

## Two Weeks on the M. & N. W. Ry.

(Concluded.)

After leaving Shoal Lake, which point was touched on the week before last, we pass two small towns before arriving at Minnedosa. The first of these, Strathclair, has every prospect of being at no very distant day a nice sized town. Already it has three general stores, a hotel, a harness shop, grist and sawmill and an elevator. This is also a good grain market as is evidenced by the number of buyers located there. Newdale, the second, is not as large as Strathclair, it only having a population of about 40, and one store, that of J. L. Cook.

### MINNEDOSA.

This town is at the junction of what is known as the Saskatchewan & Western branch and the main line of the M. & N. W. Through the centre of the town, which is very prettily situated, the Little Saskatchewan river runs, the high banks of its valley making a splendid shelter and background. The town has always been a somewhat scattered one, which gave the visitor an idea that it was very large when in fact it is smaller than it looks. This defect is gradually being remedied however, fine buildings are springing up on the vacant lots and the place is assuming a much more compact appearance. During the past year \$20,000 was expended in new buildings, some of which are very handsome and creditable structures. This will seem a very small sum to a resident of some of the large cities, and indeed it is in comparison to the amount that is annually expended in new buildings in a city, but \$20,000 worth of new buildings each year to a town like Minnedosa adds wonderfully to its appearance. The most important of these new ones is the Masonic Hall, a two storey stone building, the ground floor of which is occupied by J. K. Patton's drug store, and the upper storey by the Masons as a lodge room. The Agricultural hall is another 1890 building which cost considerable money. It is situated a short distance out of the town on the exhibition grounds. The dwelling houses which have been erected during the past year are also of a very substantial character and betoken a determination on the part of the owners to make permanent homes for themselves.

In dealing with the business history of the town for the past year, we will content ourselves with mentioning the most important events. A list of the most prominent men in the different lines of trade would comprise: P. J. McDermott, general store; Gillies & Co., general store; A. H. McIntyre, jewelry; J. K. Patton, drugs and stationery; S. Fairbairn, furniture; R. McLenaghan, general store; J. Cookman, general store; Wright & Co., groceries and crockery; J. F. Boyd, hardware; W. Bagshaw, hardware; Geo. Perry, fruits and confectionery; Taylor Bros., butchers; Sewell & Burgess, butchers; G. A. Hogarth, general store; R. Murdock, hotel; John McLennan, hotel; and C. R. B. Scobell, hotel. This latter, the Brunswick house, is an exceptionally well furnished and managed hotel. It has been in the hands of Mr. Scobell for over two years.

The business of C. R. Ranson is also worthy of being classed among the foremost in the town. Besides being agent for an implement manufacturing firm, Mr. Ranson does an extensive carriage building and blacksmith business.

A branch of the Commercial Bank of Mani-

toba was opened here last February and C. F. Grant appointed manager. The volume of business done since that time has far exceeded expectations and the present offices are not nearly large enough to accommodate it. A site has therefore been secured and plans are already out for a new building which will be commenced as soon as the weather will permit. It is the intention to make this a handsome and substantial building.

The flour mill of F. & E. Pearson is the only one located here at present. This mill has been fully described in these columns before, so it will be sufficient to say that it has a capacity of 75 barrels per day and is fitted up with all modern improvements. It has only been in the hands of the present owners about a year, previous to that it was the property of James Jermy.

Judging from the reports of all classes of business men (the year 1890) was a very satisfactory one for Minnedosa. The depression which has existed in the business community ever since the great "boom" has well nigh disappeared and a healthy and energetic feeling prevails in every line of trade.

The wheat around Minnedosa turned out a very good crop last year. The average yield to the acre was not far from 30 bushels. The quality varied greatly according to the locality from which it came.

