

Northwest Letter.

MANITOBA millers are at variance with their eastern brethren on one point, namely, the duty on wheat. The discussion in the eastern press directed against the duty on wheat and in favor of a removal of the same, has caused a great deal of unfavorable comment here. The *Trade Bulletin* of Montreal, lately characterized it as a "great piece of folly," thus "depriving our millers of the very kind of wheat they most need, namely, American 1st spring, and at the same time affording not the slightest benefit to our farmers, the price of wheat being established in both Canada and the United States by the English markets." Now this may appear all right from an eastern point of view, but as seen here in Western Canada, it is all wrong. Millers here would not be disposed to oppose the increasing of duty on flour, say to 75 cents per barrel, to correspond with the duty on wheat, but to admit American wheat free of duty, would be a serious blow to the grain and milling industry in the Northwest. The result of such a move would be that Ontario millers would look to Duluth for their hard wheat, and thus the prices which are kept up here by the keen competition for Manitoba hard, would decline. One of the largest buyers in this province, for an eastern milling firm, told me a short time ago that his firm would not buy a bushel of Manitoba grain, if the duty on wheat were removed. His reason for this was, that he could go into Duluth and buy all the wheat he wanted, at a considerably lower rate than he was obliged to pay here and with a great deal less trouble about it. It is a well-known fact that wheat has been several cents higher in Manitoba during the past winter, than was paid at points in Minnesota and Dakota, where the value should be proportionately the same. Now, what has been the cause of this? Answer, simply the duty on wheat. It has been charged that railway and elevator monopolies were the cause of the lower prices to the south of the Manitoba boundary, but Manitoba possesses both these monopolies, especially the former, to a much greater degree than Minnesota and Dakota. As for the railways, it has been proved beyond dispute that the C. P. R. Co. charges from 5 to 10c. more per 100 pounds for carrying wheat to Lake Superior ports, than is charged by the American roads to carry wheat a proportionate distance to Duluth. But in spite of these hindrances, the same grades of wheat have brought higher prices in Manitoba than in the States to the south. The reason for this is, that there has been keen competition here between provincial and eastern millers for our wheat, and prices have accordingly kept up at the very most the market would allow. Without this duty on wheat, Ontario millers would have supplied themselves from Duluth, at the lower prices and more convenient market, a consequence of which would have been that Manitoba wheat would have been obliged to go begging at equal or lower prices, before it would have been purchased by these millers. Manitoba millers would also have been obliged to put down the price of wheat very low, in order to compete in eastern markets with the Duluth wheat, ground in eastern mills. The argument of the *Trade Bulletin*, that prices are regulated by the British markets, both in Canada and the United States, with the deduction that therefore the removal of the duties would not affect prices in Canada, is a statement which will bear a good deal of qualification. This statement has been so frequently made, that it has come to be accepted as a truism. But nevertheless it is not as true, generally, as is usually believed, and it has been made apparent on different occasions that large American markets are not without their influence in fixing the values of wheat. In fact, it was asserted by a leading American grain paper not long ago, that Chicago had quite as much to do in fixing prices of wheat as Liverpool. Of course this statement is no doubt wide of the mark, but it is not without its point. In the case of Manitoba, however, there are certain peculiarities surrounding the situation which make the statement that British markets fix prices quite without meaning. Under the existing state of things, British markets have less direct influence in this province than probably in any other part of the continent. This is owing to the fact, first, that our supply of wheat is limited; and second, that it is of a particular quality. Were the supply so large that there would be an abundance for both local and eastern millers, and a considerable surplus besides for export, prices of course would not be proportionately higher here than elsewhere. Knowing that there was plenty for all, there would not be the keen competition, and prices would not be advanced beyond an export basis. In regard to the second point of quality, as the *Trade Bulletin* says, hard spring wheat is the very quality Ontario millers need. With the duty on American wheat, they are obliged to look to Mani-

