

for some time to come is evident. The business men of the North-West are made up from individuals of limited means and unlimited energy and enterprise. The latter they are compelled to substitute for the former in many instances, and in a country where men have free scope to throw aside all conventional forms in their race for wealth, the temptation to do so is very great. The power to mitigate this evil lies in the hands of business men themselves, and while no person interested has any desire to place obstacles in the way of the country's commercial and industrial progress, it is to be hoped that with this power at their disposal they will at least reduce the evil to a minimum if they cannot immediately remedy it.

### Workmen's Demands.

The Trades' Council of Toronto has recently drawn up a platform which it is intended they shall urge upon the Governments both of Ontario and the Dominion. Like all other platforms drawn up by such Councils, it is of a one-sided nature, although containing some good and practical points. The points relating to political rights it is unnecessary to take notice of, as they, like all others coming from such a source, aim at the abolition of all property qualifications. The points more intimately connected with labor are numerous, and prominent among these are the objections to convict labor competition, the limitation of Chinese immigration, the exclusion of Chinamen from labor on public works, the equalization of remuneration for male and female labor, and the passing of a factory act prohibiting the employment of children under 13 years of age, the regulating of the hours of factory labor, and the enforcing of many responsibilities upon employers of a much more arbitrary nature than any of the provisions of the English Factory Act passed by the Derby-Israeli Government of 1867.

A noted Frenchman, when he recounted the butchery of the Red Republicans of his native land, remarked that none could be so tyrannical to the masses as the masses themselves, and this saying finds some verification in the claims of the Toronto Trades' Council. While sitting in session with the ostensible object of freeing the workmen from the thralldom which monopolies would hold him in, and endeavor to build up in the labor they aim to direct one of the most tyrannical of monopolies, by the exclusion of several classes of competition from the labor market. They adopt the *similia similibus curantur* of the homeopathist, and try to neutralize the power of one class of monopolies by setting up another equally, if not more, arbitrary in its workings.

It is to be expected that a body like the Trades' Council would adopt a platform strongly biased in its leanings towards the party it represented, but the climax of inconsistency is reached when they declare in favor of a long term of apprenticeship to mechanical employment. It seems strange that a Council, representing as it should the sons of toil, could declare in favor of a system which is simply a relic of feudal days, when the laborer was little better than his master's property. The Toronto

and other Trades' Councils would do well to bear in mind that monopolies generally are injurious to legitimate trade, and in no particular does this fact carry more weight than in connection with a monopoly of the labor market of a country.

### Extended Meteorological Observations for Manitoba.

To the Editor of the Commercial.

SIR, The management of the Meteorological Service of the Dominion have furnished the Department of Agriculture and Statistics of this Province with fifty gauges for measuring rain and snowfall. It is proposed to distribute these throughout the Province to voluntary observers who will be willing to take daily observations and to send a record of them at the end of each month. They will be supplied with blank forms and stamped envelopes for this purpose, and will receive the publications of the Meteorological Service, and also the publications of this Department. In order to render the observations of the greatest possible value the sites for the location of the instruments will be distributed as much as possible, so that there may be a record of every district, and of the peculiarities of local showers, etc. Allow me, through your columns, to invite correspondence from persons who may be willing to take an instrument and make the necessary observations and records. The matter is one of vital importance, especially to the farmers of the Province, and I trust that a hearty and general response will be made to this invitation.

At present there are meteorological stations at Poplar Heights, Stony Mountain, Winnipeg, Minnedosa, Oak Lake, Meadow Lea and Rapid City, at which full observations are taken, not only of rain and snowfall, but of temperature, wind, etc. The Meteorological Service is desirous of establishing two additional stations, and the management have requested me to select the sites and recommend persons as observers. The Western portion of the Province being entirely without meteorological stations, I have decided to place one of the stations in the North-West corner—that is, in the Birtle or Fort Ellice district, and another in the South-West corner, viz., the Souris or Turtle Mountain district. Persons willing to undertake the duties are requested to communicate with me as early as possible.

The management of the Meteorological Service are endeavoring to so extend their operations in the Province as to be enabled to furnish not only a complete record of our weather, but also to telegraph the daily probabilities, as is done in Ontario and the other Eastern Provinces. With a rapid extension of railway and telegraph facilities, and a hearty response to the invitation which I have conveyed above, the additional information referred to will be supplied at an early date.

Your obedient servant,

ACTON BURROWS,

Deputy Minister of Agriculture and Statistics.

### Red River Navigation.

On Tuesday last, Sir Charles Tupper was waited upon by a deputation consisting of Mayor Logan, Aldermen Bathgate, Sutherland, Wilson, and McMicken, regarding the improvement of the navigation of the Red River. The deputation urged the necessity for the construction of locks at St. Andrew's Rapids, which would give free navigation between the City of Winnipeg and Lake Winnipeg during the entire open season. The necessity of a cheaper and fuller supply of fuel for the City was also urged, and it was stated that a system of free navigation from the North would reduce the price of wood in the City to less than half the present prices. Sir Charles received the deputation courteously, promised to lay the matter before his colleagues, and held out the hope that the wishes of the deputation and citizens would be speedily acceded to by the Government.

The citizens of Winnipeg are not the only persons interested in this matter, as the construction of the proposed locks at St. Andrew's Rapids would make clear navigation from Fargo, Dakota, on the South, and from Fort Ellice on the West to Lake Winnipeg, and thence by the Saskatchewan River to Edmonton. Besides cheapening the fuel supply of this city, it would give a great impetus to inland navigation throughout the North-West, and benefit every point on the navigable portions of the Red and Assiniboine Rivers.

### Letter from Birtle.

To the Editor of the Commercial.

This thriving town has progressed at a wonderful rate the past summer. Buildings have sprung up on all sides, and are still being erected as fast as labor and material can be had. The hum of the saw mill has been heard day and night, and yet the supply has been unequal to meet the demand. Merchants and manufacturers are doing excellent business.

Messrs. Crerar & Herchmer, general merchants, have sold out to Wilson & McKenzie. The latter are constructing a large grist mill in town, to be run by water-power from the Bird Tail River.

There has been a good demand for town lots for building purposes at steady prices. It has been the aim of the proprietors to give a substantial basis to the place, and they have eminently succeeded.

A good harvest is reported by farmers in the surrounding country.

The fall exhibition on the 10th instant brought forth many evidences of the country's progress. The officers of the Agricultural Society for the present year are—President, Mr. Robert Nelson, Birtle; vice-president, Mr. John S. Crawford, Birtle; directors, Mr. Archibald McDonald, Fort Ellice; Mr. Wm. Denmark, Shell River; Mr. Thos. Young, Rossburn; Mr. Chas. Findley, Shoal Lake; Mr. Donald Frazer, Oak River S.; Mr. Wm. D. Paynter, Beulah; Mr. Jas. B. Cartmell, Birtle; secretary-treasurer, Mr. S. W. Chambers, Birtle; assistant-secretary, Mr. Jos. Prichard, jun., Birtle.