

The Commercial

WINNIPEG, OCTOBER 13, 1885.

FROM THE RED TO THE BOW RIVER.

Having traversed by three routes from the Red River to the western boundary of Manitoba, we enter upon the territory of Assiniboia, and have only gone a few miles on the C.P.R. main line beyond the provincial limit, when we reach the thriving town of Moosomin. Here we have no evidences of boom, but we can see how the natural growth of a town in the middle of a rich and rapidly settling up country has gone onward. Three years ago a few shed-like buildings marked the site of this town, but now it has a population of close upon 500, and has some forty places of business. It has good solid merchants, who carry large stocks of goods, and is altogether a busy point. As yet it has no permanent industries, but a flour mill of over 100 barrels a day capacity, is about to be constructed, and other manufacturing concerns must soon follow, if the town keeps pace with the growth of the surrounding country.

Whitewood is the next point of any importance on the line of the C.P.R., and here we have a flourishing village with some dozen or so business places, growing in keeping with the settlement of the surrounding country, and steadily making its way to a country town of importance. Twenty-three miles further west Broadview is reached, and here a lively town of some 300 people has grown up. It has a good country around it, and but for the proximity of a large Indian reservation, would have a much more rapid growth than it has. Its being the end of a division of the C.P.R. causes the location of quite a few mechanics, and makes it quite a lively place at all times.

Going westward we pass through the village of Grenfell, and the much more important one of Wolseley, still travelling through a rich prairie country, where settlement is steadily progressing, until Indian Head is reached. Here are the headquarters of the well known Bell Farm, with its thousands of acres under cultivation, and its elevator and flour mill of 100 barrel capacity near the railway station. The town itself contains about a dozen other business institutions, all of which are now prospering. Eleven miles further west and we reach Qu'Appelle

Station or Troy. Here we have a live town of over 300 people, and some twenty-five business institutions, including a roller flour mill of about 120 barrels a day capacity, newly constructed. This town is the point where traders leave the railway for the far north settlement of Prince Albert, and this adds very materially to its trade importance. Some of the merchants carry stocks of goods which would be considered large in a town of 3,000 population, but the kind of business done with northern traders necessitates the carrying of heavy stocks. The town is beautifully located, and for hotel accommodation and other travelling comforts is far ahead of any other town of its size in the Northwest, while it has as one of its business concerns a private bank.

Leaving the C.P.R. track at Qu'Appelle Station, a drive of less than twenty miles to the north brings us to Fort Qu'Appelle, the old Government headquarters of this territory. The first view of this beautifully located town makes the traveller thankful that he is beyond hearing the screech of the locomotive. It is nestled in the bottom of a lovely valley, with high frowning bluffs on either side, and a chain of silvery lakes linked by a river lying between them. But as a trading point Fort Qu'Appelle has its attractions, and the twenty odd business institutions there all do a profitable business. The country around is as rich as it is picturesque, and but for the fact that too much of it is now in the hands of land grabbing corporations, its settlement would be more rapid than any district west of Manitoba. The time is doubtless short until a railway will traverse this beautiful valley, although it seems almost sacrilege that it should be disturbed by the whistle of the steam horse.

Between Qu'Appelle Station and Regina, a distance of thirty-three miles, there are no points of any trade importance, and as we near the latter place the belt of settlement narrows down to a comparatively narrow stripe along each side of the C.P.R., the only exceptions being the lands of colonization companies, where settlers are in some instances over 100 miles from a railway station. At Regina we are in the commercial centre as well as the Government seat of Assiniboia, and the town seems like a relief spot in the centre of an ocean of monotony. The unchanging, flat, treeless prairie is

again reached, and although the soil of the country is a mine of agricultural wealth for its future tillers, the country has but few attractions to the eye of the visitor. Regina itself is undoubtedly an important trade point, the most so west of Brandon. It has a population very little short of 1,000, and contains some seventy places of business of every description. Some of its mercantile establishments are of considerable magnitude, and it has as enterprising a lot of business men as can be found anywhere in the Northwest. We cannot say that no evidences of boom are to be seen in and around the town. On the contrary its trade has been greatly checked by the combined avarice and stupidity of a collection of speculative political barnacles, and the wonder is that to-day it is of so much commercial importance. But the trading power of the town is beginning to make itself felt, and a new era in affairs is setting in, which must soon be followed by rapid trade progress. As the country around settles up, Regina must advance in trade, until it becomes an important jobbing point, and already some of its merchants do quite a respectable volume of wholesale business. It has as yet no industrial institution of any consequence, but besides its mercantile houses it has a chartered bank branch and a private bank, both of which do quite a profitable business. Should it come our duty to treat of the trade progress of the territorial capital three years hence, we have no doubt but our sketch would supply a marked contrast to what we have here given.

We shall rest at the capital this issue, and in our next proceed westward with our sketches.

MANITOBA RAILWAY RIGHTS.

What a patronizing journal the *Monetary Times* is, when it condescends to notice Manitoba affairs; and how sweetly precious are its little lectures upon the naughtiness of the Prairie Province, all of which are doubtless delivered with a single desire for our edification in what is right and just. Its issue of Oct. 2nd gives one of these delightful little pieces of commendation and rebuke, in the form of an editorial notice of the petition presented by the Winnipeg Board of Trade to the Minister of the Interior on the subject of Manitoba railway restriction by the Dominion Government. To avoid