

The Far West.

From Macleod a drive of thirty miles due east will carry the traveller to the new town of Lethbridge, this drive being accomplished in a real old fashioned Concord stage coach, drawn along at a steady swinging trot by four horses. The driver is a thorough westerner and it is claimed that he is the best manipulator of the ribbons in Canada. He is a man of few words and these few words would not be adapted to a religious discourse, though they show considerable proficiency in Biblical subjects. As already stated, Lethbridge is a new town, in fact about the latest addition to the list of places in the Northwest, though by no means the least important. Lethbridge was called into existence through the opening of the coal mines located there, and the building of the Northwestern Coal & Navigation Co's Railway to that point. This railway leaves the C. P. R'y at Dunmore, one station east of Medicine Hat, and runs in a southwesterly direction for a distance of 109 miles to its terminus at Lethbridge. The railway arrived at Lethbridge on August 23rd, 1885, or about one year ago, and forthwith the work of building up a town commenced. The number of business institutions increased rapidly during the first few months, but during the present season the growth of the place has been less rapid, the number of business institutions now being fully up to the present requirements for the same in all staple lines. The different lines of trade are represented by the following firms and individuals: I. G. Baker & Co., H. Bentley & Co., T. Bottere, general stores; J. H. Cavanagh, hardware; T. F. Kirkham, tins; E. Walton, drugs; McKenzie & Irvine, brewery. There is also a branch of the Union Bank of Canada, established in the place. The Lethbridge News, a spicy little sheet, keeps the citizens posted on the local happenings. Of the hotel accommodation of Lethbridge the less said the better. We located at what was said to be the best house, but discovered something better in the way of a table at another, though less pretentious hotel. The country around Lethbridge is as yet unoccupied to any extent. Little attempt has been made at cultivation and ranching has not been gone into to any extent in the immediate vicinity. However the country is said to be well adapted to the latter though owing to the drought the grass is very short this year. Owing to this lack of settlement, Lethbridge depends almost entirely upon the mines and may therefore be put down as the mining town of the Northwest. All along the steep banks of the Belly River near which the town is located, the coal may be seen cropping out, in seams of about six feet in thickness. The Northwestern Coal & Navigation Co. have simply followed up one of these seams from where the coal crops out under the brow of the hill in the descent into the Belly River valley. A tunnel is made into the bank and the coal is taken out in sections, with walls of coal left standing to support the earth above. A tramway is put down through each section, and the coal is drawn out to the open air with horses. The tram cars are drawn up the hill to the level prairie above by means of a stationary engine and wire cable. Here the coal is loaded on the

cars and shipped out. About 160 tons per day were being taken out and it was proposed to increase this amount to about 350 tons by September, in preparation for the winter demand. The coal is said to be of better quality than that taken out last season. Lethbridge is also the headquarters for the N. W. C. & N. Co's Ry., which also adds to the importance of the place; through the location of the repair shops and offices of the company. From Lethbridge to Dunmore the ride is a somewhat dreary one, over an open and level prairie, the only sign of habitation being the occasional section house along the railway. At Dunmore the company have opened a very good hotel, where travellers will have to put up for the night on their way to and from Lethbridge, owing to the way the trains connect with the C. P. R'y service.

