

These mines are entirely different from such gold developments as are taking place in the Klondike, where men, with neither machinery nor much skill, can pick up gold in river beds, too often spending the proceeds in riot and dissipation. The gold developments at the Lake of the Woods are of a similar kind to those of gold mining in Nova Scotia, where numbers of men are regularly employed, and a population of skilled workmen is being built up. The splendid water power at Rat Portage and Keewatin has been utilized to drive the great flouring mills and lumber mills there, and two bright-looking and prosperous-looking towns have sprung up within the last ten years, with all the evidences of active business and growing population about them.

As to indications of gold on the Michipicoten River, it is too early to say anything definite about them. But as indicating the value of mining productions, as compared with those of the farm, it may be said that the net annual result of the operations of the two mines above named will be fully equal to that of 85,000 acres of farming land. Of course, such a quantity of farming land would give an enormously increased employment to labor, and leave far more of indirect value to the country. But so far as mere monetary result is concerned, the above is a fair statement of fact.

AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT IN THE WEST.

As is well known, there is little of agricultural development met with until Winnipeg itself is reached. It is from the Red River westward that the vast plains extend which are now being brought into cultivation. Much of the land within twenty or thirty miles of the city lies low, and requires draining; consequently there are comparatively few evidences of settlement until that distance from the capital has been reached. But whereas so short a time as fifteen years ago the vast plains which stretch between Winnipeg and Portage la Prairie (a distance of 60 miles) were almost solitary, there are now a large number of well cultivated farms and good farming homesteads within that space, with every evidence of growing prosperity about them. At this time of the year, in every part of the settled country, the stacks of grain meet the eye in every direction—as pleasant a sight as any well-wisher of the country could desire to see. After a point, say, forty miles westward from Winnipeg, on the main line of the Canada Pacific, has been reached, settlement becomes almost continuous, and the eye is gladdened with a large extent of wide-spreading, open country; vast plains being covered with crops or herds of cattle. It is well recognized that the district around Portage la Prairie is one of the finest in the whole North-West, and evidences of growth are clearly seen in the improved style of homesteads, the fencing, and particularly in the much larger number of cattle than used to prevail formerly. From thence the proofs of growth and prosperity meet the eye on every side. Whether a traveller proceeds in a north-westerly direction along the line of the Manitoba and N.W. Railway, or due west by the main line of the Canada Pacific, or whether he reaches out to the great undulating plains of Southern and South-Western Manitoba, there is but one story to tell, and that is about more land being taken up year by year, more cattle, better buildings and fences, more money in circulation, and evidences on all sides of growing wealth and prosperity.

This year will, undoubtedly, give Manitoba and the adjacent territory a decided impetus in the path of progress. The country has been favored in all its parts with a re-

markably good harvest, and there was neither frost, drought nor hail to injure it; the crops of wheat, therefore, though only an average in quantity were of an unusually high grade as to quality. By far the larger part of the wheat this year will grade No. 1 hard, which, as is well known, is about the best in the world, and readily commands the best figures in leading markets. This will produce much better results, and cause an absence of those disputes which have so often arisen in connection with frosted or rusted wheat in former years.

The price of wheat has advanced to such an extent that the farmers of Manitoba will realize almost double what they realized for their crop two years ago. And they are very wisely threshing out their yield and carrying it to market as fast as possible.

Nothing was more striking as the train proceeded on its way across the settled plains, than to see the steam threshing-machines at work in all directions, and also the teams loaded with wheat proceeding to the towns and villages where there were elevators; the Canadian Pacific Railway is putting forth all its strength in order to move the crop out of the country, so as to enable money to be realized from it. Cars by the thousand are engaged in this vast operation, and never in the history of the railway were such quantities moved in so short a time as has been done lately.

The result of all this farming business is visible in the improved appearance of villages and towns. These are all growing in substantial appearance, and evidences of a living and active business are apparent. In the town of Brandon there is not a house or store to let.

Winnipeg has grown very largely since a former visit of some seven years ago; but the city has *improved* to a greater extent than it has grown. All the requirements of modern civilization are to be met with there, just as in the larger cities of the east.

The present year will almost certainly see a large reduction of mortgage indebtedness in Manitoba, as well as indebtedness for implements and store goods. Many a long standing debt will doubtless be paid this year, and many a doubtful debt made good. Already, outstandings which had been written off merchants' books have been paid in full, and so early as this there have been instances of farmers selling enough product to pay all their liabilities and leave large sums at their credit; this year's crop being equal to the whole value of the farm, as it was reckoned a year or two ago.

The evils that were encountered in doing business in Manitoba, viz., excessively long credit, doubtful payments, constant renewals, and a large percentage of losses, are gradually disappearing, and the province is assuming the character that the older Provinces of Ontario and Quebec have long borne for comparatively solid and steady business.

In Manitoba, however, there is room for an immense accession of new population. Three times, or five times, as many people as are in it now could be established prosperously.

The country around Winnipeg, if drained, would be about the finest district in the province, and thousands of farmers could settle in it. The people of Winnipeg themselves would find it in their interest to promote a large system of drainage. They could well afford to pay one half the cost out of their own funds, in consideration of the improvement it would bring to the business of the city.

Doubtless such an enterprising body as the community of Winnipeg is will give this weighty matter the attention it deserves.