed of two or more grades, be stopped. They do not ask that even this class of mixing be stopped. They simply ask that when two or more grades of wheat have been spouted from a public elevator into a vessel, the certificate should show the exact quantity of each grade. Heretofore it has been customary at the Fort William elevators to give a straight certificate for mixed cargoes. In other words, a certain amount of