

WINNIPEG AS A LUMBER CITY.

THE following story of a lumber boom for Winnipeg comes to us by way of our esteemed cotemporary, the Mississippi Valley Lumberman. A correspondent writing to that journal from Winnipeg says:

The most important enterprise affecting the lumber trade of this portion of Canada for many a long day—in fact since the trade came into existence—is now under consideration. The plan, if carried out, will completely revolutionize the entire lumber trade of this section. The scheme involves the construction of 100 miles of railway and the changing of the base of the lumber industry from the Lake of the Woods to the Red river. This is not a visionary enterprise, planned by speculators, boomsters or schemers. It is a well-considered plan, presented in a practical and feasible form and engineered by business men of the first magnitude in the industry.

Some two or three years ago a railway charter was secured for a road which was to be known as the Manitoba Southeastern, to run from Winnipeg in a southeasterly direction. A few miles of the road were graded, but nothing has since been done and the thing was regarded as simply one of those numerous railway schemes which were brought into existence for charter managing purposes. The existence of the charter had almost been forgotten until recently, when the Manitoba Southeastern has come to the front in a new role. The leading lumbermen of the Lake of the Woods district have become alarmed at the prospect of free trade in lumber, and they have been considering means of cheapening the cost of manufacture and reducing the cost of placing their product throughout the country. Practically the entire lumbering interest is centered at and about the town of Rat Portage, on the Lake of the Woods. The reason why it is so centered is that this is the only point on the lake reached by railway—the Canadian Pacific—and the pine timber country is tributary to the lake. The distance from the mills to Winnipeg is 150 miles and the trade of the mills begins at Winnipeg and extends westward. The mills, it will be seen, are thus located a long distance from their market, and with no railway competition very high railway rates and other disadvantages. They feel that they would not be able to compete with Minnesota manufacturers in case of free trade being established. The lumbermen have been pondering over this situation and they have evolved a plan which they believe opens a way out of all their disadvantages. They propose to build a railroad of their own from Winnipeg to the Lake of the Woods, establish their mills on the Red river, right in the centre of their trade, and bring the logs here to saw.

To carry out this programme they have secured control of the Manitoba Southeastern Railway, and propose working under this charter. This charter carries with it a bonus of 6,400 acres of land per mile of road, so that it is worth something more than the paper it is printed on. They can reach the lake in a southeasterly direction from Winnipeg within about 100 miles, thus shortening the distance over one-third as compared with the present Canadian Pacific line. By that road the logs would be hauled across and dumped into the Red river and sawed by mills to be erected or moved here from their present location at the lake.

The plan appears to be all perfected but the financing, and it is in the financing that it has been made public. The promotion of the enterprise is in the hands of Messrs. Cameron, Graham and Ross, all representative lumbermen. These gentlemen are negotiating with the Provincial Government for financial aid, in the form of a guarantee of interest, at 5 per cent. upon the lands of the company for 12 years to the amount of \$11,000 per mile. They do not ask this as a direct bonus from the province, but simply as a guarantee to assist them in floating the bonds. The province would of course be responsible for the payment of the interest in case the company defaulted, but the promoters offer to put up their land grant as security, so that they give ample security for the full amount of risk taken by the government. The company also offer to guarantee a maximum freight rate, amounting to 8 cents per 100 pounds on lumber, cordwood 3 cents, and

poles, posts, piles, etc., 4½ cents, and \$3 per thousand feet on logs. These are about half the present rates from the mills to Winnipeg. They propose getting to work at once, so that the mills would be established in Winnipeg by the early summer of 1895. The promoters claim that they will be able to manufacture the lumber in Winnipeg at about the same cost as they are now under at Rat Portage, and that the present freight rate would be entirely saved. The retail price of lumber, they claim, would be reduced in Winnipeg from \$4 to \$7 per thousand. The mills have no local demand for refuse where they are now situated, and this has to be burned to get it out of the way, while in Winnipeg the sale of the refuse would almost pay the cost of yarding. In Winnipeg, where fuel is dear, good prices could be obtained for slabs, etc. If they can carry out their scheme the promoters say that they will be able to sell lumber in Dakota and northeastern Minnesota, instead of fearing competition from that quarter.

The proposed road would open up a fine agricultural prairie country, now without railway communication, for some distance east of Winnipeg, after which it would enter the pine country and continue on to the lake. It is also believed that the road would become a link in another through road to Lake Superior, which is so badly needed to give competition in export grain rates. There is a road now building eastward from Port Arthur, on Lake Superior, to the Rainy river district, and a little extension would join the two lines. It would be a great thing for Winnipeg, making it a lumbering city of considerable magnitude. The scheme has been received with great favor by the people here, as it is now felt that the cost of lumber is too great, and in fact an agitation is at present on foot to secure lower freight rates. The government is therefore being strongly pressed to grant the financial aid asked.

BLACK WALNUT FARMING.

