

HARVEST PROSPECTS.

So much hinges upon the coming harvest, that any definite information on this score is eagerly sought for. We have had an opportunity of examining returns from the managers of bank branches in different parts of the country, and from this and other sources can give the following summary as being about as reliable as can be learned at present:—

Western Ontario: Somewhat over the average.

Eastern Ontario: Below the average in several things.

Quebec: A fair crop in most sections but in others under the average.

Manitoba and the Northwest: Over the average; prospects excellent.

The post-office savings banks of Canada had on deposit on April 30th last, \$21,549,080. The amount of deposits received during May was \$514,559 and the payments to depositors were \$706,084, leaving the balance to credit of depositors on May 31st, \$21,357,555.

Correspondence.

We do not hold ourselves responsible for views expressed by Correspondents.

FROM THE PACIFIC COAST.

VICTORIA, B.C., 10th July, 1890.

Editor INSURANCE AND FINANCE CHRONICLE:—

In days gone by you occasionally found space for a communication from the undersigned, but wanderings o'er the face of the earth cut short the opportunities, and for months my pen has lost its cunning. At last, after many eventful journeys, I find myself on British soil, and it has naturally occurred to me that I might profitably utilize a few idle moments, put my facts and impressions on paper, send the document to you, and leave you to publish it or consign it to the waste paper basket, as you consider most desirable.

An American accustomed to the activity and energy of business life in the Eastern States may well imagine on awakening in Victoria that he has struck a medieval town, remote from the contact which present day railroad facilities impart, and, reversing the dream of Edward Bellamy's "Looking Backward," may give play to fancies engendered by a visit to a colonial town of five hundred years ago, where resources are all inherent, and who from a lack of railroad or steamship connections fears not the competition of livelier and more enterprising neighbors, and whose business and social life is regulated accordingly. Between the Victoria and the Chicago or New York of to-day, there is such a wonderful and marked difference of business activity that I may be pardoned if the early impression of the city give place to a comparison with "Sleepy Hollow." I have a great many good things to say of and for the city and people of Victoria, nor shall I be slow at the proper time to say them, but I must first discharge my spleen (Americans are all dyspeptic and bad livered, so you must expect evidences thereof), in order that I may hereafter do justice to the Royal City.

I was vastly amused to hear from more than one prominent business man of Victoria loud complaints against the great trans-continental railroad, the Canadian Pacific, because it had been the means of introducing competition from "North American Chinamen" (meaning Canadians from Ontario and Quebec, your own city of Montreal no doubt contributing largely thereto), thereby disturbing the peaceful serenity of their ways. One prominent merchant said: "We have no good times now as of yore; formerly we could close at midday or even all day, we could

play at cricket or at tennis, entertain the officers and men of Her Majesty's navy, and generally have a good time, without fear of friend or foe; but now all is changed, and we must keep our stores or our offices open till *five o'clock* every day." Another merchant told me that it had formerly been their custom to take a holiday when they wanted it, all they had to do was to send a requisition round to their fellow merchants to close at a certain time or for a certain day, and behold it was duly signed and observed, nor were the laws of the Medes and Persians more rigorously obeyed than was the agreement thus made. Alas for their peace and contentment, these wicked North American Chinamen have followed the introduction of the C.P.R., and our social life must be subservient to our common business interests. How are the mighty fallen! My remarks in regard to Victoria are not penned from any feeling of dissatisfaction with the treatment I received while in that city. I have happily to record the very reverse state of affairs. I retain the most pleasant memories of the kindness and sincerity of the welcome I received, but one cannot but be struck with the peculiar feature I have outlined, and the forcefulness of the impressions thus received make it necessary that I should first chronicle them.

Now let me say, Mr. Editor, that Victoria is putting on a new garment, the old state of things is passing away; brightness and activity are replacing the former condition of sleepiness and lethargy; new buildings of solid and substantial construction are replacing old and dilapidated structures; a magnificent new hotel, second to none on the Pacific Coast, is being erected, and the price of corner lots is away up. When the new and palatial steamers of that great corporation the "C. P. R." ply between British Columbia and China, Japan, and the Antipodes, and call at Victoria, their cup of happiness will be complete, and the old city, rejuvenated, will continue her supremacy,—at least so her citizens fondly imagine,—as the leading port on the Pacific Coast for your broad and fair Dominion.

Before I close this letter I must refer to one of Victoria's recent building enterprises, which commands all honor alike from residents and visitors. I refer to the Royal Jubilee Hospital, recently erected by the voluntary contributions of the people, aided, I believe, by the Provincial Government, as an expression of thankfulness for the fifty years reign of your most worthy and illustrious Queen. It was my privilege to be shown through every portion of this splendid institution, and I must confess that I have nowhere seen a building or its arrangements more perfect or complete than this one. It does infinite credit to the people whose liberality is evidenced in such a splendid manner. It may be of interest if I state that one of the leaders of the movement to erect this hospital, and one who has given largely of time and money, is not only prominent merchant, but is also the representative of two of England's largest and wealthiest fire insurance companies.

This latter sentence reveals the fact that I have said nothing concerning the insurance interests of the city or Province. With your permission I will defer touching this matter until I have referred to the other cities and interests of the Province, the whole of which of course will only be attended to after I hear that you have once again found room in the CHRONICLE for the correspondence of one who in the past has signed and will continue hereafter to subscribe himself

AMERICUS.

THE "PROVINCIAL PROVIDENT."

Editor INSURANCE AND FINANCE CHRONICLE:—

Most of your readers are aware that there is in operation in the city of St. Thomas, Ontario, an association known as the "Provincial Provident Institution." It claims to have been "Incorporated February 1st, 1884, under Revised Statutes of Ontario." In the issue of *The Globe* of June 28th, appears a long advertisement in which this occurs:—"The Provincial Provident is licensed by the Dominion Government, and is annually inspected by the Superintendent of Insurance personally." Several of its circulars make the same statement