Medicine Hat, the next point of observation, is already well known to those familiar with Northwestern geography, as the principal divisional point on the C.P.R. between Moosejaw and Calgary. Located as it is at the crossing of the South Saskatchewan river the largest stream crossed by the C. P. R. west of Winnipeg, it is likely to maintain its supremacy in this respect. The place has been so frequently described that but a brief notice of the more recent changes and improvements will be all that is necessary. The trade of Medicine Hat, which is in considerable proportion, is done principally with the settlers and ranchers in the vicinity, men employed in the C. P. R. workshops and along the many miles of road between the place and any other point where supplies can be secured. There is also some Indian and Mounted Police trade. Treed & Ewart, general storekeepers, carry a large stock. They are erecting a large brick warehouse, which will be used for storing surplus stock. The building will be isolated and rendered as nearly fire proof as possible, owing to the excessive insurance rates which run from 5 to 8 per cent. This warehouse will be the first brick building erected in Medicine Hat, the brick being manufactured within a mile or so of the town. Geo. McCuaig, Cousins & Scatcheid, and Hargrave & Sissons also do a general store business. W. T. Finlay carries on business in lumber. Mr. Leonard, the baker, was one of the first to arrive on the spot and still holds the fort. At the Cosmopolitan Hotel we found very comfortable quarters and the best table west of Regina. The proprietor Mr. W. J. Casey, and Mr. Dempsey, manager, endeavor to make their guests comfortable, which means a good deal to the traveller out west. Mr. Casey has been somewhat unfortunate in having been twice burned out, but twice he has bobbed up serenely with a new house, and better ones each time. There are a number of other business lines represented, including E. Walton, druggist, one or two hotels, etc., and the Times newspaper. The Dominion Government have also lately opened an emigration office and buildings. Quite a number of settlers have located in the vicinity of the Hat, though farming here, like many other parts of the country, has not proved an unqualified success this season, owing to the drought. We were shown some vegetables, however, which were by no means a poor sample. The ranching interests in the vicinity have as-

sumed considerable proportion, and have gone on developing steadily. It is expected that a number of herds of cattle will be driven in from Montana this fall to Medicine Hat, for shipment over the C. P. R.

Winnipeg Board of Trade.

A meeting of the council of the Board of Trade was held on Monday, the chair being occupied by the vice-president, Mr. J. H. Ashdown, and Messrs. Crowe, Stephens, G. F. Galt, J. Redmond, Stobart, and the secretary being present.

The question of the mail service in Southern Manitoba was discussed, and on the motion of Mr. G. F. Stephens, seconded by G. F. Galt, the following resolution was unanimously adopted and the secretary instructed to forward a copy of the same to the Postmaster-General:—

Resolved: That in the opinion of this board the present arrangements for mail service to and from towns of Southwestern Manitoba west of Manitou, are altogether inadequate for the trade demands of the same, and while maintained are a serious hindrance to the progress of one of the most populous and prosperous agricultural districts of the Northwest, besides furnishing an almost inseparable barrier to trade between that section of country and all east of it. Therefore this board humbly requests of the Honorable the Postmaster-General, that the present system of conveying mails to towns and villages in question by stage from Brandon or Manitou, be discontinued, and that, in future, these mails be conveyed daily along the line of C. P. R. Southwestern by rail. This board would also request that this change be made with as little delay as possible, as already trade and other interests of the public have suffered severely from the continuance of the present unsatisfactory system.

The present anomalous state of freight rates on the C. P. R. to points on the Pacific Coast was discussed, and instances of charges being higher from Winnipeg to the coast than from Montreal there were cited.

The chairman remarked that as a war in freight rates between the C. P. R. and Northern Pacific was going on, discrimination in favor of through shippers might be expected while that lasted, but he failed to see why the rates should be made to crowd Manitoba entirely out of the British Columbia market.

Mr. Galt stated that he had made up his mind to abandon British Columbia trade owing to the rates charged on the C. P. R.

It was deemed advisable to appoint a committee to inquire into the freight rates from Winnipeg, Montreal, St. Paul, and other points, both by the C. P. R. and the Northern Pacific, and the president, vice-president and secretary were selected as that committee.

The first shipment of cattle over the C.P.R. this season for Chicago arrived at the stock yards in Winnipeg on Wednesday last, from Maple Creek. The lot consisted of twenty cars belonging to Lspley and Kingsbury, of Fort Benton, Montana. The cattle are shipped through in bond. Last year about 10,000 head of Montana cattle were handled by the C.P.R., and the number is expected to be considerably greater this year.