toba for the grain which they must have to compete with American millers. The supply being limited here, consequently prices are kept up to their full value. The benefit to the farmers and millers of Manitoba from the duty on wheat, is one which will not last. When wheat production increases to a point in excess of the local and eastern milling demand, then the enhanced value of wheat here or markets to the south of us will be lost. But in the meantime Manitoba farmers have a full right to any benefit which may be derived from the tariff. It is well known that the National Policy imposes a heavy burden upon the Northwest in many respects. We have fewer manufactures than any other part of Canada, and from our geographical position are obliged to import many things from the United States, upon which the excessive duties have to be paid. Upon the things most necessary to the Manitoba farmer, namely, agricultural machinery, the duties were twice increased, solely for the benefit of Ontario manufacturers, and the newly arrived immigrant was obliged to pay several hundred dollars more for an outfit of agricultural machinery than the settler in Dakota, and then get implements not as well adapted to prairie farming. However, protection and experience has enabled Ontario manufacturers of agricultural machinery to turn out just as good articles as the Americans, and at the same time reduce the price to about the same figures as the latter. Still there are other ways in which the protective duties continue to operate as a burden upon people here, more so than in Eastern Canada, and therefore I repeat, that Manitoba farmers have a right to the benefit of the duty on wheat, whilst it lasts.

The city mills were closed down for a week or so, owing to the dullness in the flour markets, both here and in the East. Something which was never before known in the trade here, has lately occurred. Up to the present season the mills here were never able to get a supply ahead of patent qualities of flour. Patents were all taken up by the local trade, and the bakers' grades were shipped east, with the low grades used for Indian and western trade. Lately, however, the local demand has changed largely to strong bakers, whilst patents have accumulated to a considerable extent. Eastern markets were not remunerative at present prices for high grades, and millers did not care about operating more than was actually necessary. One feature, however, which has been favorable to millers, has been the large demand for bran and shorts, which has existed during the entire winter, owing to a shortage in feed from the drought of last summer. Bran and shorts have sold at \$12 and \$14 respectively, during the winter, and since the middle of March prices have ruled at \$12 per ton for each, above quotations. After a short season of idleness, the mills resumed grinding, mainly owing to the demand for millstuffs.

Provincial wheat markets have continued very quiet for the past month, and at many points buyers had deserted their posts weeks ago. The principal buying has been for seed grain on government contract, which is being supplied settlers in the Territories in some districts north and west of Manitoba. For a month or six weeks back deliveries of wheat by farmers have been very light, and would give indication that there is not much unsold wheat in the province. An estimate of exports of wheat from the province would place the total for the crop of 1886 at say 1,750,000 bushels, up to the first of April. This would include shipments to Lake Superior ports, as well as shipments all rail to Eastern Canada. The provincial mills have probably ground about 1,250,000 bushels, making a total disposed of, of about 3,000,000 bushels. These figures are very moderate, the general estimate being about 500,000 bushels greater than the figures given. Wheat yet available, in store or held by farmers, will probably raise the aggregate, perhaps up to at least 4,000,000 bushels. This shows a falling off in comparison with last year. Up to the close of April, 1886, exports of wheat amounted to 2,933,744 bushels. At the close of the crop year of 1885-1886, the total exports from Manitoba of wheat (and flour represented in wheat) were placed at 4,250,000 bushels, with about 500,000 bushels still held in store, making the surplus crop of 1885 to nearly a total of 4,000,000 bushels. This would show a shortage of about 1,000,000 bushels in the crop of 1886, as compared with the previous year. But it must be remembered that a considerable quantity of Manitoba wheat has been shipped west, for grinding and for seed purposes, whilst there has also been a larger movement of flour west since the opening of the C. P. R. to British Columbia. These western shipments cannot be properly estimated as yet, but they would undoubtedly reduce the apparent shortage in the crop of 1886 to a considerable extent.