BLACK walnut, like many other particular classes of wood, is fast becoming scarce. Mr. James Nichols, a large shipper of Virginia, who was interviewed the other day by a newspaper reporter has furnished some interesting information concerning this wood.

"Black walnut is worth twice as much nowadays," said Mr. Nichols, "as it was ten years ago. The supply is practically exhausted. Ten years ago there was a big quantity in sight in Southern Indiana—great trees eighty feet high to the first limb, and from three to five feet in diameter. But all that is gone, and Missouri has the only supply of any considerable amount, and that is melting away fast. These logs of mine (referring to a shipment of twelve carloads) come from the woodlands on top of the Katoc range. They are none of them what would be called first-class. A few years ago nobody would think of buying them. That, indeed, is why they are in my hands to-day. Thousands of just such logs have been cut and used for firewood by Virginia farmers, and every little while I hear nowadays of some old backwoods mossback who has burned up a \$50 log in his \$2 cook stove. That is a thing to make you swear, but those old fellows can't read or write, and see few outsiders, so they do just as they did fifty years ago.

"I found the other day a black walnut plank four feet wide nailed up in a Virginia barn, where it had been for twenty years waiting until its owner could get the three or four dollars necessary to pay for getting it made up into a good kitchen table. That plank, just as it stood, was worth money enough to buy the old man four good cherry tables. I tell you, it is hard to find four-foot black walnut logs in my neighborhood now. Six years ago I was travelling in the south-western part of West Virginia, where I saw some very fine timber land. I asked the people I met what land was worth around there.

"'Oh,' they said, 'if you go back away it can be had for 50 cents an acre.'

"I was through that way last summer, and that same land, which I unluckily did not buy, was stripped of its heavy timber, and they were grubbing out numerous black walnut stumps, which they told me were worth anywhere from \$50 to \$100 for the splendid sound burl veneering to be cut from them.

"These little logs that we ship from the Katoc range will seldom square over fourteen inches, but they are sound and make a good quality of lumber. I pay about 12 cents a square foot in the log, owner grubbing the tree out by the roots according to my directions. If a tree will cut into a log fourteen feet long it does well. The farmers are glad to get rid of them, for the black walnut is not much of a shade tree. Nothing will grow under it on account of the peculiar acid-like quality of the tree, and there is hardly a tree that grows that sends its limbs and roots further laterally, so that it despoils a good deal of land. If a farmer can by expending \$5 worth take out a tree that will bring him \$12 to \$15, and leave him soil enough to bring in \$6 or \$8 hereafter in crops, why, he is making a good thing of it. I get on an average \$160 per 1,000 feet for the black walnut I take to market. There is a good margin between buying and selling, but the quantity to be had is so limited that it is not a safe or very profitable business to be engaged in. It would not pay me, or any one, to put my whole time into it.

"And let me tell you this: If you want to leave your children and grand-children a fortune, buy some worthless mountain land and plant black walnuts. You can get thousands of acres in some parts of Virginia and West Virginia, and the walnuts are to be had in almost endless quantity every fall anywhere within forty or fifty miles of Washington. The tree really grows rapidly, notwithstanding its strong acid character and peculiarly dark, firm grain. If you chose to cut a tree fifteen years old you could make money planting them for that length of time. It is a good crop to try."

TRICK OF A SAFETY VALVE.

AN engineer recently observed his steam gauge indicating a higher pressure than his safety valve spring was set for. He slackened the spring, but the gauge kept rising and the steam did not blow off. He slackened the spring further, still the steam did not blow. When the pressure rose to 200 pounds he became alarmed; and as he could not start the engine he started the injector and opened the water blow-off cock. The damper being closed, this had the effect to prevent further increase of pressure. On examining the safety valve it appeared that the brass seat of the valve was a bushing put into an iron casting, that it had become loose and that the steam had pressed it up against the valve. As the valve rose the seat followed it, and there could not have been a release of steam until the bushing was pushed out of its hole. Some serious accidents have occurred from this cause. It is not good engineering to so construct safety valves that it is possible for the valve seat to become detached.

NOT ALWAYS THE CASE.

PERIODICALLY there floats through the technical press, says Power, an item to the effect that one-sixteenth of an inch of scale has been determined by accurate experiment to require 15 per cent. more fuel; three-sixteenths, 23 per cent. While this may be strictly true for the boiler experimented upon, it can not, in the nature of things, be of universal application nor an index of the loss which may be expected upon another boiler from a given thickness of scale. A boiler with a meager amount of heating surface would suffer seriously from an impairment of the efficiency of that surface by scale, while a boiler with ample surface would suffer comparatively little. The item evidently started from a formula based by Nystrom upon the alleged fact that saturated scale has about one-thirtieth the conductivity of iron plate, and giving the diminishing values quoted as the amounts of heat transmitted through a given amount of heating surface.

HOW TO DO IT.

TO maintain perfect regulation, place the engine in the hands of a competent engineer, who is capable of adjusting and keeping the engine in good running order. A good engine, or piece of machinery, placed in the hands of an incompetent person, will never give good service or economical results.