

office, neither would it be in the best interests of the Northwest to have the jurisdiction over the superior wheats grown there placed in the hands of a chief inspector resident in the capitol of a province which has shown itself to a certain extent jealous of our more favorable agricultural conditions. It would not, in addition, be found to work well in operation to have cases in dispute referred to an officer over a 1,000 miles away from our grain fields and off the highway by which our grain would pass to seaboard. It would be most undesirable in our opinion to control Ontario grain matters from Winnipeg; conversely, we maintain that we should have a chief inspector here. Each province has its own peculiarities of soil and climate as well as of kinds of grain, and we are satisfied that only an inspector on the spot who makes a study of these points can do full justice to the question.

Those interested in the development of agriculture in the Northwest would do well to consider this matter at this juncture. The whole question will be before the Dominion House during the present session. It becomes, therefore, our duty to see that the amendments to the Inspection Act will give fair play to Manitoba, and that they will be framed in view of the possibilities of our future. Ontario is turning her attention to stock and dairy farming. In a few years the products of our prairies will exceed that of all the rest of the Dominion. Occupying a premier position in grain growing, control, if centered anywhere should be centered here. We, however, think control over the provinces unnecessary; three chief inspectors would, we are satisfied, be a better arrangement, as it certainly would be more satisfactory to the provinces concerned. Inspection acts, or any other acts, cannot be amended yearly; let us now as far as possible have the coming legislation to cover the ground in a way commensurate with our agricultural future.

In this connection it might be well to consider the question of making the inspection of grain compulsory. Were this done the expense per carload would be trifling. While the benefit in the way of securing accurate statistics yearly of the quality and quantity of our cereal products would be of the greatest possible importance.

### THE UNION AND THE GRAIN TRADE.

The annual meeting of the Farmers' Union, held in the city last week, was a tame affair and calls for no comment on our part, except in so far as the Union arrogates to its leaders and to Mr. Mitchell the sole credit in connection with the upward tendency in grain prices. The three tailors of Tooley St. posing in their manifesto as "we people of England," could scarcely be more absurd than Dr. Fleming, Mr. Purvis and Mr. Mitchell, figuring before the farmers of Manitoba as the triumvirate holding the destinies of the grain markets of the world. Every merchant, and of course, every thinking man knows that the statements made at that meeting with reference to grain prices were mere twaddle, but we are sorry to think that the body of farmers who composed the meeting listened in silent assent to such preposterous nonsense. We were inclined to give the general run of our farmers credit for better sense, but it does not seem to have occurred to one of them that there were such influences in the grain market as those emanating from Liverpool or Chicago. Liverpool no longer occupies the proud position of dictator in the grain trade, she must step down and out, and leave her sceptre in the hands of Messrs. Purvis and Mitchell. Mark Lane pays more to-day for the wheat from the Indian Empire than it did in the end of last year; the prices of Australia, California and Black Sea wheats have also risen in value. Even Chicago, Minneapolis and Duluth have had to advance, and it is solely due to the action of the Manitoba and Northwest Farmers' Union. It will now be easy to conduct business in the grain trade. No further need now of telegrams from every wheat field on the globe; no need for weather reports or estimates of areas under cultivation; no need of statistics of stocks in store or afloat. Business can now be brought down to a fine point by simply consulting the eminent grain commission firm of Messrs. Purvis & Co., established 1884.

That there is a general improvement in grain prices, and that these will be maintained there is little room for doubt. This result is primarily due to the decreased area of winter wheat sown, and also to the discouraging reports regarding the plant from winter wheat sections. A year so generally good the world over may not soon again occur. We are, therefore, dis-

posed to advise farmers to sow all they can this spring, believing that prices for next season's hard wheat crop will leave a good margin to the grower.

### NEW INDUSTRIES.

While agriculture must be the mainstay of the Northwest and the chief source from which her wealth will spring, there are signs of activity in other branches which must tell materially on our present prosperity, and encourage the belief that we will be something else than a farming colony. The opening up of the coal mines on the South Saskatchewan last year marked the beginning of an industry which has been an important factor in the prosperity of other industries. The discovery lately made of even more valuable deposits of the "black diamond" at Crowfoot Crossing, on the Canadian Pacific, proves beyond doubt what scientists have long claimed, that the supply of coal in the Canadian Northwest is simply inexhaustible. Other fields exist, but meanwhile the working of the mines already mentioned, secures a plentiful supply of fuel without which life in our severe winter would be impossible, and also secures the first indispensable element in manufacturing industry.

The iron deposits which have been known for over a hundred years to exist on Big Island, in Lake Winnipeg, are not likely to be undisturbed for another season, arrangements having been completed by a strong company for working the ore during the present summer. Experts consider the raw material in Lake Winnipeg equal in quality to anything on the continent. This fact, along with the certainty of plentiful supplies of coal, leads to the conclusion that manufactures, dependent upon iron in its various forms, will speedily spring up in our midst.

The discoveries of petroleum in the Bow River country have led to the formation of a powerful company, who have already their machinery in transit to commence boring operations. The capital brought to bear on this venture, as well as the names of the directors of the Winnipeg & Northwest Petroleum Company, favor the belief that this will turn out one of the most important industries of the Northwest.

Discoveries will doubtless ere long add to the number and variety of the enterprises, which will go to make up our aggregate of industrial prosperity. It is encouraging, meanwhile, to know that the working of Petroleum Wells, and the mining of Iron and Coal will play no insignificant part in the building up of our North Land in importance and solidity.