

Established
1866
Issued
every Friday
morning

THE

Monetary Times

TRADE REVIEW AND INSURANCE
CHRONICLE

Canadian and U.S. Subscribers, \$2 per year.
British Subscribers, 10s. 6d. sterling per year.
Single Copies, 10 cents.

PUBLISHED BY THE

**Monetary Times Printing Co. of Canada
Limited**

Book and Job Printers

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TORONTO, - - - Ont.

TORONTO, FRIDAY, OCTOBER 16, 1903.

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WESTERN PROGRESS AND WESTERN VIEWS.

On another page of to-day's issue is begun a series of papers which will contain note and comment upon the Great West of Canada as a recent visit disclosed it. Comparison with the appearance of things a dozen years ago is unavoidable, and, indeed, it may often prove interesting, for the strides made are often remarkable. The present article dwells upon some features in the shape of opinion and fact which are most prominent.

Progress was very marked in towns and villages along the main line of the railway. Portage la Prairie, Brandon, Regina, Calgary show great strides since 1890. The shops are extensive and admirably arranged. At such distances from the bases of supply in the East large stocks are a necessity for the store-keepers. And their customers want good goods: nothing is more prominent than the high character of the merchandise found in western stores. The western man works hard; conditions around him are stimulating; he usually prospers, and he wants the best of

everything for his wife and children, and will pay the price for it. Nor is there, as a rule, the laxity in farmers' methods that older Canada too often sees. In care of his stock and of his field implements the Manitoba farmer is prompt.

Winnipeg makes a strong impression upon the visitor, especially if he views it from a great height, when the extent of the place and the growing beauty of its residential quarter can be seen; the grading and boulevarding of the streets, the modern tastefulness of the dwellings, the up-to-date character of nearly everything, give an air of comfort to what would have otherwise an air of newness, not to say rawness. In the business quarter the bank buildings are elegant and spacious: that of the Merchants Bank is lofty and striking, while the Dominion and Commerce have offices surpassed nowhere in Canada for beauty. Of the wholesale warehouses one can say that everyone is busy, and in some the employees have to work at night. Half a dozen at least have been enlarged this year by the addition of stories, and several have been doubled in size. The retail shops are a revelation: two in particular, a furniture shop and a jewellery shop, both on Main Street, had stocks of the most beautiful and expensive things. But Winnipeg seriously needs a large and modern hotel. This she will shortly have. There is every indication that Winnipeg will be a second Toronto as a distributing centre. Some of her citizens assert that in ten years she will have 250,000 people. Certainly when the plans for power and boat traffic from the great cluster of waterways to the north are carried out, Winnipeg will progress by leaps and bounds.

It is impossible not to be struck with the curious impatience of "the East" which characterizes the talk of the Western folk. One finds it everywhere. It seems as if, when persons have lived a certain number of years or months west of Lake of the Woods they inhale along with the intoxicating western air, a feeling of contempt, or something very like it, for the old-fashioned East. This is expressed in several ways. In the view of one person, the East is synonymous with excessive freight charges on the railways; another declares the banks and wholesale houses grinding monopolists. But the third criticism one hears of Eastern Canada is by far the most powerful and widespread. It was heard in Regina, in Edmonton, in Calgary as well as in Winnipeg. "You people at Ottawa deny us the custody of our lands. You give them away to the C.P.R., to the Hudson's Bay Company, to monopolists and speculators, who withhold them from settlement. We demand the administration of our domain; we want to mine our own coal, and not to have millions worth of it given away to Eastern capitalists or great railways. Whatever else our lands contain we demand the right to the disposition of it." Now, whether we reject such views as savoring of State rights as opposed to federal sovereignty, it is impossible to deny their existence or to get away from their expression, sometimes with earnestness, sometimes with actual animosity. It is no figure of speech if we say that he who lives in Eastern Canada cannot understand the feelings and views of Northwest Canadians unless he visits that great country, learns its capacities, and realizes what statesman-like breadth of view and the relaxation of red tape may make it.