

The Commercial

WINNIPEG, SEPTEMBER 9, 1889.

THE WHEAT YIELD OF 1889.

During the early portion of July THE COMMERCIAL in more than one article called attention to the misleading crop reports, which were then in circulation, and were being freely forwarded by mail and wire to the east, and it seems now, that the grain of the Northwest is safely harvested, the reports of yields therefrom are also very misleading, and as is generally the case, the less reliable the source, the more misleading the report.

If a visitor felt inclined to base his estimate of the Northwestern grain crop of 1889 upon the result of the harvest in any one section of country, he could by selection of the section supply himself, with a report of the most glowing description, or he could procure one very discouraging indeed. It would all depend upon where he located his observations. With such a variety as this in the crop yield, it can easily be seen how difficult it is to approximate, much less estimate closely the average yield for the Province of Manitoba. An estimate of this kind can be after all but a well judged guess; and even the estimate of average yield given in the last crop bulletin issued by the Provincial Government, although based upon carefully gathered information from all parts of the Province, cannot be rated as anything better than a rough approximation.

Although the difficulty in estimating the Manitoba crop yield is great this year, it is by no means so insurmountable as it was last fall with the 1888 crop. Then the farmer who gathered in 30 bushels of wheat to the acre, had invariably neighbors close beside him, whose crops were not worth cutting; and it was not unfrequent to find two wheat fields on the same section of land, one yielding a good crop, and the other yielding nothing. This year we might use the gambler's phrase, and say that the luck has run in streaks, and with few exceptions the streaks are distinct and clearly defined. Still the distribution of luck has been so erratic as to make the work of reaching an average yield for the whole country anything but a simple or easy contract.

Another marked difference in the crop results of 1888 and 1889 is, that the

more searching the inquiry last year, the more discouraging were the revelations of damage done, and not until the threshing machine had got half way through its season's work was the full extent of damage realised, while this fall the more closely inquiry is made, the more hopeful the prospect of a good yield of wheat becomes, and now that the threshing machine is slowly reducing, or it might be said truly increasing the yield estimates to actual facts, it is apparent, that while wheat will be a short yield for the Northwest, it would be a liberal one for any other portion of this continent, while the quality all over is turning out much superior to the grain produced here in any former year.

Looking matters in the light of the above facts, it would be wisdom for people to wait a month or two in order to secure a better estimate of the average wheat yield, as the threshing machine will give it, and even those who are anxious, to reach the probable aggregate report from this crop, would do well to wait until next summer and secure correct figures. It is evident that neither of those anxious crowds will be displeased with the actual results once they are obtainable. Every indication pointed to a heavy discount coming off the most reliable grain yield estimates of a year ago, and it must be admitted by the most sanguine friend of the Northwest, that the figures of grain exports from the 1888 crop were very disappointing. The indications are that estimates of the 1889 crop are likely to prove too low, and agreeable surprise instead of disappointments will doubtless be felt by the same people, once they hear actual results from this year.

Only about two months ago it did look as if the grain crop of this Province was ruined by drought, and that with a continuation of such weather bread and seed for a coming year would not be by any means certain. Now we are sure of both, and also of being able to export wheat enough to feed for a year a population five times the number of our own at least. This has been accomplished in a year of drought, and it might truly be said during the months of July and August, for all the improvement in crops took place during these two months. Surely such results should close the mouths of the agriculturist's wise head (?) who pretend to have studied and reduced to a science the peculiarities connected

with the soil and climate of this wonderful country. Such people will be telling us once more that we have had an exceptional season, a piece of information that has been furnished annually for the past seven years at least. It would be far better for us all to admit the fact, for it is a fact beyond dispute that even in wheat raising, we are as yet only experimenting in Manitoba.

UNNECESSARY GRUMBLING.

Committee's like individuals often get into a state of chronic grumbling, and frequently continue to grumble long after the cause for the dissatisfaction is removed, and there is strong reason to believe that the trading community of Manitoba are committing this foolish blunder at the present time. That there has been cause for grumbling in the past is beyond doubt, but that the cause is now greatly removed is equally certain. But as grumbling is in a great measure a habit, we may expect, that it will continue with many long after the necessity for it ceases, and with some it has developed into a chronic if not incurable disease.

Grumbling finds a tangible source in disappointed expectations, and as a new western community like that of Manitoba is made up largely of persons, who came here with the expectation of becoming rapidly if not suddenly wealthy, is it not unnatural, that there should be an abnormally large proportion of grumblers here. The number who have rapidly acquired wealth here is not very great, and yet it is safe to say, that an overwhelming majority of our population have bettered their condition since coming to this Province, and the exceptions are rare, in which men have fared worse in a wordly sense since locating here, than they did in the country they came from.

But it is grumbling under the present circumstances, and with the present prospect, that seems most unpardonable on the part of our trading community. That the Province has passed through a few months of slow trade and financial tightness during the summer now near an end, is unquestionable. But a few months of pressure before harvest is to be looked for in a purely agricultural country, and after a damaged crop which brought great disappointment, the past summer's pressure was naturally heavier than usual. But the pressure is now