

The Commercial

WINNIPEG, OCT. 10 1892.

IN EMBARKING on an undertaking of importance it is always encouraging to carry with you the good wishes of friends and onlookers, and feel that few, if any, wish you evil in your path. We have had a forcible realization of this feeling during the past week in connection with the reception given to the first issue of *THE COMMERCIAL*. The journals of this and other Provinces, and from the American side also, have extended to us the most hearty congratulations, and wished us all the success we can desire. The journals who have thus welcomed *THE COMMERCIAL* are too numerous for us to mention individually in our columns, but we feel bound to specialize our local contemporaries the *Times* and *Sun*. To all we return our warmest thanks, and at the same time assure them that our every effort will be concentrated for the promotion of feelings of unity in the Press of Canada in general, and Manitoba and the North-West in particular.

CASH PAYMENT VERSUS TRUCK.

THE word truck we must set down as an importation from Britain; and those who remember the labors of a Royal Commission some twenty years ago, can comprehend what the word implied so far as the payment of labor by employers went. That same Commission brought to light a grinding system by which operatives were to a certain extent compelled to accept goods at exorbitant prices instead of ready cash in return for their labor. Those who do not remember the labors of the Commission will find some wonderfully-vivid pictures of the system in its most repulsive forms in the late Lord Beaconsfield's novel of "Sybil, or the Two Nations." Truck of this kind has to some extent taken root on the American Continent, and on several occasions it has been exposed in its worst forms in the mining districts of Pennsylvania. As yet, however, it finds no place in the North-West, where the relation of the employer and the employed are of the most independent description. In many newly-settled portions of the West, both in Canada and the United States, a system of more truck creeps into ordinary business transactions which it takes many years to eradicate, even after it has been recognized as an evil.

This system is simply the exchange of produce for merchandise, which frequently leavens every other branch of trade, until often the artisan finds it difficult to get cash payment for his labor. The mildest form of this system is to be seen in the local advertisement of the country merchant, who offers goods in exchange for farm produce; while a case of the worst type is to be found in the Kansas editor who published in his editorial columns his willingness to take payment of subscription in side pork, pickled cucumbers, or early rose potatoes, but at the same time signified his determination not to accept slough hay, wet cord wood, or religious tracts in lieu of legal tender.

It is astonishing how rapidly an evil like this will grow in a new country, and it is satisfactory to notice that the system has no footing in Manitoba. Money for merchandise or labor is the invariable rule in this country, and it is to be hoped that it will long continue so. There is, perhaps, no portion of the American Continent where the possession of money more or less by every person is so marked. The most prosperous of new countries usually have their successful and wealthy men, but at the same time their unfortunates, and to use the slang phrase "Dead broke brigade." In Manitoba, however, matters are very different, and impecuniosity is a thing almost unknown in the Province. The steady stream of capital from other countries which is flowing in and finding safe and remunerative investment has, no doubt, something to do with this state of affairs. Be that as it may, the facts above stated have tended much to produce the solid system of trading upon a basis of cash payment instead of truck.

COMMERCIAL HOTELS.

THE crowded state of hotels in Winnipeg last winter will be long remembered by those who were compelled to make their abode in such houses, and we doubt if any lot of business men profited more as a class by the boom of that season than the hotel proprietors. A great increase to the accommodation in that line has been made, and the travelling public will now find in the city hotel comforts such as are not surpassed in any new city of the West or North-West. Still there is great room for improvement in these traveller's homes, and in no particular is it more necessary than in the accommodation pro-

vided for Commercial Travellers. We cannot expect Boniface to introduce the old English system of the Commercial Room with all its conventional exclusiveness; nor, indeed, could such an introduction be any great advantage in a city like this. There are many other points, however, in which a little catering for the special convenience of these heralds of commerce would be for the profit of all concerned. For instance, there is not a hotel in Winnipeg with sufficient sample room accommodation for half-a-dozen men who carry a large and varied line of samples, and in several houses of considerable pretensions no such room is to be found. A great many travelling men are thus compelled to secure a room away from their hotel, and without taking into consideration the inconvenience this causes such rooms provide very little safety for men who carry valuable goods in their cases. This is but one particular in which our hotels are deficient, and we could mention numerous others.

The great rush of settlers, speculators and prospectors will not always make a stopping point of Winnipeg, or at best many of these classes will soon have reason to make their stay but short. Other cities with extensive hotel accommodation are springing up West of this, where such can make a temporary home nearer their field of operations. The days are gone when the principal attraction of a leading Winnipeg hotel was a real estate auctioneer bellowing the merits of town lots in its billiard room or office, and landlords will yet find that the itinerant mercantile men are about as good a class of patrons as they can court the favor of. A little more attention, therefore, to the wants of this class would well repay those hotel men who will bestow it, and it would certainly prove of value to the mercantile classes of the city itself.

THREATENED RAILWAY WAR.

Persons who have studied the railway interests of the North-Western States, must have come to the conclusion that outside of the St. Paul, Minneapolis and Manitoba, and Northern Pacific Railway Companies, only two interests exist West of the Mississippi River. One of these is the combination of the Chicago, Milwaukee and St. Paul, and Chicago and North-Western Railways and the other is a fusion of the Chicago, Burlington & Quincy & Chicago, Rock Island & Pacific lines. Numerous local