

Wool and Woollen Manufactures.

It is a fact admitted on all sides that the rich lands of the Red River Valley are not the most suited for the raising of sheep, and in fact their great productive power in cereal crops makes it folly to utilize them for any other purpose. As the work of railroad extension moves westward valley after valley is opened up, where nature seems to have made special efforts for the production of grazing lands. Next season the Canada Pacific will reach the base of the Rocky Mountains, and open up the Valley of the Bow and other rivers having their rise in this mountain range. Here the sheep raiser can find one of the finest countries in the World in which to carry on his operations, while he can send his products to an eastern market by direct rail route. Already the mountain lands of Montana are yielding immense returns in wool raising, and these lands are but a continuation of our Rocky Mountain district, and in many respects are inferior to our valleys for the purpose we speak of. We have no doubt therefore but wool will in the near future be a leading product of the North-West, and the question is shall this wool find its way in an unmanufactured state to Eastern markets? or shall it be intercepted in the growing cities of Manitoba and transformed into manufactured goods? We have no doubt but there is industrial enterprise sufficient in the Prairie Province to intercept this supply of raw material, and it seems that only the most unpardonable negligence could allow it to pass Rat Portage, where one of the best water powers on the American Continent gives for milling institutions advantages which are unsurpassed if equalled in any other portion of the Dominion of Canada.

At some future period we shall treat of this matter more fully.

The Present Lumber Demand.

From the whirl of machinery now to be heard along the river bank in this city, a person unacquainted with the state of business in Winnipeg would conclude that the supply of lumber turned out ought to meet any reasonable demand, even in a new and growing country like this. Inquiry into the matter however reveals a very different state of affairs. A COMMERCIAL representative has made some investigations of the facts and he finds that our lumber dealers and manufacturers are hard pushed to supply the demand in the city alone, while orders from the surrounding towns have to be left almost unattended to. The extraordinary amount of building now going on in the city and the quantity of lumber required therefore cannot be comprehended after a superficial survey of the principal buildings now constructing. The suburban proportion of the work although made up principally of smaller business buildings and residences causes a great demand for lumber which only those who visit the outlying portions of the city can form anything like an accurate approximation of. The crowded state of this branch of business has no doubt been aggravated by the long blockades caused by the snows and

still later by the floods of last spring. The supply from the South may be said to have been practically suspended for two months, and building operations during that interval were at a stand still. Making full allowance however for the exceptional circumstances of last spring the lumber trade is in an extra healthy state, with a heavy demand which will in all probability be a long lasting one.

The local supply of logs has filled but a small proportion of this season's demand, and heavy importations have had to be made from the United States, while in cut lumber the supply from the same locality has been equally heavy. At present the booms on the river are so crowded with logs that large quantities have to be hauled up upon the bank. Seldom have our mills had such a supply ahead, and it is being steadily added to while navigation remains open. We may expect therefore that these mills will have a later run this fall, and that their producing capacity will be tested to its fullest extent till very near the close of the present year. We find also that the arrangements at the different logging camps for the coming winter are on an extensive scale, and will furnish for next summer the largest supply of logs ever brought out in the North-West.

Unsafe Navigation.

As the investigation into the loss of the steamer Asia progresses, the outside world are astounded with the recklessness which characterizes navigation on the lakes, and many will doubtless wonder why accidents are not even more frequent than they have been.

It seems that the provisions of the Canadian marine laws are not lacking in strictness, and even the American press in their criticisms on the appalling catastrophe generally admit this. Strict as they are however they seem to be set at defiance by steamboat captains and owners, and the Asia on her last and fatal trip was a striking instance of this contempt for law. According to the charter under which she had previously sailed she was carrying at the time of foundering at least double her legal quota of passengers; and in fact this very certificate which the law says shall be posted in the most conspicuous part of the vessel, was not on board at the time of her loss. The life saving arrangements on board seem to have shared in the general system of reckless mismanagement which characterized everything else.

Out side of all these omissions which have come to light regarding the Asia it is evident that the class of vessels hitherto used in lake traffic do not possess the seaworthiness which might be secured. We must bear in mind that our lakes are great inland seas, and crafts which sail them should possess all the qualifications for standing rough weather which are necessary in ocean-going vessels.

The people of Manitoba are deeply interested in the system of navigation on the lakes, as for some years it must be our channel of traffic to a great extent with the East. It is to our interest to cast in our influence for the securing of safe sailing for ourselves and transportation for our goods over this great high-way, and in any Dominion legislation upon this sub-

ject we shall expect to see the solid vote of Manitoba in favor of securing an improvement upon the evidently lax arrangements of the past.

Coal in Dakota.

Under this head the *American Mail and Export Journal* has an article estimating the extent of the coal fields of that territory. Of course the writer carefully avoids hinting at any mineral wealth on our side of the boundary line, although in his estimate he wanders significantly near to the British possessions, but never crosses into them. How accurate the estimate is we are not in a position to judge, but allowing a liberal discount, as is often necessary in Yankee transactions, we should be forced to the conclusion that at least a small share of the bituminous fuel would be found north of the forty-ninth parallel of latitude, owing to the fact that nearly all of the Mouse River country spoken of is in Canada.

We append the article, and our readers can judge for themselves. "A matter of unusual interest to the settlers of the great North-West is the matter of the fuel supply on the immense prairies where wood is almost unknown. Recent investigations show that the coal fields of Dakota are of immense extent, extending from the Missouri River on the east to its western boundary, and from the Black Hills on the south to the British Possessions on the north, making an area of 100,000 square miles of coal-bearing territory, besides a new district lately discovered in the Mouse River country, which promises a rich development. The *Bismarck Tribune* says of the recent discoveries: 'The total thickness of the different veins discovered is about twenty-four feet, making a coal-field containing 2,500,000,000 tons of available coal. The coal in this field is classified into four distinct veins—the upper vein three feet thick, the second vein four feet thick, the third, or Merriam vein from seven to sixteen feet thick, the fourth or "Boss" vein four feet thick. This vein has a solid sandstone roof of forty six feet in thickness. The different veins have a similar appearance, the lower veins containing the largest per cent of carbon and volatile matter.' The soil of Dakota is rich and fertile, but its growth has been very slow, owing to the scarcity of fuel. These discoveries, however, will obviate this difficulty, and throw open the fine farming lands for cultivation, and be the means of establishing substantial manufacturing industries."

THE Dominion Government paid out \$6,000,000 on the 13th of Sept. in redemption of 5 per cent. Dominion stocks.

IN WINNIPEG there are 751 different firms or individuals conducting separate businesses. Of these there are 42 which are only auxiliaries or branches, the parent firm being located elsewhere. The Province of Ontario supplies 23 of the 42; the Province of Quebec 7; the Maritime Provinces 4; Manitoba and N. W. T. 6; and the U. S. 2. The branches are principally representative establishments of wholesale and manufacturing concerns, and are valuable auxiliaries to the city's commerce.