

The C. P. R. Main Line

Special Correspondence of The Commercial.

The main line of the Canadian Pacific Railway runs in a westerly direction from Winnipeg for a distance of two hundred miles through the province of Manitoba. This line passes through a varied country, some of which is the best in the Canadian West. On leaving Winnipeg we enter at

Portage la Prairie the land is all good and the country has a fertile surface, though not in any way abrupt. Small poplar bluffs dot the view. The soil is in most cases light, especially on the higher land although when well cultivated there has always been very good results. Further to the north at a dis-

walks. The residences are tastefully placed and have in most instances a fine lawn with here and there ornamental trees and shrubs. We cannot begin to enumerate the men in business here as every line is fully represented and thoroughly worked. There are ample banking facilities, two weekly newspapers, branch houses of all important manufacturing establishments and plenty of hotel accommodations. The Lake of the Woods Milling Co. have a branch here, turning out their product at a rate of eight hundred barrels a day. There is also The Alex. Brown Milling Co., a branch of the Toronto firm, whose daily capacity is two hundred and fifty barrels. Met-

ple. The mill owned by C. J. Hurt does a good local trade. Brown & Armstrong hold a flourishing hardware business. Jas. White owns and operates the planing mill and has a good trade.

Of Brandon, which comes next, we shall not now speak as to do justice to a place of Brandon's standing requires more space than can be afforded in an article of this nature.

Passing on then to Alexander we find one of the regular little country towns, not large, but doing a nice little local business. Just a few miles west of Alexander is Griswold, about the same size, but rather more enterpris-



Flour Mill of Alex. Brown, at Portage la Prairie, Manitoba.



P. W. Martin's Residence, at Magregor, Man.

ness on a section of purely prairie country. The first few miles of this is not above the average, although the vicinity of Rosser is considered very good. The land is low and at present much better suited to grazing and hay than to grain farming. The higher parts have proven themselves very fair wheat farms but are rather too isolated. Just following this we come to a district that is fast changing from hayland to grain farms. At the present time it is about half of each, but yearly the area broken and cultivated is increasing. This section merges gradually into the celebrated Portage Plains, which for years have held first place in the public estimation as a grain country. The land is nearly level and of excellent quality and the seasons are earlier than in other parts of Manitoba. Perhaps no part of the province boasts better farms and farm buildings, and certainly for a term of years no other place has been equally productive. The Portage Plains are not so distant to the neighborhood of Portage but also embrace several of the smaller towns on either side.

Between Portage and Brandon there is a large stretch of country wooded in parts, and with fertile sections and ranges of sand hills alternating. As the word implies these sand hills are of very light soil and vegetation is scarce. The tree life is found in scrub poplar, jack pine or stunted oak. It is worthless for cultivation and about the only use it could have in for a sheep run. There are between these ranges, however, some pieces of good land, which though generally rather

lance of five or six miles the land is much better and has been found to give a better yield.

Until we reach Portage la Prairie, forty-six miles from Winnipeg, we do not find any village of large size. Fifteen miles out is Rosser, which is rather too near the city to ever expect to be very large. Still, as there is a

calfe & Son own and operate the oat-mill mills and carry besides a line of harvesting machinery and Ontario wagons. J. & E. Brown have what is, perhaps, the largest departmental store in town, although closely followed by several others.

Nearly twenty miles west of Portage we reach the village of Magregor,



Street View, Elkhorn, Man.



School, Elkhorn, Man.

very fine locality around, it may become quite a local centre.

Poplar Point and High Bluff are the only other places before reaching Portage that are worth notice and naturally they suffer from most of the trade going to the town. High Bluff has, however, quite a little local business and is surrounded by the same conditions of soil as Portage.

from which point the Wellwood branch opens the country to the northwest. While not large, this village is a first class business place, the general stores of Jas. Martin, P. W. Martin and Merri- cke Bros. being worth attention. In the hardware line we have H. Glover and H. B. Fryer doing a good trade, while a monopoly of the meat business is in the hands of Chas. Street. Mac-

gregor. Several good firms are here, the chief of which are the H. Hill & Sons and Speers & Paul, in the general store lines, and J. C. Humphry, with furniture and implements.

At Oak Lake the most important concern is the milling business of Leitch Bros. The product of these mills has a wide sale, both east and west, a good deal finding sale in Japan. There are several other men having good establishments—W. A. Clow, the butcher; J. S. Ledgerwood, confectioner and baker; T. J. Parsons, hardware merchant, and Mr. A. Thompson, general store man, are instances.

Virden, fifty miles from Brandon, and with a population of 1,000, is our next point. This is one of the best towns on the line, and in proportion to size, probably does most business. Nicely situated and well looked after, it is a pleasant place to live in, and surrounded by a good farming settlement the merchants are kept going. This year the mill changed hands and is now controlled by Nichols, Hubbard & Drine, who are gradually working business up to a profitable point. The hardware business is in the hands of Frame & Miller and the Virden Lumber and Hardware Co. W. J. Wilcox has a very fine building for general store purposes and handles an excellent stock. McEllen & English also hold a good business, particularly in dry goods. There are several others of importance whom we cannot mention.

Elkhorn, the last town on the line



Leitch Bros.' Mill, Oak Lake, Man.



Private Residence, Portage la Prairie, Man.

light produce well when the moisture is plentiful. The land around Brandon is good, especially when one gets well to the west of the Assiniboine river. Of course this locality has been well known for many years since the early eighties and many of the houses and buildings around one of farm homes in Ontario, although orchards are here unfortunately unproductive.

From Brandon west to the Assini-

Portage la Prairie has second place among the towns of Manitoba, both in size and in volume of business, and in appearance we think it stands first. The population is now almost four thousand and a busy, bustling population it is. A great deal of care has been taken to make the town as attractive as possible, all the streets but those exclusively business being lined with trees. Trees have reached large size and formed an arch over the side-

gregor is a brisk little town and has a good tributary settlement. Austin and Sidney, the next villages worth noting, are in the favored spots among the sand hills. Neither one is large the population being between two and three hundred.

Carberry, one hundred and five miles from Winnipeg, is quite an important little town. Judging from its appearance one would not suppose it to contain nearly twelve hundred peo-

ple in Manitoba, is not of great size, but has a very fair location and a steady, if not very rushing business. There is a fairly good trade with the settlement around. The general store of G. W. Marsh, the hardware of G. Silvester, the flour mill and bakery of C. F. Travis, and the butcher business of E. B. Guest are all deserving of mention. A good work is being done by the Indian school here, whose pupils now number over a hundred.