Enough has been said to give the reader an idea what kind of a place Minnedosa is and we will now run down the Saskatchewan & Western branch to

### RAPID CITY.

This town is situated fifteen miles from Minnedosa in a southwesterly direction. It is at present the terminus of the above mentioned branch line and is like Minnedosa in the valley of the Little Saskatchewan river. In all there are about 40 stores and places of business in the town; the majority of these are old established houses and have been described in previous articles in THE COMMERCIAL, so we will content ourselves with mentioning some of the new ones. The general store of Leflar & Macdonald was opened in December 1890, since that time a large trade has been worked up and the proprietors are very well satisfied with their prospects.

Stone & Co. are also general store keepers, they bought out the stock of H. C. Ross a few months ago and have been carrying on the business since that time. W. M. Vaughan, who was for three years in the butcher business, opened out a stock of groceries and provisions in September last. He will deal exclusively in these lines in the future. The Windson hotel is now under a different management to what it was when last we wrote up the town. J. T. Cable is now controlling it, he having rented it from the former proprietor Basler. J. C. Gibbard opened out in the boot and shoe line in October last, he has already worked up a good trade. It is now over a year and a half since D. A. Hopper opened his private bank, and the amount of business done during that time has induced him to go more extensively into it. He is now preparing plans for a bank building to be erected in the spring. When this is completed it will enable him to handle a great deal larger amount of business than he could in the old office.

The flour and woolen mill of Geo. McCulloch & Co. is the most important industry of the

town. A lengthy description of these mills was published in these columns some 18 months ago. Since that time however, the manufacture of blankets and sheeting has been added to the products of the woolen mill. This is one of the few mills in Manitoba which can be run by water. The power is obtained from the Saskatchewan river which at this point is a wide and powerful stream. The mill also has an excellent boiler and engine, which makes it independent of the water, entirely. The lumber business of T. Houlding although it does not come under the heading of new ventures to which we intended to confine ourselves is still deserving of mention, and will serve to illustrate the progress made by the town during the past year. Over 1,000,000 feet of lumber was disposed of by him in that time. He supplied the lumber for between 20 to 25 new buildings right in the town besides what was sold to the farmers. Two weekly newspapers, the Reporter and the Indicator are published here, these papers have both been in existence for some years, one of them under a different name.

Rapid City is the centre of an extensive area of good wheat land and has a widely extended trade. Its central situation; its proximity to the main line of the C. P. R.; and the fact that the Northwest Central railway runs within a mile of the town are all points in its favor which will not be overlooked by intending settlers. After returning to Minnedosa and changing cars there we run east again for about nine miles and come to

### FRANKLIN

or Bridge Creek. This place was, until about the middle of December, called by the latter name, but it was then raised to the dignity of a post office and given a new name. The only store at this point is that of A. Anderson's. He conducts his business in a new stone building, which was erected in the summer of 1890. E. J. Sinett carries on a lumber and grain trade. He has a grain warehouse, with a capacity of 7,000 bushels.

### NEEPAWA.

The run from Franklin to Neepawa is a short one, and it would, if the road was on a bee-line, be very much shorter, but in order to overcome some obstacle which the surface of the land presented, the line is laid very much in the shape of the letter S. The run, however, is soon made and we now come to what at first sight appears to be a small and uninteresting village, mainly composed of elevators and grain warehouses. But this impression is quickly dispelled by a sight of the body of the town which lies about half a mile to the south of the railway station. Neepawa is rather curiously laid out, the lines of business which do the most shipping being located near the railway, and the mercantile and residential portion, as was said before, nearly a half a mile from it. This cannot be said to be an advantage as it is not only very inconvenient for those residing in the town, but also for travelling men who have business to transact with the merchants. Such a division as this, also, almost invariably brings sectional jealousy, and Neepawa has found no exception to the rule, but this, we believe, will gradually die out as the inhabitants begin to see the folly of it.

A road was opened last year by the provincial Government from Neepawa to Lake Dauphin, about forty miles north. This will tend to increase the trade of the town, as the Lake