

The Commercial

WINNIPEG, AUGUST 28, 1883.

LANDLORD AND TENANT IN WINNIPEG.

There is no man so difficult to convince of the wisdom of a liberal business policy as the small town property owner, to which rule, however, be it remembered there are many exceptions. If a careful scrutiny of the antecedents and records of the small property owners of any town or city is made, it will not be difficult to assign good reason for this obtuseness on the part of this numerous class. It will be found that they are as a rule men of a very limited business experience, and whose traffic with their fellow-men has been confined to the transactions necessary to acquire the productive property, which will guarantee to them something like a competency. Their aims are limited to the securing of what will free them from the risks and dangers which engaging in ordinary business entails. In property a law of hypothec of some kind or other protects them almost completely from loss, and under the shelter of this covering, which the ordinary trader cannot secure, they build up their pile, and if they ever had any disposition towards trade enterprise, it must in time become dwarfed and stunted in growth under such a system of protected investment.

By this thread of reasoning it is not difficult to understand why property owners in Winnipeg still cling to the hope of getting exorbitant rents. The small property owners of this city differ very little from those of other Canadian cities, except that they have a wider field for true enterprise, if they wish to take advantage of it. They do not as a class belong to the trading community, and shrewd business class, and if a proof of this fact is wanted it can be found in the present City Council, which on account of the property qualifications for holding civic offices, is composed largely of mushroom landlords. We do not go so far as a local wag, who asserts, that one half of their number could be picked out, whose combined business ability would not be equal to the management of a peanut stand; but we do assert that the record of blunders and squandering of public funds which our civic history furnishes for the past two years, proves beyond doubt that the Council is composed of

anything but acute business men, and while they are selected from the fossilized small property owning class and the active trading class excluded, a majority of blockheads must be found in their number. Our Winnipeg property owners as a class therefore, are not business men, who act upon enterprising business principles but belong to a class who grow less enterprising as they grow older, and it is impossible, except by actual loss of dollars and cents to convince them of the wisdom of a liberal policy. It is a fixed matter in their minds, that they are not part of the city's trade structure, and have no obligation to share in any of the losses or burdens which it should bear. Their aims are to secure a fixed and exorbitant value for their property, a fixed and exorbitant revenue from the same, and that this they should have, no matter how grinding on trade their demands may be. That the trade of a young city with a new surrounding country requires careful nursing, in order to produce well even for the property owner, is beyond their comprehension, and the mass of struggling producers who are building up a great country, are to them only so much of an element capable of squeezing and pressing profit out of. To such an extent has this been carried, that the trading and property owning classes of the Manitoba Capital have interests as widely opposite as tenant and landlord in Ireland. There is this difference in the relationship however, while the landlords of Ireland are as a class educated gentlemen, and their tenants, although in no way inferior to other peasantry, not overstocked with information, the property owners of Winnipeg are a comparatively benighted crowd, and certainly in no way the equals of their trading tenants in intelligence, which will account for the long suffering way in which the latter bear their unjust burdens. In Ireland a wronged tenant often blows out a landlord's brains, but the Winnipeg tenant does not follow such a course, and has probably some doubts whether his landlord is possessed of brains to blow out.

Thus the process of separation goes steadily on in Winnipeg, until the property owning and producing classes of the city promise soon to be arrayed against each other as determined enemies, when a more liberal and considerate policy on the part of the former might secure the unity which is a necessity for the city's pro-

gress. It is to be feared however, that the day of unity is past, and trade and property owners must look upon each other as parties with directly opposite interests.

THE FRUITS OF INDUSTRY.

While the speculative class of the community in Winnipeg and the North-west have been laboring under a load of financial responsibility which they found it difficult to get rid of, it is a source of satisfaction that industrial classes have been prosperous. Some in mercantile circles have felt the load, but in nine cases out of ten it will be found upon close inquiry that speculation in some way or other, and generally in real estate, has been the chief factor in bringing about the circumstances with which many have found themselves embarrassed. That the working classes have been prosperous is best indicated by the business done in the savings banks of the city. The following information has been kindly furnished us by the Dominion Savings Bank here, and they are certainly such as will cause not a little surprise to the disappointed idling grumblers who have been employing their time industriously in decrying the country and its resources. On the 30th of June, 1882, a period at which the influence of the boom was making itself felt in the prosecution of building enterprise, and when large amounts were being spent by the city on public improvements, the balance deposited was \$558,629.01. On the same date, this year, and at a time when commercial and speculative interests were in the most depressed condition, the balance of deposits was nearly \$30,000 more, the actual figures being \$586,291.47. Since then the amount on hand has steadily increased, and at the present time it is accumulating more rapidly than ever. The deposits made daily at present average from \$5,000 to \$10,000. The total number of depositors is about three thousand, and they with very few exceptions belong to the mechanical and laboring classes. Then beyond this there are large amounts deposited in the savings departments of the various chartered banks in the city, the exact figures of which we have not been able to ascertain. But it will be safe to say that it will equal the amount deposited with the Government. This gives a total of about a million and a quarter of dollars held in deposits by the working classes of the city. Who, after reading