

# The Commercial

WINNIPEG, JULY 11, 1892.

## A NEGLECTED SOURCE OF PROFIT.

THE COMMERCIAL has frequently endeavored to show the value of raising hogs in Manitoba, from a commercial stand point. We leave it to agricultural journals to discuss what kind of hogs are most suitable to the country, and what particular treatment they require. But providing that the climate, etc., of the country is suitable for raising hogs, the commercial side of the question is certainly favorable to the industry. Tons upon tons of cured hog products, lard, etc., are being brought in from eastern Canada, to supply the demand for these lines in the west. Formerly large quantities of cured hog products were brought from Chicago and other United States packing points, but the increase in the duty has operated in favor of eastern Canada packers, who now provide the bulk of supply.

THE COMMERCIAL has frequently urged that these products should all be produced at home, and that not only should Manitoba and the Territories be supplied with home raised and home cured products, but that we should also supply the large demand for such products in British Columbia. We have tried to point out in the past, that a great deal of the grain sent out of Manitoba, which has to bear a high rate of freight to the east, should be consumed here in feeding animals, particularly hogs. At present we are paying freight both ways. We pay freight upon the hog products brought from the east, and we pay freight on low grade grain sent to the east for feed, when we could feed the grain here and save the freight. This year there are tons of grain in the country which would make good feed for hogs, if the animals were here to eat it up, but which is hardly saleable for shipment, or at least not saleable at a profit.

THE COMMERCIAL has always contended that it would be far more profitable to feed cheap grain here than to ship it, though we were not able to supply much information in the way of statistics upon this point. An experiment carried on at the Dominion experimental farm, at Ottawa, however, bears out our assertions. Professor Robertson, of the Ottawa farm, says that last winter a carload of frosted wheat was sent from Manitoba to the farm. They wanted to find the comparative value of the wheat in cattle and swine feeding. They found the frosted stuff quite equal to any mixture of grain for beef making, both in rapidity of gain and quality of beef. In the making of bacon they got 16.4 pounds of increase in live weight, per bushel of frozen wheat, sold the pork at 5½ cents per pound, live weight, and therefore realized 86 cents per bushel. Now, here is the proof of the pudding. Manitoba farmers have been selling damaged grain at from 15 to 30 cents per bushel, which would bring them 80 to 90 cents per bushel if marketed in the form of fat hogs. There seems certainly to be a great waste in this transaction.

Besides the loss in shipping low grade grain, the curing of hogs would build up an important

industry at home. This industry has been the main support in building up some of the cities of the central western states. Several attempts have been made to build up a packing industry in Winnipeg, but the supply of hogs has been so limited that no progress has been made. With low prices likely to rule for coarse grains, and always the possibility of occasional years in which there will be considerable low grade wheat, it would appear that what our farmers require more than any other thing is hogs. It would pay even to feed the best grades of wheat, in preference to selling at present values. In fact at average wheat values in this country, selling the grain in the form of pork would return a better profit for everything but the very choicest grades.

The only thing we have heard urged against the raising of hogs here, is the cold winters. We think, however, that this difficulty could be overcome by building a warm place with some of the straw which is usually burnt upon our Manitoba farms, after threshing. Hogs do not require a very roomy place of abode. This point, however, we will leave for the agricultural papers.

## ANOTHER IMPORTANT DEVELOPMENT.

The advancement of Manitoba, and Western Canada in general, goes on apace. Railway construction is progressing on a number of roads in various parts of the country, and quick development of agricultural and other interests always quickly follows the opening up of any new sections by railway. The large number of settlers who have come into the country this year, the activity in railway construction and the new industries of various kinds which have been set on foot, all mark the year 1892 as one of material advancement.

We come now to speak of a particular industry of a most important nature which has just been inaugurated. The first car load of coal from the new Souris mines arrived in Winnipeg last week. The opening of these mines establishes a source of fuel supply within easy distance of Winnipeg and the settled portions of Manitoba. The bulk of the coal supply of Manitoba has heretofore been drawn from the coal mines in Pennsylvania in the east, or from the western coal mines at Lethbridge, Medicine Hat and other points in the western portions of the Territories. These far western coal deposits were developed on account of their proximity to railways, though in the case of the Lethbridge coal deposits a railway was constructed specially to the mines. It was known, however, that there were valuable coal deposits hundreds of miles nearer the centres of population than these western mines, but in the absence of railroads to these deposits they were of little value to the population at large. Settlers in the immediate vicinity secured their supplies of fuel cheaply, but the coal could not be carried in wagons great distances to advantage.

Last year the government of Manitoba made an agreement with the Canadian Pacific Railway company to construct a railway to the Souris coal region. At the same time an understanding was also come to with the Dominion Coal Co. to mine and place this coal on the market upon the completion of the railway. As a result the first car of coal from the Souris

district has now arrived here, and in a short time the company will be prepared to supply the demand for this coal.

The Souris coal deposits are situated in the south-eastern corner of the territory of Assiniboia, not far beyond the western boundary of Manitoba. The deposits are regarded as the most valuable of any yet discovered in the eastern portion of the prairie region. The quantity is abundant, and the coal of good quality for heating, cooking and steam purposes.

The opening of these mines will have the effect of materially cheapening the cost of coal. The coal is situated in a good locality, being in a direct line to connect with all the branch railways in Manitoba, south of the Manitoba North-western railway. The coal district is therefore in direct connection with the most populous portions of the country. All the country south of the main line of the Canadian Pacific railway and east of the Red river will now have a convenient and abundant source of fuel supply at a greatly reduced cost. The open prairie districts of southern Manitoba, where wood fuel is scarce, have now a convenient and abundant supply of fuel opened to them. The price of the new coal will be \$4 on track at Winnipeg, as compared with the old price of \$7 per ton for a similar coal, while at points nearer the mines the price will be even lower. This reduction in the cost of fuel will be of great value to Manitoba in cheapening the cost of living and reducing the cost of fuel for manufacturing purposes.

## THE LONDON CONGRESS.

The congress of boards of trade in London has rejected a motion in favor of preferential trade between the colonies and the United Kingdom. This is perhaps what might have been expected in view of the strong free trade influences in the congress. There is one point which we wish to refer to. The cable report says:

"Sir Thomas Henry Tanner, late secretary of the board of trade, assailed the position of Sir Charles Tupper on the subject of preferential trade. He contended that colonial trade was infinitesimal compared with the trade that would be lost to England by the adoption of Sir Charles Tupper's suggestion. 'Should Great Britain,' asked Sir Thomas, 'forego fifty millions of American trade in order to secure a problematical eleven millions from Canada? Conceive of England's position if the United States should conclude to offer free trade on condition of being accorded the same terms as Canada, and England would be compelled by a prior obligation to Canada to reject that offer.'"

The extract above is simply the cable report, and it may be inaccurate, but if Sir Thomas took the position as described therein, it appears to us that he made the very strongest point in favor of differential duties. He strove to depict the terribly awkward position in which the United Kingdom would be placed if the United States would come and offer free trade on condition of being admitted to the British trade compact. The answer to our mind is a very simple one, why, admit the United States, of course! Probably the best argument in favor of an imperial trade compact is the one that it would force other countries to offer favorable trade treaties to Great Britain and the colonies. If free trade predominated in the world there would be very little which could be said in favor of a British trade compact the