

THE activity displayed in buying up property offered at tax sales of late may be taken as a good indication of improving confidence in the future of the country. A number of tax sales have been held lately in some of the rural municipalities, and all have proved remarkable successful. The bidding has been spirited, and good prices were usually realized.

THE *Canadian Manufacturer* will shortly publish a special edition for distribution in Australia. No doubt the issue will be largely patronized by manufacturers in Canada, who may look toward Australia for an extension of their trade. The move is a wise one in the interest of commercial intercourse between this country and the Australasia, and should receive liberal support and encouragement.

• THOUGH coming late in the day, the grant made by the Provincial Government in aid of the sufferers from the prairie fires of last fall will be generally commended. The grant is of necessity small, and when portioned out among the different municipalities will not give much to each individual in proportion to the loss sustained. Still the spirit in which it is given will be appreciated, and where the fires have created the keenest distress, the small measure of relief will be the most welcome. If nothing more than sufficient to purchase seed grain, the grant will prove a great measure of assistance to many.

NOTWITHSTANDING that the past winter has been the most severe in the west for very many years, the stock on the western ranges appears to have come through much better than was at one time supposed. Undoubtedly in some instances individual losses have been heavy, and these heavy losses will fall mainly on new beginners in the ranching industry, who had started with imported cattle. In other instances losses have not been at all excessive, and some old ranchers report that they have not suffered more severely than usual. In cases where the cattle were thoroughly acclimatized the loss was minimized. It is not probable that the result of the winter will have any bad effect upon the ranching industry. Already this spring a considerable number of animals have been brought into the country, and the industry promises great extension during the coming summer.

WHILST Mr. Van Horne is so solicitous about the future of Winnipeg should disallowance cease, the members of the Winnipeg city council seem to have no fear as to the result in the event of such a consummation. The following resolution, passed at a late meeting of the council, speaks for itself. "Therefore the corporation of the city of Winnipeg most urgently request that His Excellency, the Governor-General-in-Council, may be pleased to leave to their operation such acts as have been or may be passed by the Provincial Legislature of Manitoba, for the incorporation of a company or companies for the construction of a railway or railways to the international boundary line; between the 96th and 99th meridian of west longitude." The idea that the trade of Winni-

peg would be cut off through the construction of railways from the boundary to points west of this city, is evidently confined to Mr. Van Horne and a very few of his interested admirers.

THE people of Manitoba seem to be awakening to the fact that immigrants require a great deal of attention and assistance after their arrival here, and that it is just as necessary that they should receive this attention to keep them here as it is to endeavor to get them to come here in the first place. In a number of places throughout the province committees have been appointed, with the object of rendering any assistance possible to incoming settlers. This will undoubtedly have a splendid effect in creating a favorable impression among new arrivals, and it must be remembered that first impressions are very often lasting. Immigrants who are well received and made at home in the country, will be far more likely to settle down contentedly and induce their friends to follow them, than would be the case were they entirely neglected by the old residents of the districts in which they have located. In times past many settlers have looked more to making money out of immigrants than to assisting them. They have been charged exorbitant prices for conveyance to look at lands, and for any things which they required which the settler had to sell. Happily the tendency is now in the other direction, and incoming settlers may in the future expect better treatment from the people of Manitoba.

THE *Montreal Herald* forcibly points out that the Government should at once make known their policy for the future in regard to disallowance. The *Herald* says: "The question is, do they, or do they not, intend to adhere to that policy? and, as many commercial interests depend on the answer, the public has the right to know. The eastern parts of Canada hold that they have an interest in this matter, and under any circumstances desire to know how the matter is to be decided. Manitoba and the Northwest hold that their interests are paramount and they also wish doubt removed. The business men of both sections require to know, to shape their affairs accordingly. What is wanted—and it is wanted at once—is an explicit declaration of what the Government intend to do about it." The *Herald* states the situation clearly and to the point. The suspense as to what course the Government intends following in regard to disallowance, is working great harm here. It is simply paralyzing the country, and until the people are fully assured that disallowance has ceased, there will be little progress made in any undertakings. The people are becoming impatient and irritable, and as the time wears along the distrust deepens. If the Northwest is to make any progress this season, no time should be lost in declaring that disallowance has ceased.

THE recent increase in the freight rates on the C.P.R. on lumber shipped from British Columbia to Northwestern points, will have a serious effect upon the western portions of the Territories. The *Calgary Tribune* says that

"the rates on rough lumber and cedar posts shipped from points west of Donald to Calgary, have been more than doubled. From Beaver Mills the rate has been increased on rough lumber from 19c per 100 pounds to 42c; from Palliser it was formerly 16c, now it is 33c; from Twin Butte it was 21c, now it is 42c. An average carload of green lumber will contain 11,000 feet, more or less, weighing about 34,000 lbs. At 19c per 100 lbs, the freight charges would be about \$6 per thousand, in the neighborhood of \$65 per carload. The increase in rates brings the freight charges up to \$143 per carload, or \$14 per thousand feet. Under the old freight rate a carload of cedar fence-posts cost \$81; under the new tariff it will cost \$160, which means an addition of eight cents to the cost of every post brought into the market." This will show how the C.P.R. operates to grind those who are wholly in its power. The distance from the farthest point mentioned by the *Tribune* is less than 200 miles, yet for hauling lumber for this distance the C.P.R. exacts a freight charge about equal to the value of the lumber in Ontario, as the *Tribune* puts it. Fourteen dollars per thousand is certainly an outrageous charge for hauling lumber in car lots less than 200 miles, and will make building an expensive undertaking in the Territories, at points distant from local saw mills. The *Tribune* says that the C.P.R. has advanced the lumber rates in order to prevent the shipment of lumber from the mountains during the spring and summer, and thus force the mill men to sell the product of their mills to the Company, at figures dictated by the latter, as the Company will require a large amount of lumber during the summer. This is a peculiar explanation as to the cause of the extortion, and one which can hardly be credited at first glance. It is evident, however, that legislation which will prevent this kind of robbery, is sadly needed in Canada. An inter-provincial commerce law is, as badly needed here as is the Interstate law in the United States.

WE have referred at different times and in very strong language to the difficulties which are likely to arise through the indebtedness of certain municipalities in the province. We had hoped perhaps that attention being called to the heavy damage which was being done to the financial credit of Manitoba by the inability of certain corporations to pay their debts, that they might be urged to do at least the smallest thing that a debtor can do, face their creditors and actively bestir themselves in order to try and get some equitable arrangement made so that those with whom they had incurred liabilities might be recouped as far as lay in the power of these corporations to recoup them. As far as we have been able to gather no municipality has moved in the direction of obtaining any action likely to secure a settlement of its debts for at least several months. They appear without exception to consider that the law of the land was created as a means of their avoiding payment of what they owed, and that its very intricacies were devised as paths to assist them in their escape. They must, however, remember that they do not constitute the whole of the province of Manitoba, and that it