

Better Telegraph Facilities.

For a long time the telegraphic arrangements between Winnipeg and St. Paul and Minneapolis have been altogether inadequate to the wants of the first named city, and strong representations of this fact have, from time to time, been made to the managers of the Western Union Telegraph Company. Only one wire is now available for commercial purposes, and the amount of business would require three. The defect will be remedied, to some extent, in a few weeks, as the Western Union Company are now stretching another wire from Glyndon to St. Vincent, which will make two complete systems from the Manitoba capital to St. Paul. They are also making arrangements to have messages transmitted direct between Manitoba and Ontario, without the necessity of repeating at St. Paul and Chicago.

Many business men will be astonished at this amount of consideration of the wants of the North-west by a corporation which is dictated to by Jay Gould, and which has practically a monopoly of the United States telegraph system. The reason will doubtless be found in the fact that next summer the Great North-west Telegraph Company will commence laying their Lake Superior cable, which will give direct communication between Ontario and Manitoba through Canadian territory, and to compete with this system the Western Union are merely taking time by the forelock by establishing direct communication through the United States. The international boundary line does accomplish some good for Manitoba after all.

Cut Through Rates.

Last Thursday a paragraph appeared in a local daily regarding a Winnipeg merchant who had prepaid freight on a consignment of fruit from Toronto to Winnipeg, and when the same was delivered he found he had his freight to pay a second time with about thirty per cent. of an excess charge, over what he had paid to the Grand Trunk agent in Toronto. The fact of his having to pay double freight on his consignment of fruit is a matter of very little consequence to the commercial circles of Manitoba, as the consignee can easily secure the return of what he has overpaid, if he was business man enough to secure and preserve receipts for what he disbursed. The difference of thirty per cent. between the charges here, and those made by the Grand Trunk agent at Toronto, is one of much greater general interest, however, as it is a circumstance of very frequent occurrence in connection with freight from the eastern provinces. In any city of Eastern Canada a shipper has no trouble in finding an agent of some railway who will quote him special through rates to any point in the North-west, and in cities where competing lines receive freight these agents are not over particular how much they cut rates. The shipper will naturally take the lowest offer, and if he is shrewd enough to bind the agent with a written contract, he may secure, by means of a rebate, anything he has to pay on delivery over and above the rate quoted. But if he is loose enough in his dealings to take a verbal agreement of rates he is at the mercy of the agent. Those shipping goods

from eastern points to the North-west should bear in mind that no agent in the East has any authority for quoting a special through rate over the C. P. R. or the St. P. M. & M., nor in fact over any railway but the one which receives the goods. The shipper himself can secure the published tariffs of each line over which his consignments pass to the North-west, and when he has added them together, he has the same ability to make a through rate as any railway agent in Eastern Canada, and any rate less than the product of the shipper's addition is a bogus one, and furnished only for competing purposes. Railway officials in Manitoba are placed at great inconvenience with goods shipped in this manner, as they have to bear the blame incurred by the Eastern Agent, and all the intervening lines between the point of shipment and delivery. Consignees take it for granted that the rates quoted to the shipper are *bona fide*, and the C. P. R. officials who deliver and collect, through the Cartage Co., are blamed for the overcharge often when the whole charges of their company are much short of the difference between the quoted and actual rates. Local drawbacks in connection with railway freights are numerous enough, but there is no necessity for Manitoba railways shouldering the blame incurred by unscrupulous agents in the East, or blundering railway officials in the United States; and in nearly every complaint of overcharges on freight it will be found that they have their origin before they reach St. Vincent.

Mining Affairs.

Operations may now be said to be well under way in the auriferous belt on the Lake of the Woods. Upon none of the mines is there what can be called a large gang of men at work; but the work of development is being energetically prosecuted. The Winnipeg Consolidated have now about four hundred tons of quartz upon the dump, which Mr. Brown, the experienced superintendent anticipates will mill up to \$200 a ton. During the winter a large quantity of quartz will be taken out, so that when the large mill is erected in the spring there will be plenty of rock to crush. At present the Winnipeg is having erected at their mine the old fire stamp mill that formerly stood upon Boulder Island. With this somewhat antiquated mechanism the company will be able to crush five tons a day, a quantity sufficient for a milling test at every stage of the development of the mine. The company is reported to have received quite recently a most encouraging essay from the Hamilton Reduction Works, New York, and it is probably on the strength of this that during the past few days the holders of stock have stiffened their prices. It has not transpired when the stock will be put on the market, but it is not likely to be floated until the mine is fully developed.

The Argyle Company is actively at work, and recent advices are to the effect that the results so far obtained are most encouraging.

The Keewatin company have entrusted the development of their Hay Island property to Mr. John T. Nagle, a miner who acquired his education in California and Nevada. When he was superintendent of one of the Nevada mines

he had the famous Mark Twain under him, as chief engineer of an Irishman's locomotive. Mr. Nagle has seen too much of the ups and downs of gold mining to be over sanguine. In a conversation recently with the writer he said in a quiet way that he was perfectly satisfied with the prospects ahead. He had made four openings upon the vein and three of them showed rich pay streaks, the veins running in such a way as to satisfy him that the deeper he went the richer he would find the rock. He has a gang of twenty men, with a full winter's outfit, and as soon as possible will put on a day and night shift. While the element of uncertainty is never wanting in gold mining, Mr. Nagle says that he never saw a country where there was less chance of failure than the Lake of the Woods mining belt.

A correspondent writing from Rat Portage says: "At table I hear a great deal of talk about mining here, and everyone has a great opinion of the country for gold. One old fellow this morning said he had been twenty years connected with gold mining and he never struck a country yet which promised so fair as this one round here. He says that before two years this will lick any gold country ever was opened."

Work is being vigorously prosecuted upon Big Island, in Lake Winnipeg. The close of navigation and the failure of ice to form prevents communication with the mine, so it cannot be said whether or not the development of the mine is bearing out the promise of the essays. Altogether the mining outlook is most encouraging, and with the development of their mines it may be expected that the eager eye of the gold-hunter will be found upon the North-west.

The Montreal Gazette recently published the opinion of a British flax spinner who employed 200 operatives, regarding England's decline in the branches of manufacture. He says to go to Lille and other Continental manufacturing centres, and see the factories working 72 hours a week, then cross to England, only three hours' sail, and see that our mills can work only 56 hours. A few years ago, when Britain led the van in manufacturing power, her most severe critics never hinted at her want of technical knowledge. During busy times misguided philanthropists got up a cry for shorter hours, and they have not now the candor to admit that they have rendered many of our staple industries entirely unremunerative, but they turn round and say the depression arises from our want of technical education. I know that the spinners of Belfast are as scientific as ever they were, but how can they compete with 56 against 72 hours? Tons of foreign woollen and linen yarns arrive weekly on our shores. The flax and woollen trades have never raised their heads since the last Factory Act. This is the true cause of depressed trade and low wages.

This is rather a strong comparison of facts versus philanthropy, and no doubt throws some light on the question of foreign manufacturers competing in English markets with the goods made in the country.

It is always the case in industrial countries that philanthropy, when applied to labor, reaches only that portion which is included under the head of manufactures. Those em-