

Notes and Comments.

A number of towns in this province have passed by-laws imposing high licenses upon transient traders. Some of these licenses amount to practical prohibition. The itinerant tailor, who has become quite an institution in this country, is now falling in for a share of attention from municipal councils of outside towns. The Minnedosa council proposes to place such a tax upon these individuals as shall render their visits unprofitable. These restrictive measures are adopted in the interests of local merchants, who undoubtedly deserve protection from cheap Johns and peregrinating hucksters.

The question is again being discussed as to the value of frozen wheat for seed purposes. Many farmers are of the opinion that frozen grains will answer for seeding just as well as sound wheat, while others believe that it will not produce as sure and healthy a growth as the latter. Experiments have been made with the damaged wheat by sowing in a box, and it is found to germinate very well, but this can hardly be taken as a sure test under ordinary circumstances. Besides, damaged grain which would sprout in the usual time, might not mature as early as sound grain, and the product might not be of a desirable quality. It will be admitted that the bulk of the testimony is against the use of frozen wheat for seed. At all events, farmers should not run any unnecessary risks in a matter of such vital importance. Like begets like; and the very best grain procurable should always be used for seed, if a No. 1 quality is expected to be reaped at the harvest.

Some of the outlying municipalities in Manitoba and the territories have been placed in an awkward position, on account of the large amount of property lying within their boundaries, which is exempt from taxation. Moose Jaw is one of the places which is placed in a peculiar position in this respect. The town site is owned by the Government, the C.P.R. Co., and the Northwest Land Co., and all the lands held by these are exempt from taxation. This leaves very little property upon which a rate can be levied, and consequently the authorities find themselves short of funds for the purpose of municipal requirements. The people have petitioned the Dominion Government for relief, and as the exemptions were the creation of the Government it would seem but right that they should receive some assistance. However, if the principle were recognized in one instance, it would follow that all other municipalities should receive similar treatment, and forthwith there would be a deluge of demands from other municipal organizations. In the case of the Northwest Land Co., there appears to be some doubt as to the right of the company to exemption from taxation. According to the agreement between the Government and the C.P.R. Co., the lands granted the latter were to be exempt from taxation for the period of twenty years, but lands passing from the ownership of the company would become subject to taxation immediately upon such transfer. Now, the properties held by the Land Co., are a part of the original grant

to the Canadian Pacific Railway Co. The Land Co., have so far evaded the payment of taxes by posing as agent for the C. P. R. Co. The former company holds a large amount of real property in some sections of the province, and in municipalities where the company is very largely interested, there is some agitation to have the matter tested in the courts, as to the right of the company to exemption.

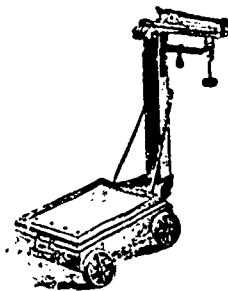
Commercial Summary.

Special telegrams to *Bradstreet's* report no real improvement in the movement of general merchandise throughout the country, with the exception of the increase in the eastern traffic of the California railways, owing to cut rates. At St. Louis and southwest thereof there is continued stagnation. Much impatience is manifested at business centres throughout Missouri, Kansas, Arkansas and Texas, owing to the continuation of the strike and the consequent embargo on trade. Brighter weather and a moderately active order demand for seasonable goods are reported from Cleveland, Detroit, Chicago, Burlington, Iowa, and Kansas City. At eastern centres business has not improved, but is equal in volume and promise to that of a week ago. In general it has been uneven, with the most strength shown by dry goods. Stocks of the latter at first hands are lighter. Higher wages paid mill operatives tend to advance prices, but the prospect of labor troubles renders the market heavy and uncertain. Jobbers are doing better than last week. Print cloths are firmer at 3½c less ½ per cent. for 64s. Wool is now admittedly heavy and lower in price. Mill supplies are light, but labor troubles are held by mill-owners to be a menace to the trade outlook, and holders are shading prices at seaboard markets. Iron presents few features beyond the weakness of finished iron at Pittsburgh, prices of which are as low as they were last autumn, while quotations for pig are \$1.50 higher. Pittsburgh is reported more bullish on pig iron than any other producing centre. The general industrial situation has not improved. The strikes of southwestern railway employes, of bituminous coal miners, and of textile mill operatives continue, and strikes at Pittsburgh of 1,200 employes of the National Tube Works and of 1,500 cloak and suit makers at New York bring the grand total of those on strike up to 55,000. The Adams, Mass., textile mill-owners' league to withstand the Knights of Labor promises a serious lockout in that locality. One-third of the hands at one mill have been discharged. Wheat is duller and lower again on western estimates of a heavier reserve on July 1 than had been expected. *Bradstreet's* estimates from available data point to a total stock, visible and invisible, on July 1 next of about 60,000,000 bushels, both coasts; other grains present no features, and hog products though in strong hands are not active. Low prices for sugar in London affect the market here. Coffee is easier under a small demand, and heavy offerings of tea at auction have had a like effect. There were 209 failures in the United States reported to *Bradstreet's* this week, against 211 last week, 247 in the third week in March,

1885, 192 in 1884, 196 in 1883 and 140 in 1882. Canada had 30, against 28 last week and 36 last year. The total number of failures in the United States from January 1 to March 19 is 2,948, against 3,474 in a like portion of 1885, a decline of 526 failures this year against last or nearly 47 per week. There were 2,885 failures in eleven weeks of 1884 (63 less than this year), 2,800 in 1883, and 1,899 in 1882.—*Bradstreet's*

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