The Commercial

WINNIPEG, FEB. 27, 1883.

## BRANCH LINES WANTED.

Business men in many branches of trade report collections slow. This has been the result to some extent of the cold January, of which most of us have had some experience. Farmers were afraid to start out while the cold snap continued, and consequently a stagnation in monetary circles was ths inevitable result. Now that a milder period has set in there is a general improvement. But still the fact remains that there is grain in the country, which can be counted by thousands of bushels, which cannot find a market this winter. Far removed from railway facilities, it takes nearly all the grain is worth to haul it to the nearest market—in many cases from sixty to one hundred miles.

Unless branch railways, running into these districts are built, these settlers cannot hope for an improvement in their circumstances. We know of a case where a farmer has two thousand bushels of wheat stored in his granary. If he undertook to haul it to market and sold it at present prices he would not have more than a hundred dollars left over expenses. He has incurred liabilities to some extent and cannot pay. The present state of affairs affords no encouragement for him to go to work and haul his grain to market in this inclement season for the sake of the paltry hundred dollars that would be placed to his bank account after the whole business had been transacted.

This naturally leads to the conclusion that branch lines leading into the settled districts of the North-west must be constructed in the immediate future. The Southwestern and the Portage Westbourne and North-western will bring a certain amount of relief, but they will not be sufficient to meet the demands of the country. There are still large and thickly populated sections of the country which require accommodation in this respect, and must have it, if the country is to maintain the position it has already attained.

There is plenty of capital laying idle in the coffers of capitalists, all over the world, which, if feasible schemes were offered, would be easily made available for purposes of railway construction. In providing the country with abundant railway facilities depends, to a large extent the future of Manitoba and the Northwest. We have land and climate in which to raise the finest quality of grain ever graded in an elevator. Willing hands and honest labor are ready to produce it, and all that is now required are the facilities to bring it to market. Therefore let there be no stumbling block placed in the way of the construction of railways branching in all directions from the main line.

## THE OUTLOOK.

The prospects for Manitoba and the North-west for the coming season are good. True, we have been passing through somewhat of an ordeal of late. But this was only what might be expected. The "boom" that set in in 1881 and lasted well into 1882 had, in the natural course of things, to be followed by a reaction. The inflation that existed could not continue forever, and the sooner business generally returned to its normal condition the better. The weaker have had to go to the wall in some cases, but those that remain will be in a better position than before. The immigration this year will be on a scale hitherto unparalleled, and with the opening of spring will pour like a deluge into our country, They come to develop the rich resources of our fertile prairies stretching to the base of the Rockies, and with their every endeavor the soil will yield up its latent treasure. To the east the development of the mining industry will attract a large amount of capital, the expenditure of which will go to make a freer circulation of money. Then the large expenditure to be made in the construction of the C. P. R. and on numerous other lines to be built in every direction throughout the country will place an enormous amount of ready money in the hands of the people. A little caution in not repeating the mistakes of the past, and there cannot be a doubt but that an era of prosperity will be entered upon much more substantial and satisfactory to every one than that which characterized the period of inflation, from the evils of which we are now emerging.

## THE BANKING ACT.

Sir Leonard Tilley has introduced into the House of Commons a series of banking resolutions providing for the more regular and earlier transmission of certified lists of shareholders to the Government, and imposing a penalty for the violation of such provision; and by imposing penalities on banks allowing the amount of their notes in circulation to be in excess of that limited by law, or holding a less amount of their cash resources in Dominion notes than is required by law, or neglecting to make up these amounts by return, either in the time prescribed by law or contravening any provision of Sec. 43, or of Secs. 46 or 51 of the Banking Act; and amending the form of monthly returns and provisions respecting parties unlawfully styling themselves banks or assuming any designation implying that they are acting as chartered banks or as an agent of any bank. These changes are not of a revolutionary character and do not materially affect the general principles of the Act as it has been. The object in view is chiefly to make existing enactments more effective. The necessity for such legislation was made evident by the irregularities brought to the surface a few months ago, it having come to light that one or two prominent institutions had openly violated the law in loaning money upon the security of their own stocks. One bank evaded the law forbidding such loans, by advancing the funds through the medium of a loan company, while another made advances to directors, who in turn loaned out the money on bank shares. It is also known that some small banks have been in the habit of increasing their circulation, in busy seasons of the year, to an amount beyond the limit allowed by law. It is to put an effectual stop to this class of business that the amendments to the law have been introduced. They are in the right direction, and cannot but have a healthful effect in keeping our monetary institutions within legitimate bounds.

## CORNERS IN PRODUCE.

The *Rural New Yorker* has a very sensible article under the above caption. The subject of "corners" in produce has become one of intense interest to all classes of the community, and so often fraught with undesirable and evil results that a special committee of the New York Legislature has been giving it their fullest consideration. The same important topic has engaged the attention of Legislatures in other States also. In all cases the monstrous evils of such transactions have been clearly demonstrated. Every wit-