

The Commercial

WINNIPEG, DECEMBER 26, 1892.

CHRISTMAS GREETING.

Without enlarging, THE COMMERCIAL wishes its patrons, one and all, a merry Christmas and a happy New Year.

LOW PRICES FOR GRAIN.

It is not in the west alone that depression is caused by the very low prices ruling this season for grain. On account of the great cost of carrying grain from the remote interior to the seaboard, the prices of wheat and other grains are lower in the west than elsewhere, but this is more than counterbalanced by the ability of western farmers to produce more cheaply than those of the east. At a recent meeting of a Manitoba farmers' institute, there were some present who asserted that they could grow wheat at a cost of 30 cents a bushel and less. In Ontario quantities of spring wheat have sold at 60c per bushel, which is probably comparatively lower than prices here, when cost of production is taken into account. It is also lower than prices in Manitoba, on a basis of cost of freight. Ontario millers can buy their local spring wheats at about 60c, but Manitoba hard costs them about 80 cents per bushel, adding freight rates to prices ruling in Manitoba markets.

Across the Atlantic the agricultural interests of Great Britain are again apparently more keenly affected than in Canada, by the low prices of cereals. There the farmers appear to be driven to the greatest straits. British agriculture is sore distressed, and as is usual in such cases, an agitation is springing up looking for some way to remedy the matter. Meetings of representatives of the agricultural interests have been held, and protection for the home produce has been demanded. Under present conditions, British farmers appear unable to compete in their own markets with the imported goods. Here in the west our farmers appear able to grow wheat, pay the freight to Britain, and sell cheaper there than the British farmer can do, with the freight in his favor. As a result, doleful tales are heard in Britain of deserted farms, untilled soil and ruined agricultural interests. While therefore low prices cause depression here in the new world of the west, we are still in better shape than the farmer across the water. Imports of food-stuffs into the United Kingdom are steadily increasing, while home production is decreasing. With an unlimited market at home and freight rates in their favor as against imports, British farmers are being driven to the wall, and the land is going out of cultivation. Imports of food-stuffs into Britain last year reached the enormous amount of \$576,230,000, and this all for commodities, which the country is adapted by natural conditions for producing to good advantage. This is ample proof that British farmers cannot compete with imported commodities. The situation seems dark for the British farmer, and not very bright for the people as a

whole. With such enormous imports of commodities which should be produced at home, and millions of acres of land going out of cultivation, the outlook is not encouraging from any point of view for the British people, who are gradually becoming more and more dependent upon foreigners for their food supply—a source which is liable to serious interruption at any time from war. One of the greatest problems which the British people at home to-day have to face would seem to be how to prevent the further decadence of agriculture, and restore waste lands to cultivation. There is idle land enough in the British Isles to support millions of people, notwithstanding the vast annual imports of foodstuffs from abroad.

PACIFIC RAILWAYS.

The cities of St. Paul and Minneapolis are celebrating the completion of another railway, the Great Northern line being now completed through to Puget Sound. The road will not be ready for active traffic for some time yet. The Great Northern is better known throughout the Northwest as the "Manitobaa" road. Its original line ran from the Minnesota twin cities to the Manitoba boundary, 60 miles south of Winnipeg, where it connected with a branch of the Canadian Pacific, completed in 1880. The Saint Paul, Minneapolis and Manitoba railway (the full name by which the Great Northern was until a year or so ago known), was the first road to give Manitoba railway connection with the outside world, and since 1880 through trains between Winnipeg and St. Paul and Minneapolis have been constantly run. The road is therefore intimately associated with the early railway history of this province. Manitobans regret the change which led to the dropping of the word "Manitoba" from the name of the road, but the extension of the road westward to the Pacific necessitated a new name of a less local significance than the one formerly applied to the railway.

Though the Great Northern has dropped the word Manitoba, and has become a Pacific road, yet we hope it will continue to have an active part in the railway affairs of Manitoba. The company now has two lines terminating directly at the Manitoba boundary, and two or three other lines approaching the boundary. The extension of these roads into Manitoba would be welcomed by many. The Great Northern is now dependent upon the Canadian Pacific in running its trains into Winnipeg. Now that it has become a Pacific road, and will soon enter the field in competition with the Canadian Pacific for coast business, some change may be made in the relationship of the two roads at this end. Pacific coast business for St. Paul, Minneapolis and central states' cities is now handled over the Canadian Pacific to Winnipeg, thence south over the Great Northern. This traffic will of course cease when the Great Northern has its own Pacific line in operation, as the latter road will then be in the field to compete in taking the traffic from coast points that it is now receiving from the Canadian Pacific at Winnipeg. The latter road will also have to make a new shift for connection through to central states' points. This it is already preparing for in the construction of the new

road from St. Paul and Minneapolis, across the states of Minnesota and Dakota, in a northwesterly direction, crossing the boundary into Canadian territory near the new town of Estevan, and thence northward to connect with the main line of the Canadian Pacific west of Regina. This road is an extension of the St. Paul, Minneapolis and Sault St. Marie railway, controlled by the Canadian Pacific. It will be completed next summer, and will give the Canadian Pacific a shorter and more direct line between central states' points and the Pacific coast, than it now enjoys through its traffic arrangement with the Great Northern, via Winnipeg.

The completion of the Great Northern makes the third Pacific railway extending through the northern wheat region to the coast, and it is worthy of note that these three lines—the Canadian Pacific, the Northern Pacific and the Great Northern—are running daily trains into Winnipeg.

VALUE OF WATER POWER.

The Baltimore Sun says that the city of Augusta, state of Georgia, will realize this year from her canal, in water rents from the people and the amounts paid by the factories for water power at least \$90,000, or 4½ per cent. on \$2,000,000. Augusta's municipal indebtedness is \$1,700,000. If the canal and water works were sold for \$2,000,000 Augusta would be out of debt and have in her treasury \$300,000. But the city has no idea of parting with its canal property, which is yearly increasing in value. Winnipeg has a water power which is running to waste, representing an annual loss estimated to approximate \$200,000 net. Winnipeg's debt is greater than that of the southern city, while the cost of utilizing our water power would not be as great. Why not construct the necessary work and apply the revenue therefrom toward reducing the civic debt.

TRESPASS BY HUNTSMEN.

The other day in Manitoba a quarrel which resulted in the fatal stabbing of one person and the serious wounding of another, occurred through a case of trespass by a huntsman. This calls attention to the question of shooting game on the property of others. In this country the greatest liberty is taken by huntsmen in shooting upon the property of others. The rule here is to pay no regard whatever to the rights of property in following game. We have heard many complaints on account of the custom, and on more than one occasion THE COMMERCIAL has been asked to take the matter up, in advocacy of more stringent law against this form of trespass. So general is the rule to follow game over private property, that shooting on the farm of another is really not considered as a trespass at all. It is simply done as a matter of course. Still, there is quite a feeling amongst farmers against it, and it might be advocated with good reason that the law should prevent persons from shooting upon enclosed lands at least. In this country where the farms are large, and where there are large areas of unbroken prairie, it is difficult to distinguish farm boundaries, unless the land is on