

The Commercial

WINNIPEG, JANUARY 27, 1885.

FROM THE WEST.

In a former article, under this heading, we endeavored to show the persistent folly with which Manitobans have for years back looked to the east for assistance in the work of developing the great resources of this country of ours. As then stated we are beginning to get sceptical about this expected help, and there are not wanting indications that in the not distant future our eyes will be turned in the opposite direction looking for aid from the west.

In our first article on this subject we confined ourselves to showing the folly of looking to the east for supplies of what we can and are now producing at our own doors, but affairs are developing and discoveries are being made with such rapidity in the boundless territories of the west and north of us, that a look even further ahead than we then indicated may not be without profit, and may suggest some future developments, which are, perhaps, not so distant as many of us imagine.

It is useless talking about the food supply of the Northwest, or even the coal supply, as these problems are already solved beyond question. But we may now safely look forward to, and make calculations upon securing our future supplies of certain classes of manufactured goods from the west. The discoveries of coal and iron during the past year make it now a certainty that as soon as the consumption of this metal in the province and adjoining territories is large enough, it will pay to commence the manufacture of iron. The statement may be an astounding one, but it is nevertheless true, and the company which was organised some two years ago for the development of the iron resources around Lake Winnipeg may soon appear in a less ornamental light than some were disposed to look upon it when it was organised. In like manner the operations now being prosecuted for the development of the well-known oil resources of our far western districts, are likely soon to revolutionize matters in connection with our supply of that material, and it is just likely that the Saskatchewan and other river valleys west of us will furnish our supply before

long. In numerous other necessities there is a fair prospect of before long expecting and receiving supplies from the west, which have been, heretofore, drawn from the east, and reached us through the manipulation of powerful and unassailable monopolies, the pressure from which we have been compelled to submit to without hope of redress, and it should be steadily kept in mind that every step in this direction is something secured in the way of independence. When we draw supplies from the west, we are simply aiding in building up a new country which is tributary to us commercially, and in which our mercantile houses will find an unlimited field for the extension of their trade relations. In years gone by we have paid too much of our money to distant parties, from whom we received no return in the way of trade, and we are still paying too much to similar people. The work of freeing ourselves from such an one-sided state of affairs must necessarily be gradual, and in some details rather slow. But the work can be greatly hastened, if a careful watch will be kept for opportunities to develop our western resources other than agricultural, and a readiness to assist all in our power in their development, when the appeal for help is made to us. In this field lies our greatest hope of pure commercial independence.

GRAIN INSPECTION.

According to newspaper reports the Committee of the Toronto Board of Trade had an interview recently with the Hon. the Minister of Inland Revenue, at Ottawa with reference to grain standards. They objected to the intention of the Government to make a special grade of grain for the Northwest under the name of "Manitoba Hard," and suggested the name of "Canada Hard" instead. It was only natural that they should suggest this way out of a classification which would tell to the advantage of the Northwest as against the products of Ontario. If they could succeed in getting the name of "Canada" to all hard wheat grown in the Dominion the position of Ontario would be very much improved, but, again, the true value of our Northwestern product would be minimised.

Ontario did at one time grow hard wheat, but the quantity she produces grows less and less, and while what she can now grow is not equal to Manitoba, a

few years will see her out of the hard wheat production altogether. Under these circumstances we heartily coincide with those who desire to establish and maintain a distinctive name for the product of the Northwest, and we feel assured from what has already transpired that Government will give us our due in this matter. It can easily be proved that our prairie soil is much better adapted to the growth of hard wheats than that of Ontario. The chemical constituents of our lands produce in the wheat kernel a much larger percentage of albuminoids than can be obtained in Ontario grown wheats. In this respect our soils resemble, while we believe they are superior to those, of northern Minnesota and Dakota. It becomes, therefore, a question of grades based not upon what can be grown in Ontario, but what is grown in the territory immediately to the south of our boundary. Minnesota and Dakota have already established their reputation in the hard wheat market, and we can only hope to secure a name and develop agriculture by carrying in our grading a distinctive name for our special products.

We understand that the Toronto deputation were sent off with the impression that a chief inspector for the Dominion would be appointed under the amended Act with headquarters at Toronto. If this is the intention of the Government, we would point out a few objections to such an arrangement. In the first place the location of Toronto for such an office is not desirable, as that city, on the completion of the Canadian Pacific Railway, will be off the main line of traffic. Were such an appointment deemed necessary, a better place could be got for the head office. We are, however, strongly of opinion that the interests of provinces would be best secured by the appointment of a chief inspector for each, resident therein, and easily at call in case of difficulty or dispute.

The grain interests of the Dominion centre principally in the Province of Quebec for export, and in Ontario, Manitoba and the Northwest as regards production. It appears to us, therefore, that a chief inspector should be appointed at Montreal for the former province, another at Toronto for Ontario, and a third at Winnipeg for Manitoba and the Northwest. It would not be desirable to control inspection at the shipping ports at Montreal and Quebec through a Toronto