

The Commercial

WINNIPEG, OCTOBER 19, 1886.

THE PROPOSED STOCK YARDS.

The interview held last Monday between Mr. Olds, General Traffic Manager of the C.P.R., and the deputations from the Board of Trade and City Council, has resulted in the accomplishment of but very little toward making any practical headway with the scheme of establishing stock yards at Winnipeg. Although promising every assistance on the part of the railway company in the line of freight rates, Mr. Olds made it clear that he was not in favor of any very extensive operations in handling and slaughtering cattle being attempted in Winnipeg. Indeed, his advice was: "Let others handle it for you; let Montreal men take it in hand." The objections urged against attempting slaughtering here were mainly the precariousness of the business in finding profitable markets, etc., and the disposition of the offal. In this latter connection Mr. Olds referred to what had been done at Chicago, Kansas City and other points in the Western States, but he thought it would not do to attempt the same here, owing to the limited home market for the disposal of that part of the animal which could not be made use of for export. Nevertheless, Mr. Olds promised that the railway company would co-operate and render all the assistance possible, should an attempt be made to slaughter here. In this connection he remarked:

"I will say that we will in the matter of rates aid you materially. The rate on beef from Kansas City to New York is 79 cents per 100 pounds, the distance being 1,333 miles. We will be glad to carry your beef from Winnipeg to Montreal, a distance of 1,430 miles, for the same money."

In shipping live stock, dealers here were promised every assistance by the company in low freights, etc. They would also be allowed to stop the cars here and take out animals which were not fit for export, replacing them by other animals, without additional charge over the through rate of freight from the point of shipment.

Although the views presented by Mr. Olds in regard to slaughtering here were decidedly discouraging, yet this should not by any means settle the question with our business men. Mr. Olds may and undoubtedly does possess a considerable knowledge of the subject under dis-

cussion, but his remarks could at best be taken only as opinions, and of course opinions differ. Then his frequent reference to Montreal as the point where this industry should centre, may account for his apparent disparagement of attempting anything in the same line here. The statement that "a surplus of 5,000 cattle would hardly justify any body of capitalists in investing money in beef slaughtering" was an argument of little or no weight at all. Although there may not be even 5,000 head of surplus cattle for export this year, yet there is every prospect that by the end of another season, the number of cattle available for export will be greater than could be handled here by a single slaughtering establishment, of such capacity as would be wise to establish at the outset. The intimation that cattle might not be obtained here at such prices as would enable packers to prepare them for eastern markets, is also of little moment. If the cattle could be obtained at such prices as would warrant their shipment as live stock, which is the more expensive way of exporting, they could also be obtained for slaughtering at home. In either case the cattle must be purchased on an export basis, and as slaughtering on the spot is the more economical way, therefore it follows that there need be no difficulty apprehended in this respect. If we have a surplus of cattle, that surplus must be disposed of by exporting, and prices will therefore rule at an export basis. The same line of reasoning may be followed in regard to the probability or improbability of finding a market. If the cattle could be shipped to Montreal, slaughtered there, and a market found for the product, what is the hindrance in the way of finding a market for the product more economically prepared here and shipped east. Another strong argument in favor of slaughtering here, and one which might be enlarged on to a considerable extent, is found in the terrible ravages made by that dreaded cattle disease, pleuro-pneumonia. This disease has been spreading to nearly all the leading cattle markets with increased virulence of late, whilst Winnipeg gives greater promise of freedom from it than any of the eastern and southern markets, owing to the well-known healthfulness of Northwestern cattle, and the exemption which this market must always enjoy from the transfer through it of cattle from southern portions of the continent.

Whilst, therefore, Mr. Olds' remarks as to using caution, etc., should be given due consideration, coming as they do from one who must possess a vast amount of information on the subject at issue, yet business men here should not be discouraged from following up the question. It would not be either necessary or wise to commence operations on a scale of magnitude equal to the large establishments of Chicago and other large slaughtering centres; but on the other hand good reason has not yet been shown, why a slaughtering and curing establishment, in keeping with the present ability of the city, to consume that portion of the animals not of use for export, could not be made a success here. A start could be made on a small scale and the industry extended as circumstances would permit.

In connection with the question of dressing, canning or curing meats for export, at Winnipeg, one thing should always be borne in mind, namely; that whatever advantages we may now enjoy, or whatever disadvantages we may have to contend with, this industry can never reach its full proportion here until the opening of the Hudson's Bay route. But with that route once in operation, it would be almost unnecessary to use argument to show that this city possesses advantages over any other place on the continent, for the establishment of this industry. In view, then, of the great possibilities of the near future, it would hardly seem too early (as Mr. Olds would have us believe) to make a commencement on a small scale, that we may be in a position to grapple more extensively with the cattle trade, when the time comes that we must do so.

DISCRIMINATING RATES.

The visit of Mr. Olds to Winnipeg was made use of to enter upon a further discussion of the question of discriminating freight rates, and also freight rates from Winnipeg to the Pacific coast. After the cattle question had been discussed, the committee took up the matter of rates to the Pacific coast points in British Columbia. Mr. Olds contended that the special rate of 55c. per 100 pounds on flour was enough to give Manitoba manufacturers control of the British Columbia markets. Oatmeal would be given the same rate as flour. Rates on dairy products, he said, were already too low, and could not be changed. He explained that the difficulty existing in connection