

MANITOBA AND THE EAST.

It is a favorite theme upon which the less liberal and thoughtful of eastern journals delight to harp, that Manitoba has been drawing away capital and labor from them without making any return. No amount of proof seems to be sufficient to convince these journals that they are in error, but, that they may have one more opportunity to turn from their misrepresentations and make atonement, THE COMMERCIAL once more invites their attention to a few statistics which cannot be gainsaid. The bulk of the capital which has hitherto been invested in Manitoba has been furnished by Eastern Canada, and that capital is invested in permanent improvements throughout the Province. The owners of much of that property reside in the East and draw a revenue from their investments, the amount of which there is no means of ascertaining. Doubtless the bulk of that revenue is re-invested in Manitoba simply because returns are larger here than in the East. Still the control of these investments rests in the East, and that control is an element of strength to the older provinces.

Another return which is made by Manitoba to Eastern investors is the inter-provincial trade, the volume of which during the past year considerably exceeded ten millions of dollars. This is in reality new trade to the East for the purchasing power of the East has not been visibly affected by the migration of about one per cent. of the population. This new inter-provincial trade has nourished Eastern manufacturers and warehousemen without visibly affecting the shop-keeping class. If this is not a return made by Manitoba for the support of the East, then a new commercial definition for the word is needed.

Even the labour which has been transplanted from the East to Manitoba remains, mainly through the fault of the landlord class in this province, tributary to the older provinces. The workmen of the City of Winnipeg alone sent to their families in the East last year \$750,000 through the Money Order department of the Post Office, a sum which exceeds the combined volume of Money Order business at Toronto, Montreal and Halifax. The banks do not afford access to their returns or it would be found that the remittances to the East by other men

who are not exactly of the artisan class but are nevertheless to all intents and purposes working men, at least equals in volume the remittances through the Post Office. The citizens of Winnipeg have good reason to deplore the short-sighted policy of property owners which compels workmen to leave their families in the East, thereby causing the flow eastward of a million dollars a year, besides depriving the city of what it greatly needs—juvenile labor. From this hasty glance at the relations of the East with Manitoba it will be seen that while we have some reason to complain, the people of the East have reaped nothing but benefit from legitimate investments in the Prairie Province.

Winnipeg Wholesale Trade.

The Wholesale trade of the city during the past week showed an appreciable improvement on the preceding week. At this season of the year the wholesale houses do not expect activity, so a satisfactory state of affairs is being recorded, when it is said that business generally is better than might be reasonably expected. Indications are not wanting of a brisk spring trade, the volume of which will be related to the volume of immigration. In one or two lines renewals are reported to be more numerous than is acceptable, but, generally speaking, collections have been quite satisfactory. Preparations continue for the spring trade, and travellers in various lines are making up their samples. The week closes with a firm and hopeful tone.

AGRICULTURAL MACHINERY, CARRIAGES, ETC.

Sales during the week were a fair average at this season of the year. The demand for sleighs may be said to have almost ceased for the season. The houses are busy appointing agents over the west, and some stocking up of agencies has been done. The receipts during the week were seven car loads, and considerable consignments are on the way from Eastern factories.

BOOTS AND SHOES.

The market remains practically unchanged. The demand for winter goods having ceased, while that for spring goods is only beginning. Travellers are making up, and will be on the road this week, when the market is expected to be more active. The collections have been fairly satisfactory.

CLOTHING.

Though trade is far from being brisk in this line, a welcome improvement was noticeable during the week, goods being in better demand, while collections were moderately good. Travellers take the road this week. Spring stocks are still arriving, and fine lines will be shown.

CROCKERY AND GLASSWARE.

Business during the past week was characterized by a steady, but not a heavy demand, orders being mostly for the medium range of goods, the fancy trade being now off. The country orders have been quite as numerous as during the preceding week, and a much im-

proved demand in the near future may be relied upon. The collections are quite as good as they have been during the past three weeks, and altogether the state of the trade is satisfactory for this season of the year.

DRY GOODS.

The trade does not show any marked improvement over last week, and steady quietness still prevails. In the warehouses the receiving and opening of spring stock and the making up of travellers' samples has maintained a show of activity, which dealers would not object to see prevailing in the packing room. Travellers began to take to the road during last week, and this week will see almost all the houses fully represented in the provinces, where, though the dealers are running closer on stocks, a good business may be anticipated as awaiting solicitation. Collections during the week have not been what they should be, and though there is no very marked cause for complaint, greater promptitude in meeting engagements would be acceptable. There is no reason to suspect unsoundness of trade as the reason for the slowness in collections, which is attributable to the general tightness of money and the bad roads outside, which have temporarily caused a contraction of trade in provincial trade centres.

DRUGS AND CHEMICALS.

The past week showed a slight improvement in the volume of trade transacted, the business being fair. The city trade was steady, and collections might be better were the trade not divided among so many retail firms. Orders from outside have been good, the travellers on the road having encouraging business. Collections from the country are good, and the general tone of the market is hopeful, the present trade being satisfactory for the season.

FANCY GOODS AND SMALLWARES.

The tendency towards renewed activity was maintained during the week, which closed with an improvement to be recorded over the preceding week. The holiday lull may be said to have disappeared, and while business has not been up to the busy standard, it is fully as good as can be expected and what is at this season more satisfactory, collections are generally reported as very good.

FISH, POULTRY AND GAME.

The Fish market is well supplied with the coarser qualities, but whitefish are not plentiful and a limited supply is expected for the balance of the winter. Lake Manitoba whitefish have advanced from 5c to 8c; the price has an upward tendency. River jack fish are quoted at 5c, but dealers being stocked, an offer of 4c would meet with acceptance were the quantity to be moved made an object to the seller. Dried fish and poultry are so scarce that quotations can hardly be given. The St. Paul poultry market is practically closed through high prices, and the supply in sight is limited. Game is still offering, but in small quantities at flexible prices.

FRUIT.

The trade in fruit during the past week showed a material improvement, the record from the New Year having been one of increasing activity. The variety is the same as last week. Apples are quoted from \$0.50 to \$7.50. Valencia ranges can now be had at \$14 a case, being 50c