

are now mostly coming into comfortable circumstances.

BETTER MAIL ACCOMMODATION WANTED.

In a new and sparsely settled country like Manitoba, it would be strange if there were not complaints of insufficient mail accommodation. In some parts of the province post offices are far apart and distant many miles from railway communication. In some of the more distant sections, a mail once a week, or even once a fortnight, may be considered as a luxury, and is all that could be expected from the Government. Taken altogether, the Dominion postal authorities have shown an anxiety to extend mail facilities to our settlers, to the fullest extent that circumstances would warrant, and as a general rule there has not been much ground for complaint. There are some exceptions, however, in which it is apparent the postal authorities have not done their duty in providing the people with proper mail accommodation. Perhaps the most notable instance of such neglect is in connection with the mail service on the Southwestern branch of the C. P. R. This important section of Manitoba, has, to say the least, been shamefully neglected in the matter of mail accommodation.

At settlements distant from railways, and to reach which requires long journeys by wheeled vehicle, it could not be expected that mails should be furnished at frequent intervals. As regards the Southwestern railway country, however, the case is quite different. The thriving towns in this district are connected with Winnipeg by train service, and all the facilities for better mail accommodation are in existence. Here is a railway, running in a southwesterly direction from the capital of the province, for a distance of 105 miles, and having on its line a number of busy little towns, surrounded by a well settled agricultural country, yet the mail facilities are such that it takes a week to get an answer to a letter forwarded from Winnipeg.

At present the passenger train service on the Southwestern railway consists of three trains per week each way. Trains leave Winnipeg on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, at 12:30 o'clock, for the end of the track, returning on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays. No mail, however, is carried by the train leaving Winnipeg on Wednesday, and re-

turning on Thursday. The Southwestern railway country is therefore supplied with but two mails per week from Winnipeg, by Mondays' and Fridays' trains. Now let us see how this works. A letter posted in Winnipeg after 12 o'clock noon on Friday for say Glenboro, will leave the city on the following Monday, arriving at its destination at 9 o'clock Monday night, if the train is on time. If the local postmaster feel disposed to assort the mail the same night, the Glenboro merchant may obtain his letters by ten o'clock Monday night; but the postmaster is not obliged to deliver mail so late at night. Providing the merchant gets his mail the same evening it arrives, he will have to answer his correspondence after ten o'clock the same night, and place it on the train early the next morning, as the train leaves for Winnipeg about 7 o'clock Tuesday morning. If he does not get his mail on Monday evening, or is unable to do his correspondence that evening after he gets his mail, he will be obliged to wait until the following Saturday morning before he can send a letter to Winnipeg. Merchants having a large correspondence, and receiving only two mails per week, would be obliged to sit up all hours of the night to answer letters, if they wished to do so by return mail. Otherwise they would be obliged to wait five days before another opportunity arrived of forwarding a letter. If the local postmasters declined to deliver the mails the same night they arrive, there would be nothing for it but to wait for the next mail train. In an instance where a merchant wished to send a registered letter in answer to a letter received from Winnipeg, it would be impossible to send the answer within five days. Thus a letter mailed in Winnipeg after 12 o'clock on Friday, could not be answered until the Saturday evening of the following week, thus consuming nine days to obtain an answer to a letter, from a town only 100 miles distant from Winnipeg, and connected with the city by rail. As the merchants along the Southwestern do their business mostly in Winnipeg, the great inconvenience arising from the mail arrangements will be seen. It seems almost scandalous that a large and important section of the province, comprising several flourishing towns, should be treated in this way. With three regular passenger trains running each way weekly, the very least the Department could do is to provide for a

mail on every train. The people on the Southwestern are petitioning the postal authorities for better mail accommodation, and it is to be hoped their request will meet with just consideration.

WHEAT-GROWING IN CANADA.

Canada as a wheat-growing country has been attracting a good deal of attention both in Great Britain and the United States, of late, among those interested in the breadstuffs question especially. The discussion upon the merits of Canada as a wheat-growing country, has been provoked by a pamphlet prepared by W. G. Bear, London, England, published under the auspices of the Cobden Club. Mr. Bear in his pamphlet, entitled "The British Farmer and his competitors," proceeds to show that British agriculturists have nothing to fear from Canada as a competitor in supplying the British consumer with breadstuffs. Mr. Bear claims as proof of his statements, that wheat exports from this country have declined of late years; that imports are increasing in proportion to exports, and that production is gradually falling behind the increasing consumption; that in the two important wheat-growing provinces, production has decreased steadily since 1884. Many other assertions are made in the pamphlet, some of which are quite ridiculous, such for instance as the assertion that the climate of Manitoba is too arctic for wheat. In some respects Mr. Bear's statements are apparently true, but his utterances as a whole appear to be animated by a prejudice against this country, which leads him into several blunders. Canada as a whole has certainly not made much progress as a wheat exporting country, but it is very absurd of Mr. Bear to represent that wheat production in Manitoba is on the decline. In the old provinces it is true the production of wheat has not kept pace with the growth of consumption from increasing population, but only in two years (1884 and 1885) were imports in excess of exports, and that to a very trifling amount, whilst exports in excess of imports have ranged from 3,657,000 bushels in 1881, to 7,351,000 bushels in 1887. To show the increase in wheat production in Manitoba it is only necessary to state that the surplus from last year's crop in this Province was greater than the entire exports of the Dominion in any previous year.