

through their malfesance, the province will have four years freedom from political agitation, so damaging to its commercial welfare.

THE NORTH-WESTERN RAILWAY.

In circles which should be well informed it is reported that the Portage Westborne and North-western railway has now obtained command of capital sufficient not only to construct its own trunk line, as projected to and beyond Prince Albert but also to lend the Syndicate a helping hand in the construction of feeders to the main line of the Canadian Pacific, should Mr. Stephen and his associates desire to take advantage of its aid. The Allan influence which is very powerful in the money market is now said to be cast in support of the North-western and as it is or will shortly be, no longer necessary for this company to take advantage of every mile of railway already constructed, it may well be worth their consideration if it could not be better, while still maintaining the junction at Portage la Prairie to run a line right into Winnipeg. It is quite evident that the C.P.R. line between Winnipeg and the Portage has already traffic sufficient to keep it employed and if the settlement of the Saskatchewan country proceed as rapidly as there is every reason to believe it will, the traffic upon the Portage section of the C.P.R. will speedily become congested. There does not seem to be any good reason why the two companies should not dwell together in amity and the making of the North-western terminus in Winnipeg will not materially injure the Syndicate, which indeed has no power to prevent the North-western coming into the capital if the directorate are so minded. The Syndicate will have the handling of all the traffic after it reaches Winnipeg for about nineteen years yet, for the North-western would never attempt to cut a way through to Lake Superior and they are debarred from seeking a southern outlet, except by the Manitoba South-western, the route of which is too circuitous to be profitable in competition with the lines wholly owned by the Syndicate. THE COMMERCIAL hopes that the North-western directorate will earnestly consider the propriety of running directly into Winnipeg. Their decision to do so would be received by the business men of the city as a movement which would be beneficial all round.

THE UNSEASONABLE SEASON.

The telegraph, by bridging space and annihilating time, enables data to be gathered such as warrant, without the possession of scientific knowledge, the assertion that, the world over, the season is most unseasonable. In Europe floods have been premature in their arrival and have lingered late or begun too early. This winter has been almost as different from the average season as that season is by all accounts different from the old fashioned winter. On this continent cold and snow are as phenomenally severe as wind and water across the Atlantic. The cold spell has undoubtedly been the longest severe spell on record and its area has been far greater than any hitherto remarkable cold wave. In Manitoba we have had continuous cold for a longer period than can be recollected by people far advanced in years, who were born in the early days of settlement here. There have been colder days than any registered this winter, but nothing to approach the continued severity of the month of January. A peculiarity of the winter is the light snowfall, there having been no interruption beyond a few hours from this cause to railway traffic in the North-West this winter. If their thermometers be reliable the States of Minnesota and Dakota have had not only cold as severe as we have had in Manitoba, but a fall of snow almost unprecedented. While railways have been open in the Canadian North-West, in Minnesota the railways have all been more or less blocked, and the same holds true of Dakota. In Iowa the trunk lines east and west have been blocked for two and three days at a time, while on some of the lines west of the Mississippi, running north and south, there has been no mail for nine days. Even Chicago, for forty-eight hours, maintained connection with New York only by one telegraphic wire. In Ontario the cold has registered 30° below; at Montreal, 35° below; Quebec, 39° below, and in the New England States 35° below has been registered. With such incontrovertible facts as these before us, and comparing their experience with ours we must come to the conclusion that cold and all as the season has been, the people of Manitoba have reason to be thankful for having, under all the circumstances, the decidedly preferable share of the unseasonable season.

TRICKS IN GRADING.

The Chicago *Tribune* says:

"A great deal of talk was heard yesterday about the present grading of oats and corn, and bitter talk at that. Some receivers estimated that our receipts of corn during the last month have been at least 1,000,000 bushels less than they would have been with a 'fair' inspection, and asserted that either the inspection of a month ago was unjust or that of to-day was rotten. They said that the corn received in the middle of December was in much poorer condition than that now coming in, yet did not grade any worse. Some experts who were conversed with said that fully half of the corn now inspecting as now mixed, ought to be graded No. 2, being sound and hard and up to every reasonable requirement for the speculative grade. It is notorious that two parties are buying these low grades with the intent of holding them in elevator till spring, when they expect all will grade as No. 2, and another is loading the new mixed into vessels to lie in the harbor till navigation opens, while large quantities of the new mixed have been bought for export in full confidence that it will bear the journey across the Atlantic without heating."

If instead of "corn" the Winnipeg dealer reads "wheat" he will understand why it is that THE COMMERCIAL insists upon the grading of Manitoban grain being done in this city instead of in Minneapolis, Chicago, Toronto, or Montreal. The grading of grain in the Chicago market is more regular than in any of the others mentioned, and if such flagrant injustice may be done in what is generally considered a regular market, what is to be expected from others which are usually flexible? Winnipeg, and no outside market, Canadian or American, is the market wherein Manitoban grain must be graded, if the whole trade is not to be made a football by outside speculators, and if our own people are to administer justice to themselves. The necessity and urgency of something being done is apparent. Who will take the initiative? Has the Board of Trade nothing to say? Is the City Council prepared to acquiesce in a place in Ontario being built up at the expense of Winnipeg and the whole North-west?

THERE are numerous commercial alarmists in the United States as well as in Canada, and as a rule there are much firmer believers in the doctrines of the balance of trade. That the latter months of 1892 did develop a dulness in many branches of business in the United States cannot be denied, and with the opening of 1893 there seems to be no movement towards improvement. The fact that the export of provisions in 1891 were valued at \$133,332,417, and in 1892 for only \$96,924,428, accounts for the increase in specie exports to some extent, and gives the alarmists quite a lever to bear down upon.