

various mine owners and this is now being placed and housed so that the work of taking out and treating the ore may be gone on with next year. A large reduction works plant has existed at Rat Portage for some years.

Fishing is another industry which commands attention at Rat Portage. This is largely in the hands of Americans and the product is mostly shipped to the United States.

A number of freight and passenger steamers doing business on the Lake of the Woods and up the Rainy river as far as Fort Frances make their headquarters at Rat Portage and bring considerable business to the town. This year has witnessed a great increase in the popularity of the run to Fort Frances as a pleasure trip and the fine twin-screw steamer Keenora which makes tri-weekly trips to that point has yielded her owners considerable revenue from this source. Besides the passenger business to various points of interest on the lake Rat Portage has for many years been in great favor as a holiday resort and watering place.

We have already mentioned one public improvement which is being made this year—the new waterworks. Besides this many private enterprises are being added to the town. A new opera house to replace the one burned down early in the year is being built by Louis Hilliard, proprietor of the Hilliard hotel; the Rat Portage Cold Storage company is building a cold storage warehouse; Messrs. Gordon & Ironsides are building an abattoir and the Presbyterian congregation are commencing the erection of a handsome church building. These are additions which are going on at present, many others are now in a state of completion, notably an addition to the Hilliard hotel, which makes it one of the largest and most comfortable hostleries in this country.

Norman, the western suburb of Rat Portage, is sharing in its general prosperity, and has had several additions to its business community this year. A fine brick school house is among the real improvements. It is at this point that the power dam of the Keewatin Power company is located, which is destined in a few years to furnish power for important milling industries.

Keewatin is three miles west of Rat Portage on the Canadian Pacific railroad, and overlooks Keewatin Bay. It is famous for the magnificent flour milling plant which it possesses, the property of the Lake of the Woods Milling company. This mill has a capacity which is calculated by the thousands of barrels per day. It has as a subsidiary industry a barrel factory, where all the barrels for the mill are manufactured. This entire plant is operated with water power.

The Keewatin Lumber company has its mills at this point, and these add not a little to the importance of the town. R. A. Mather, who manages the concern, is also manager of the Keewatin Power Co.

The new gold milling plant of The Ottawa Gold Milling and Mining Company at Keewatin is an addition to its industrial establishments, which may be ranked as of first-class importance. This was completed and put in operation in 1897, and is one of the best equipped plants of the kind in Canada. It is a customs mill and ore is shipped to it for treatment from

many of the mines which are now being worked in various parts of the district.

Several important public improvements have been made at Keewatin this year, among them the building of a large section of the railway yard. A new public school has also been built at a cost of over \$6,000.

It will be seen from the foregoing that substantial progress is being made in industrial development at the principal centres of the Lake of the Woods country. If all the anticipations of a few years ago in regard to this district have not been realized it is only because many of them were unreasonable, and some impossible fulfillment. Experience is proving here as it has everywhere that it takes time to build up a new country and inaugurate new industries where large capital and skilled treatment is required, and the promises of the boomsters, who are always to be found in new localities of this kind, and who are ever ready to predict all kinds of astonishing things for their momentary favorite, were from the first doomed to remain unfulfilled. The true friends of the district who have its real interests at heart are very well satisfied with what has been already accomplished, and look forward with undiminished faith to the same steady progress in the future.

*Who will Handle the Crop

At the beginning of a new crop year it may be interesting to know something about the companies, firms and individuals who will handle the grain crops of Manitoba and the Territories this year. When we speak of those who will handle the crop, we have reference to the Winnipeg dealers. Of course there is a portion of the crop that is not handled by Winnipeg dealers. There are flour mills at many points which require more or less wheat, and there are also dealers at many country markets who buy and ship wheat, who are not represented in Winnipeg. The great bulk of the crop, however, is handled by Winnipeg grain men, and much of the grain bought by independent country dealers is sold in car lots through Winnipeg commission dealers, so that speaking generally, we may say that the grain trade of the west is handled by Winnipeg parties.

First on the list of large grain handlers, we may mention the two big milling concerns—The Ogilvie Milling company and the Lake of the Woods Milling company.—Both these companies have elevators and buyers at country markets throughout the wheat belt, and between them they handle several million bushels of the crop. The Hudson's Bay company, which operates a flour mill in Winnipeg, does not have buyers out in country points. They get a good deal of wheat at the mill door in Winnipeg, and buy the balance of their requirements in car lots.

Besides the millers, perhaps the most widely known grain company is the Northern Elevator company. This company was formed by the amalgamation of several of the local grain firms. At first the firms worked together under a sort of pooling arrangement, but later a complete stock company form was adopted, and the individual firms have now ceased to exist and have been merged in one company. The old firms known as Martin, Mitchell & Co., R. D. Martin, & Co., N. Bawlf, Crowe & Co., and S. P. Clarke & Co., are the concerns

merged in the Northern Elevator Co. The company owns 102 buildings at country points for taking in grain from farmers, all but a few of which are fully equipped elevators, and the balance flat warehouses. The company will buy grain this season at not less than 125 country points in all. Wm. Martin has been elected manager of the company this year, succeeding G. R. Crowe, who was at the head last year.

Two new grain companies were formed a year ago, which are in the field for as much of this crop as they can get hold of. One of these is the Manitoba Grain Co. This company was also formed by the amalgamation of a number of dealers, but in this case they were not Winnipeg firms, but dealers operating at country points. The head office of the new company was naturally established in Winnipeg. W. A. Walker, who was the leading spirit in the organization of this company, has been succeeded this year in the management by W. L. Parrish and J. A. Thompson. The Manitoba Grain Co., though only in their second year, own forty elevators at country points, and will buy grain this season at about sixty points in all.

The other new grain company formed a year ago is the Dominion Elevator Co. This company controls a large line of grain warehouses and elevators at country points and will buy grain at over 100 country markets. The company is composed of a number of different grain firms who work on the pooling principle. The firms represented in the concern are Roblin & Leary, D. H. McMillan & Co., Jos. Harris, R. Muir & Co., and S. A. McGaw. These firms are to a certain extent independent. They buy grain separately, but their purchases all go in together and are sold through what they call their clearing house, which is managed by R. P. Roblin. The effect of the organization of these strong companies, by the amalgamation and co-operation of different firms and dealers, has been to reduce the cost of handling wheat, which is now bought on a much closer margin than formerly. The large quantity of grain handled also enables these companies to maintain special agents at New York and in Great Britain, to look after the direct sale of their wheat.

Another new concern which started in business in a very vigorous fashion last year is the firm of Bready, Love & Tryon. This firm built a number of new elevators last year, and they have added to the number this year, giving them 26 elevators in all at country points, all new and modern buildings.

H. S. Patterson, who worked with the Dominion Elevator Co. last season, is this year doing business alone. He has opened an office at Room 19, in the Grain Exchange building. In addition to handling car lots, Mr. Patterson will have buyers on about ten country markets.

Another change in the trade is the dissolution of partnership of J. K. McLennan and W. C. Graham, grain merchants. Each will continue alone. Mr. McLennan has taken a room in the grain exchange and will buy at a dozen or more country points. Mr. Graham will open an office here shortly, and will also buy at some country points.

W. D. McBean, who has been with D. G. McBean & Co., will do business alone this season. D. G. McBean, who is one of the pioneers of the Manitoba

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