

PORTAGE LA PRAIRIE.

The merchants of this town have had a few days leisure since the holidays, for which they have to thank the extreme cold weather more than anything else. There is a general smile on the faces of this class, which is equal to a report of a heavy holiday trade. A few days in the beginning of the week were rather dull in town, but as the weather grew milder matters have improved considerably, and there is now a moderately good business doing in the different stores. Grain still comes in freely, and prices have changed very little. Wheat has sold during the week at from 65c to 72c; oats 35c to 40c, and barley 42c to 47c. Potatoes are still worth 75c a bushel.

As advertised the Sheriff's sale of the effects in the Grand Pacific Hotel commenced on Thursday, but the prices realized were very low. This fine house is likely to be closed for some time, as there is as yet no prospect of a new tenant. It is beyond doubt that this town has had too many hotels. The number of institutions claiming that title were two weeks ago twenty-seven, or about double the number actually necessary. The overdoing of one branch of business is what creates the impression at a distance that trade generally is in a very depressed state, and the standing of business men generally does not warrant such an impression.

McIlvaine's paper mill is about to commence running to its full capacity. The two wells sunk, with the aid of a steam pump, will give a plentiful supply of water, and there will be no let up to the mill's operations before spring. The proprietor has been away at Winnipeg and other points arranging for the purchase of rags and waste paper to be used in the manufacture of printing paper when the spring opens.

The grading of the fifteen miles of the Portage, Westbourne and North-western railway beyond Gladstone is completed, and the laying of ties is now being pushed with vigor, and the laying of track is expected to commence in about two weeks, and be finished by the middle of February.

E. McDonald, of the Marquette mills, is about to erect a store building at Regina, where he will do a grocery business; but his principal aim will be to make it a branch for the sale of the flour of his mills.

There have been no business changes during the week.

EMERSON.

There has been a slight lull in business since the opening of the year, and merchants have not been doing a heavy trade during the past week. There is a general expression of satisfaction with the trade of 1882, among all classes of traders, and the new railroad arrangements makes even the real estate men feel satisfied, and are hopeful for 1883. Grain receipts have slackened up but very little, and farmers teams were thick in the streets during the coldest days of the week. There was a little competition in the wheat business, and prices have been advancing a little. As high as 80c has been paid, but this is owing to a disagreement among the

buyers. Oats have sold up to 42c, and barley from 40c to 48c.

Mr. Barclay, assistant chief engineer of the C.P.R. has been at work for several days arranging for the building of the railway bridge across the Red River, and work upon the same is to commence at once. It will be located between Park and Rousseau streets.

The latest railway rumor in this town is to the effect, that Mr. Van Horne has resigned the position of general manager of the C.P.R., and will be succeeded by Mr. C. J. Brydges. It is doubtless only a rumor.

There has been a change in partnership of the West Lynne Brewery. Mr. Loofe has taken a Mr. Nightengale as partner, and the firm name will in future be Loofe & Nightengale.

There has been no business changes in the town during the week, and there is a great scarcity of trade news generally.

Politics are on the "Boom" again, and will doubtless keep boiling until election is over.

BRANDON.

The Cochrane Manufacturing Co., and the Haggart Manufacturing Co., have erected a warehouse on Ninth Street. These companies are anxious to procure their share of the enormous implement trade which will be done next year. Last season over \$391,400 worth of agricultural implements were sold out of this town.

Notwithstanding that this is a great shipping point for wheat, there is very small millers' accommodation. There is one of the best investments to a person who could build a first-class mill in this town.

Our water tanks will soon be completed, they have been delayed on account of the city not being able to get the hoops. It is hoped that insurance rates will be reduced as soon as these tanks are in good working order.

The C.P.R. station is about completed, and will soon be ready for occupation, it has a very neat appearance and is the best station west of Winnipeg.

The city council are advertising for tenders for the purchase of city debentures to the amount of one hundred and fifty thousand dollars at six per cent. already several tenders have been received.

Messrs. Selby, Bowerman & Co's. Elevator is completed with the exception of the machinery which has not yet arrived. This elevator has a capacity of 50,000 bushels and is situated on the C.P.R. grounds between sixth and seventh streets, it is one of the best buildings of the kind on the C.P.R. Messrs. Fortier & Bucke have fitted up the scales, which are of the Improved Howe make, they are the best scales for this purpose and are giving good satisfaction. It is expected that one, if not more, elevators will be built next year, as this is destined to be one of the largest grain shipping points on the C.P.R.

Business since Christmas has been very brisk, far more so than previous to that date, and the new year will open most satisfactorily for Brandon.

The Grand View Hotel opened on Monday

under Mr. Boisseau's management, and it promises to be one of the best houses in Brandon.

There have been no business changes of note this week, everything running smoothly and satisfactorily.

Mr. Knight has opened a wholesale butcher's establishment on Rosser avenue.

Business has been somewhat dull this week, on account of the cold, 36° below zero was the coldest we had here.

A NEW VENTURE.

The following we have received from a correspondent at Brandon:

The firm of Poudrier & Brownlee, of Brandon, intend to add to their business the profession of Mining Engineering. They have made arrangements with Mr. James Holme, a mining engineer from England, to conduct this branch.

During the autumn, Mr. Holmes made an extensive examination of the Souris Coal fields, situated about 30 miles west of the second principal meridian, and he speaks with confidence of the future prospects of the place, and thinks it will very shortly be the scene of extensive operations. Samples of the coal were brought back and tested in an ordinary coal stove with very favorable results. It gave a great heat and burned readily, leaving no clinkers or slag. It has also been tested in locomotive engines and as a steam-generating power it may be considered to answer very well. The whole of the deposits in the Souris region are lignites or brown coal, which differs from the bituminous and anthracite in having a lower percentage of carbon, and a higher percentage of volatile elements. The samples brought in by Mr. Holmes were taken from a heading driven about five yards in a seam eight feet thick.

The great drawback to the immediate development of these mines is the want of a railway. It is hoped that the C.P.R. Souris Branch from Brandon, and also that from Winnipeg through Southern Manitoba may be pushed forward next year. Poudrier & Brownlee also undertake to conduct explorations to other portions of the Great North-west, with the view of proving and locating coal-bearing lands.

Considering the importance of this branch of industry, we cordially wish the firm every success in their new venture.

Up to about a week ago there was scarcely any snow west of Broadview, and as yet there is very little west of Swift Current.

The Dominion Government commenced laying the telegraph wire on Tuesday, the 2nd instant, at Fort Q'Appelle to Q'Appelle railway station, about twenty miles distant. The work was delayed on account of the severity of the weather.

Freight sent to Prince Albert via Q'Appelle station, remains there on warehouse rent, unless instructions are sent to S. W. Caswell, freight agent at the Post Office. This delay, the station master states, is owing to the fact that he has sent goods forward, and afterwards teamsters called for the same, having been instructed to do so by merchants north of the railway. Proper notice should be made known to business men to avoid delays.