

The Commercial

WINNIPEG, OCTOBER 12, 1886.

HOME INDUSTRIES.

The labor organizations of the city of Winnipeg will have the sympathy and encouragement of all those interested in the industrial development and general commercial progress of the city, in their agitation in favor of supporting home industries and against the practice of sending to eastern cities for goods which may be procured at home. The question is one which not only Winnipeg, but the whole country, is specially interested in. The large attendance at the meeting held in the city on Tuesday evening to consider this matter, demonstrated that the people have become thoroughly aroused on the subject, and that the time has come when some effort should be made to minimize the evil. Many of the leading business men of the city were present, and the speeches were strongly condemnatory of the practice of sending out of the country to have work done or goods supplied which could be procured to equally good advantage at home, save in some instances at a trifling additional cost. The following resolution moved by Messrs. E. L. Drewry and J. H. Ashdown, and unanimously passed at the meeting, speaks for itself:

"Whereas it is the custom for many individuals and firms to send orders east for execution when the work could be done at home; and whereas such a practice is an injustice, both to employers and employed; therefore, be it resolved that this meeting denounces such practices, and urges upon our citizens the necessity of making all their purchases from local firms."

A resolution was also passed pledging those present to "encourage in every possible way our home industries, by the use by ourselves and families of the products of those industries, believing that in doing so it will materially conduce to the prosperity of our city and province." The speakers all endorsed the sentiment contained in the resolutions, and pointed out many advantages to be gained by purchasing as much as possible and having work done at home.

Few people who have not given the matter attention have any idea to what an extent this practice of sending east for goods is carried on. Almost every line of trade is injuriously affected directly, whilst the evil indirectly arising from this custom, must be very great in the aggro-

gate. If all the goods which could be manufactured in this country, but which are now frequently brought from the east, were purchased at home, the effect upon local industry would be something surprising. Our industrial population would be more than doubled, and every branch of business would receive benefit from the circulation of the money at home, which is now sent east. The influence of such a move would be to almost revolutionize trade all over the country, and the whole province would receive benefit far beyond present conceptions.

This matter is one in which the people of Winnipeg are specially interested, and the old saying that "charity begins at home" is applicable in the case. Winnipeg is desirous of securing trade from the towns and villages throughout the province and territories, and many of our merchants think, and justly too, that country merchants who order from the east, in preference to patronizing local wholesale manufacturers and dealers, are doing an injury to the whole country, themselves included, in retarding commercial and industrial development at home. But until the people of Winnipeg have learned to supply their own wants as much as possible at home, they cannot justly find much fault with the citizens of outside towns for sending their money east. From the city alone there are hundreds of thousands of dollars sent east every year, in single industries, for goods which could be manufactured at home, and which, if procured here, would add immeasurably to our wealth. Then the expansion of local industries would cheapen the cost of production and enable our manufacturers to compete to better advantage for the trade of provincial and territorial towns.

A great deal of the money sent out of the city is in small amounts, for work of an industrial nature, such as clothing and boots and shoes made to order, printing, etc. It is claimed that for tailoring not less than \$50,000 is sent out of the city annually, every cent of which could be expended to almost as good advantage at home directly to the purchaser, whilst the aggregate amount taken from the legitimate trade of the city is an injury to the whole community of no minor importance. Then in the item of printing and kindred industries, the work of this nature done in the east amounts to a very large sum, which expenditure if all made at home, would in itself help to support quite a

number of mercantile institutions. Many other examples could be given of a similar nature.

In the instances given nearly the whole expenditure would go into wages, and hence the city is robbed of the number of workmen who, with their families, would be supported in our midst, were the work done at home. The merchant who sends his money away from home for such little things as these, with the vain idea that he is saving a dollar or two, is pursuing a very short-sighted and suicidal policy. Allowing that ten per cent. is saved (which is probably a maximum figure) by having this work done in eastern cities, on every \$1,000 so sent out of the country there would be a saving of \$100. On the other hand the merchants of the city would be robbed of the profits which they would realize by the extra sales of \$1,000 worth of goods, which at 20 per cent. would make \$200. It is safe to estimate that for every dollar saved through sending work of this nature out of the country the whole community is the loser to double that amount.

In addition to the sending east of small sums for work of the nature previously indicated, there are many branches of local wholesale manufactures which should receive far better encouragement and support than has hitherto been accorded to them. Some of the branches already do a flourishing trade here, but if the money which is sent out of the country for such goods were spent at home, it would lead to the establishment of additional manufactories in the same line. In cigars for instance, there are two small factories located in the city, and the manufacturers claim that the facilities for turning out such goods here are as favorable as exist at any place in Canada. The goods made here compare favorably in quality and price with the imported article, yet the manufacturers have not been accorded anything like the support which they should receive from the city trade. The cigars consumed in Winnipeg alone would support fifty workmen where we now have five. The same thing will apply to ales, etc., though a much larger business proportionately is done in these than in cigars. Many other branches of wholesale manufacture might be referred to, but those mentioned will serve the purpose as examples. It is to be hoped that the agitation inaugurated by the labor societies will lead to a much needed reform of the practice of sending east for