

The Commercial

WINNIPEG, SEPTEMBER 24, 1894.

MAGNIFICENT MILLING WHEAT.

The Western Grain Standards board met in Winnipeg on Tuesday for the purpose of fixing the standards for grading the present crop. Bags of wheat from all over the country, numbering in the hundreds, had been collected, for the purpose of affording the members of the board an idea as to the average quality of the crop, and if the wheat will average all around as good as these samples, it certainly is a magnificent crop in point of quality. The samples are probably the best ever gathered together in Winnipeg for any previous meeting of the Grain Standards board. The wheat is plump, dry, bright, nearly all pure hard wheat, and of extra heavy weight to the measured bushel. In the language of Inspector Horn, it is simply magnificent wheat. Last year's crop was of very fine average quality, but this year's is better, particularly in respect to the plumper berry. The samples gathered, which no doubt indicate a fair average of the crop, show it to be an excellent milling quality. Millers never had better wheat to work upon than the quality of the Manitoba crop for 1894. We have to go back to the year 1883 to find a crop of as average good quality as the present year, while the yield this year is much better than in 1883.

There may be a little more smut this year than last, but the weather has been favorable for handling smutty wheat, and if due care is taken the bad effects of the smut can be overcome. The grain should be dry when threshed, and if the wheat is run through a fanning mill before it is taken to the elevators, the smut will be pretty well disposed of. Handling the wheat in the elevators causes the "tagging" of the wheat. The smut balls are broken and the black, sooty substance with which they are filled, is dusted over the wheat. Farmers who have smut in their wheat, can take the most of it out by fanning, if they will take the pains.

The standards, as selected by the board this year, are practically the same as last year. There was little trouble in fixing the standards, as the crop is similar to last year's in its general condition, and it was agreed at the outset by the board to make the standards as nearly the same as last year as possible. The highest grade of Extra Manitoba hard, is a magnificent sample of pure, hard red fye wheat weighing 62 lbs. to the bushel or more. No. 1 hard is a fine milling wheat, weighing 61 pounds to the measured bushel. The act calls for a wheat weighing 60 pounds to the bushel for this grade, but the wheat is all so heavy that it has been difficult this year to get a standard sample down to 60 pounds, consequently the standard shows a weight of 61 pounds for No. 1 hard, the same as last year. No. 2 hard is a really good hard red fye milling wheat, but this grade weighs a couple of pounds lighter

per bushel than No. 1. The grade of No. 3 hard is still a couple of pounds per bushel lighter than No. 2, and will take in some wheat that was caught by hot weather at a critical stage, and as a consequence presents a somewhat bleached and shrunken appearance. It is nevertheless a fairly good milling wheat. The grades of No. 1 and No. 2 northern are the same in general condition as the grades of No. 1 and No. 2 hard, with the exception that the northern grades will contain a smaller percentage of hard red fye wheat. The inspection act stipulates that the northern grades shall contain not less than 50 per cent. of hard red fye wheat. Soft wheat will be classed as "spring" grades, but there will be very little of this class of grain. Only two or three bags of soft wheat appeared among the samples gathered for the board of examiners. Smutty wheat of course will not be allowed in the regular grades.

It is a matter for satisfaction to the trade that the quality of the wheat is so high this year. With such fine wheat to work with, it will be pleasure for millers and shippers to do business this year. The person who would grumble with such wheat, could be set down at once as a born fault-finder. The fact that the grades will be practically the same as last year, is also a matter for satisfaction on the part of shippers. Foreigners who handled Manitoba wheat last year, will find the grades this year fully up to expectations, and there will be no misunderstandings and disputes such as might occur from a lowering of the quality of the grades. In fact, Manitoba hard wheat may be expected to increase in favor during the next year in British and other markets where it is handled. It is certainly a very desirable milling wheat.

As regards the production of wheat this year, it is also pleasing to note that the yield per acre in Manitoba is turning out larger than was previously estimated. Threshing has made considerable progress, and threshing returns, which are the most reliable reports, indicate a larger average yield in many districts than was accredited in earlier estimates. It is now believed in well informed circles that the August estimate of the Manitoba department of agricultural, which was 15.6 bushels per acre, will be exceeded by the actual returns. An export surplus of 15,000,000 to 16,000,000 bushels is now counted upon from the 1,000,000 acres in crop in Manitoba this year.

LIVE STOCK VS. DEAD MEAT.

The cable from England the other day, to the effect that Australia would be a competitor the coming winter in the live cattle trade, can hardly be taken as a very serious matter. The great distance, and the severe climatic conditions experienced on a voyage from Australia to England, renders it very doubtful as to the success of live stock shipments from Australia.

It seems peculiar, however, that while many in Canada advocate the discontinuance of the exportation of live cattle, in favor of the shipment of dead meat, that in Australia they

should contemplate the shipment of live stock in the place of dead meat. Heretofore the trade from Australia has been in the form of refrigerated meats, and the proposal to attempt the shipment of live stock might be taken as indicating that the frozen meat trade is not as satisfactory as is desirable. Further information regarding the proposed shipment of live stock from Australia would be interesting, as bearing upon the question of the live stock versus the dead meat trade.

The Commercial has been an advocate of the dead meat trade, and we have hoped that in the not distant future the live stock export trade of Western Canada would give place to an export trade in dead meat. To the advocates of the dead meat trade, this report about the shipment of live cattle from Australia comes as a surprise, and further information will be awaited with some anxiety. There can be no question as to the economy in handling dressed meats, as compared with the shipment of live stock. It is also generally admitted that the dressed meat could be laid down on the other side of the Atlantic in a better and more healthful condition, than meat from animals slaughtered immediately on arrival. In fact shippers of cattle themselves will admit that the health of many of the animals is so affected by the hardships of the voyage that they are not in a fit condition for slaughtering. From the humanitarian point of view, it is also desirable that the live stock trade should be superceded by the shipment of dressed meat.

The greatest hope of Western Canada for a large export trade in dead meats, is in the opening of the Hudson Bay route. This route offers possibilities for the expansion of the trade which cannot begin to be conceived of under existing conditions.

THE OUTLOOK IN MANITOBA.

The only discouraging feature of the situation in Manitoba at the moment is the low price of wheat. In almost every other respect the outlook is cheery. Unfortunately as regards wheat, there does not seem to be much hope for any considerable improvement in the price, so far as we can at present see into the future. Many persons are firm believers in the theory that wheat values have reached a permanently lower basis, while there are many others who believe that old prices will come back again. While we hardly look for a permanent return to old values, we expect that wheat will have its ups and downs in the future the same as it has had in the past, and it is quite possible that wheat prices might within even a year's time show a marked appreciation over present values. As we have said, however, there seems to be nothing at the moment upon which to base a hope for any marked improvement in prices in the near future. Notwithstanding present low prices, The Commercial cannot therefore advise the holding of wheat in expectation of higher prices. Even although there might be some advance toward spring, it would not pay farmers to hold for a rise of a few cents. It would pay them better to sell at once and have the