

WE must again call attention to the state of the local butter market, and re-echo a warning we have already given this season. Already tons of butter have gone into store in this city, and tons of it are being peddled around to wholesale dealers, and offered at figures these dealers cannot touch by four to five cents a pound. Some holders refuse to sell at the figures offered for prime eastern townships butter in the city of Montreal, and have lulled themselves into the hallucination that by holding on they will get their price. Now the receipts of butter during most of the winter will be as they are now nearly double what the local demand calls for, and as eastern markets now point, export prospects are anything but bright. The *Trade Bulletin* of Montreal closes its November quotations as follows:—Creamery 20 to 23c; Townships 17 to 21c; Western 15 to 18c, which shows a decline of about one cent during November. Now the best butter we can export will not grade above prime western, worth 18c there or say 16c here. To get 20 or 21c here and the cost of storage it is easy to figure up the necessary advance, and the man must be of a hopeful turn of mind who expects to secure it. It is high time our butter makers were being convinced of the fact that this is an export market now, and we must get down to export prices. So long as they fail to realize this fact they must expect a glut each spring as we have had for three successive years. We know of butter for which 17c was offered last winter, but which was held with the intention of getting 25c in spring, and the same butter sold last summer for 13c and under. Such expensive lessons may be avoided by selling during winter, while butter can be exported and delivered anywhere in good condition, and by no other course can they be avoided.

THE Red River Valley railway seems to be passing through trials and troubles unheard of. Mr. E. P. Leacock, M. P. P. for Russell, a former staunch supporter of the Local Government, has forwarded a petition to the Lieutenant Governor, asking that the Local Legislature be at once called together to deliberate upon the matter, and uses strong and convincing arguments to show, that in not calling the House together on this question the Government have broken faith with the Legislature and the people. He bases his argument upon the following resolution, supported by the Government and passed at last session:—

"That whereas the Legislature has unanimously passed a Bill providing for the construction of the Red River Valley Railway; and whereas it is most desirable that the said Railway should be completed with as little delay as possible; and

"Whereas it has been suggested that there may be obstacles thrown in the way of the construction of the said Railway; and

"Whereas it is advisable to provide in every way possible against any such contingency;

"Therefore be it resolved, should obstacles arise that would interfere with the construction of the Red River Valley Railway to the International boundary, this House is of opinion that the advisers of His Honor the Lieu-

tenant-Governor should recommend the calling of the House for despatch of business forthwith to take such action as will give effect to the will of the people of this Province in regard to the completion of the said railway at as early a date as possible, and that members of this House do pledge themselves to attend at such meeting and waive their right to claim indemnity as provided by law for such session."

Outside of the blind followers of the Government, the petition of the member for Russell, speaks the sentiments of the Manitoba taxpayers. If the Government have acted in the interests of the people, they will receive support and encouragement from the Legislature, which unanimously supported them in the Red River Valley railway undertaking, and only fears of crookedness on their part being exposed, can prevent them from honestly meeting the House.

THERE is considerable dissatisfaction in this province about the present year's grain standards and the Grain Inspection provisions of the Dominion Inspection Act and its amendments. The *Manitou Mercury* echoes the complaint and without comment quotes from the Canadian and Minnesota laws regarding No. 1 hard. The quotations are as follows:—

CANADIAN.

"No. 1 Manitoba hard wheat shall be sound and well cleaned, weighing not less than sixty pounds to the bushel, and shall be composed of 85 per cent. of red Fyfe wheat grown in Manitoba or the Northwest Territories."

MINNESOTA.

"No. 1 hard spring wheat shall be sound, well cleaned, and weigh not less than 58 pounds to the measured bushel, composed mostly of Scotch Fyfe wheat."

One explanation is necessary in connection with these quotations, namely, that the Canadian is based upon Imperial measurement. The Imperial bushel is about two pounds more than the Winchester, so there is no discrepancy in weight between the two inspections. This fact, however, has no practical bearing upon the grading of the present season, as there is no trouble here in getting wheat heavy enough for any grade. The trouble lies mainly in the variety or admixture of other than red Fyfe wheat. In Minnesota the standards have been gradually lowered during the last three years, until No. 1 hard there calls for exactly the same proportion of red Fyfe, which No. 1 Northern calls for here, and with Minnesota and Canadian grades quoted the same, the Manitoba farmers and grain dealers undoubtedly suffer loss. The question arises will Manitoba No. 1 hard bring a better figure than Minnesota No. 1 hard? and with the paternal monopoly of the C. P. R. in force, and preventing the shipment of our wheat by any route but the Port Arthur one, it is difficult to answer this question, and the C. P. R. management will take good care, that a fair test to decide the matter cannot be made. That the monopoly places Manitoba wheat at the mercy of Montreal manipulators is evident from the fact, that during a considerable portion of the past month our No. 1 hard and good Canada spring, were quoted at the same figures in that market, although in any other market in the world our No. 1 hard is at least five cents a bushel more in value. Grain

dealers in this city have seen and felt this grade difficulty for some time, and the grain committee of the Board of Trade have taken the matter up with a view of getting some changes made in the Inspection Act, that will give us equal advantages with our neighbors to the south. Whether they will succeed or not remains to be seen. If we had in this province the power of fixing our own grades and standards the same as is possessed by each of the states south of us, the matter could soon be put right. But the Inspection Act is a Dominion one in Canada, and all the grain interests of the east have to be fought or conciliated before any advantage for Manitoba can be secured. If we had no railway monopoly to prevent shipping of grain by the south, our dealers would soon commence making all shipments by Duluth, and working upon the grades in forced there. By thus ignoring Canadian inspection, they could soon force eastern men to buy upon grades arranged here, and the grain growing and handling interests of the province at large would be thoroughly protected from eastern manipulation. But then that is what monopolists do not want to see, for their whole and sole aim is to make every interest in the Northwest thoroughly subservient to those of the east. Let us hope that the grain committee of the Winnipeg Board will push this matter in such a manner, as to secure something like justice for the grain interests of this province. That they will have up hill work may be expected, for it was only by the persistent efforts of Mr. John Ogilvie and one or two others interested in the Northwest, that special grades for our hard wheat were adopted by the Department of Inland Revenue in amending the Inspection Act, three years ago. The combined grain power of Toronto had come to the conclusion, that our hard wheat and their soft varieties should be placed on the same level in grading. This will give an idea of how difficult it is to secure consideration of purely Northwestern interests in Dominion trade legislation.

The Reason of It.

Edward Atkinson never opens his mouth without saying something which commands general attention. His latest reported utterance is mentioned by our London correspondent, and illustrates in the clearest manner the causes for the continued and heavy growth of our breadstuffs trade, as well as showing why our farmers can continue to compete with the wheat growers of any country on the globe. When we first began to work for our share of this trade the country was newer and freight rates were very high. Mr. Atkinson shows that since 1870 there has been a reduction in the cost of transporting our wheat from the farm to the foreign markets of thirty-nine cents per bushel. At the old freight rates we would not to-day be exporting a single pound of wheat. At the present rates we are enabled to more than hold our own, and this being the case, the superior quality of our products has gained the favor of foreign consumers so that we are certain to have for all time a market for our surplus, and at prices which will average a fair remuneration for our wheat growers and our millers. It has been said by Mr. Atkinson