

The Commercial

WINNIPEG, FEBRUARY 10, 1896.

EDITORIAL NOTES.

FUR dealers report that there is an immense loss to the country every year by the killing of wild animals when their skins are of very little or no value. One fur dealer estimates that the annual loss in Manitoba from killing fur-bearing animals when their skins are not good amounts \$100,000. Some of these animals are protected by a close season, but the protection by law is not as complete or as general as it should be. Now that the provincial legislature is in session, perhaps some member would look into this matter with a view to devising means to check this great waste. The fur-bearing animals are one of the sources of wealth of the country, and any waste which can be prevented in this direction should be stopped, just the same as if it applied to any other interest.

THE relaxing of the quarantine regulations in the East, in the opening of the port of St. John for the export of United States cattle, and the port of Boston for the export of Canadian cattle, by the Canadian and United States governments respectively, would indicate that the time is opportune to approach the government again in the matter of the quarantine regulations in the West. The Winnipeg board of trade took this matter up about a year ago, but so far has been unable to accomplish anything. We think a further effort should be made at once to press this important matter upon the attention of the Ottawa authorities. If something were done at once, some concessions might be secured in time to be of some value when the annual spring movement of immigration takes place this year. Our best immigration field is to the south of us, but this field can never be worked to any advantage while the quarantine regulations remain as they are at present. This is a matter which the immigration convention called to meet in Winnipeg soon, might also take up to advantage.

A PARAGRAPH which appeared in one of the Winnipeg city papers recently, from its Ottawa correspondent, reads as follows: "The voice of Manitoba has not been raised all these years in vain for the improvement of the country's waterways. It looks as if the appeals are at last to be answered. The government contemplate the construction of a lock at St. Andrew's rapids (Red River), and will make the same improvements on the Saskatchewan, so that the stream may be made navigable for coal barges to ply between Edmonton and Winnipeg. The Nelson river canal scheme will receive at least moral support and perhaps something more substantial and the Hudson Bay railway will be assisted." This of course sounds like election times. But, elections or no elections, it is high time the Dominion was doing something to improve our western waterways. We will be content with the moral support of the Nelson river canal scheme, if the government

will take up the more practical and more pressing Red and Saskatchewan river improvements.

A LATER telegram from Ottawa says that as a result of the agitation among the Manitoba and Territorial members regarding wheat grading, Mr. Davin has had an interview with the controller of inland revenue, and has been promised that hereafter eastern millers and dealers shall have no representation on the grain standards board, and that western men shall have the entire control of fixing the standards. If the government will just go farther in this matter and abolish the present cumbersome board entirely, and allow the grain grades to remain permanently as fixed by the act, they will do about the right thing. The present mode of fixing grades by samples of the crop, is a useless expense, an annoyance to the trade and a cause of much useless and senseless agitation every year. The standards board has been added to and enlarged to please various agitators and various interests until it has become a farce. It is now composed of numerous divergent interests and made up largely of men whose knowledge of the interests to be served in the selection of grades, is not such as to qualify them to act intelligently on the board. Any grades made necessary by crop peculiarities, which were not provided for in the act, could be fixed by a small board of say three experts, and certainly not more than five persons should constitute such board, including the two official inspectors located at Winnipeg and Fort William.

THE politicians at Ottawa have been discussing the Manitoba wheat grades. Mr. Davin moved for a committee to consider the matter, but he afterwards withdrew it, on the promise of Hon. Mr. Prior, of the inland revenue department, to make inquiries into the matter. It was alleged by Davin and Martin that the present system of grading operated to the disadvantage of the farmers, but they failed to state any facts to bear out their assertions. Mr. Martin wanted separate grades made for scoured wheat, and also wanted the grades made permanent. So far as having the grades made permanent, he no doubt voiced the sentiment of the grain trade. This discussion of the wheat grades at Ottawa is an outgrowth of the agitation here, regarding grain trade matters. The bottom of the whole trouble is the low prices. This makes the farmers dissatisfied and leads them to suppose that the regulations of the trade work to their disadvantage. The farmers have votes and they also have organizations, consequently it probably seems necessary to the politicians that they should at least make a show of sharing in their suspicions. The political agitation of this matter, however, can do no good, and it can only help to further arouse the unwarranted suspicions of a naturally suspicious class. The farmers, however, should not complain that the wheat grades operate against them, as the grades this year were practically fixed by the representatives of the farmers on the standards board. So long as prices remain low, we can look for grumbling and charges of fraud from the farmers in grain matters, and no system

could be devised which would obviate this state of things. The politicians and agitators may fix such grades as they like, but they cannot change the quality of the wheat. The grain will be bought and sold on its actual merit as a commercial commodity, let the grades be what they may. If the agitators could succeed in establishing impossible grades, the trade would simply ignore the official grades and establish their own commercial grades. At the same time it must be admitted that the official grades are a great help to the trade when they are fixed to meet the requirements of the crop. If not suited to the crop they would be a nuisance and an annoyance to the trade, and the grain would not be handled on the grades. The grading of grain is a commercial matter. So far as the farmers are concerned it is a comparatively unimportant matter to them. Their wheat will be bought on its merits, according to quality, quite regardless of the nature of the grades. The grades are required for the commercial side of the grain trade. The exporter has about as much ground to call for laws governing the plowing and sowing and harvesting work of the farmer, as the latter has to demand the control of the grain grades. Any movement to change the system of handling grain should come from those who are directly interested in the trade and who understand the matter, and not from parties whose knowledge of the question is in all probability very limited.

Manitoba Dairy Association.

The annual business meeting of this association will be held in the city hall, Winnipeg, on Wednesday, February 19th, 1896. The programme of proceedings will be as follows: Tuesday, 18th—In city hall at 2 p. m., meeting of factory representatives to discuss the best methods of marketing their produce. At 8 p. m., a meeting in board of trade rooms to deal with the same subject. The dairy school, Bar natyne street, east, will be open to visitors in the afternoon.

Wednesday, 19th—Dairy school—Lecture in forenoon by C. C. Macdonald, dairy superintendent. At 2 p. m. in the city hall, election of officers and other business. At 7.30 p. m., public meeting in city hall.

Addresses and papers.—By J. A. Ruddick, "Manitoba Dairying"; by David Munroe, Neepawa, "Last Year's Experience"; S. A. Bedford, "Mistakes in Dairy Feeding"; R. J. Phin, Moccasin, "Drawbacks in the Western Factory System, How Met"; W. M. Champion, Reaburn, "Gleanings by the Wayside"; J. J. Philp, Winnipeg, "Cold Storage"; W. J. Hinman, Winnipeg, "Tuberculin Testing of Dairy Cows."

Thursday, 20th—Forenoon at dairy school, demonstration. Meeting of Cattle Breeders' Association, 2 p. m. and 8 p. m. in city hall.

If thirty-five attend the two meetings, railway return rates will be fare and a third from all stations. Take receipt for your money from Station Master and have it indorsed by the secretary.

A Toronto telegram says: February 4th, the date well known as settling day, has brought us no great business failure, but has been severely felt by a number of wholesale houses. An unusually large amount of paper, mostly dry goods matured, and while much was taken up, houses reported a cheerful outlook, though the bad season is showing its effect. The Samson-Kennedy smash is regarded as responsible for a large proportion of the small dry goods failures, which have been going on lately.