Notwithstanding the depression in the milling industry, there are good prospects of a considerable increase

in the grinding capacity of the province during the present season. Quite a number of new projects for establishing mills at points in Manitoba have come to the fore of late, several of which will no doubt be carried through. The only regrettable feature in connection with this is, that bonuses are wanted in almost every instance. Among the points where there is some prospect of establishing mills, are Birtle, High Bluff, Holland, Elk Horn, Manitou and Boissevain, all in Manitoba. At Holland a joint stock company has been formed, and at High Bluff a bonus by-law has been passed, granting \$6,000 in aid of establishing a mill. It is reported that the mill at Moosomin, Assiniboia territory, (which has remained in a half-completed state for nearly a year, though the failure of the party receiving the bonus to finish the work, and which has since passed through several hands), has been secured by parties who will complete it at once. The mill project at Shoal Lake, which also hung fire for a length of time, owing to a lack of funds on the part of the first projectors, has at last been successfully carried through, with the aid of an increased bonus, and the mill will commence to grind this month. The Rapid City mill, in aid of which bonuses to the amount of \$13,000 were granted, will shortly be completed and put in operation. A mill has lately been completed at Stonewall, and another at Balmoral, both in the Winnipeg district, in aid of which \$3,000 bonuses each were granted. The Carberry, Man., mill, which was badly wrecked by an explosion of dust a short time ago, has been thoroughly repaired and will soon be grinding again.

In Manitoba bonuses are granted not only for mills, but also for elevators, and in instances of the latter nature, the consideration is generally something in the way of special rates to farmers, as a return for the bonus assistance. A party has lately been endeavoring to secure \$7,000 bonus for the erection of an elevator at Portage la Prairie, specially for the benefit of farmers, but also for the use of grain dealers, on equal terms. The projector offers the following rates: For the first 15 days, or portion of same, 1¼ cents per bushel, to include storage, cleaning, elevating and loading into cars; ¼ cent per bushel for the next five days; and ½ cent per bushel for each succeeding twenty days, until 4 cents has accrued, after which no additional storage will be charged for six months. There are now two elevators at Portage, but they are both in the hands of millers, and independent buyers are sometimes crowded out, the railway company always being inclined to favor the elevators, against other shippers.

British Columbia lumber is now finding its way all over the province and territories, but this will not interfere with the local sawers. The B. C. lumber is all fine, finishing stuff, which is not produced here, and has to be imported from some quarter. Lumber dealers are anticipating a good trade during the coming season, especially in Winnipeg, where building operations promise to be on a much larger scale than last year. Preparations have commenced for the erection of half a dozen or so large blocks, and quite a number of residences are already under way. The thing most needed is an improvement in prices, which have been more or less demoralized for years, owing to excessive stocks held. This season, however, promises to place the trade upon a solid foundation.

THE HEATING POWER OF GAS.

A series of tests has already been made by Dr. Fischer, the well-known German chemist, showing that in ordinary domestic stoves in use not more than 20 per cent. of fuel consumed is really utilized for warming the rooms, whereas, with stoves burning gas, 80 per cent. and more of the possible effect is obtained. In a sugar manufactory at Elsdorf, it is stated no steam engines have been used for several years. Gas is made at a cost of about 10d. per 1000 cubic feet, and is used for lighting and driving gas engines. At the Essen works, water gas is made at a cost of 4d. to 8d. per 1000 feet, and serves both for fire and lighting.

CATARRH, CATARRHAL DEAFNESS, AND HAY FEVER.

[From Scientific American.]

Sufferers are not generally aware that these diseases are contagious, or that they are due to the presence of living parasites in the lining membrane of the nose and eustachian tubes. Microscopic research, however, has proved this to be a fact, and the result is that a simple remedy has been formulated whereby catarrh, catarrhal deafness, and hay fever are cured in from one to three simple applications made at home. A pamphlet explaining this new treatment is sent free on receipt of stamp, by A. H. Dixon & Son, 305 King Street West, Toronto, Canada.