

peculiarly dependent upon outside resources for its supply, and should there arise any cause of interruption in the prompt delivery of those supplies the effect becomes immediately apparent, and the results more serious than otherwise would be the case. In this connection the "freight conditions" of Winnipeg are causing a good deal of dissatisfaction, trade being seriously checked by the uncertainty and delay in delivery of goods. This probably is nowhere more marked than in the building trades, where the scarcity of materials has been causing the greatest anxiety. Many buildings have had to be held in abeyance, and others seriously delayed in their progress entirely for lack of supplies; it is computed that, had there been sufficient materials ready to hand, there would have been an increase of quite 25 per cent. in the completed buildings during the present season; this, in a city where the dearth of available dwellings stands already at almost the famine point, is of most serious moment.

It is without doubt that the present year's progress came as a general surprise; all expected a measure of advancement, but no one looked for such strides as have actually come to pass. The financial section, at the commencement of the year, were inclined to move with caution in face of last year's anticipations not being fully realized, and probably this re-acted on the business men, causing them to hold back many orders which should have gone forward, thus causing a certain amount of delay in commencing operations. The difficulties at the present, however, are more distinctly those of "transit." From all accounts it would appear as though it was high time that a change was made in the handling of merchandise, so that there was some certainty of receiving a consignment of goods within a reasonable time, instead of having to wait and often suspend operations, the only news obtainable being that "the goods cannot be traced." If such a state of things continues, with the present extensive operations under way, it is impossible to tell where it will land us, and a serious check to business will result.

The extensive alterations and improvements to the Exhibition grounds are now rapidly nearing completion, but for some time it seemed as though the buildings could never be finished in time, mainly from the cause already referred to, but by dint of great exertion after much waiting, the work has gone ahead, and will be ready to keep the schedule time.

The tremendous storm which swept over the city some weeks since did a great deal of damage to buildings and property, more especially in the outlying suburbs, and to the smaller new dwellings under construction. In several instances houses were removed several feet from their positions, but without otherwise receiving damage; many simply collapsed with the severity of the wind and a long stretch of sheds on the railroad siding were razed to the ground. On the new Union Bank building work had to be at once suspended owing to the effect of the electricity on the steel work.

If one required additional proof of the real advancement of the city, it could well be found in the excitement prevailing in the community toward the improvement and enlargement of church buildings; there are quite a number in project, and many new ones under consideration. This probably is one of the best indexes to the substantial and financial success of the city; seeing that the churches are to a great extent not only the expression of the religious sentiments of the populace, but also the indication of their social life and progress. On River avenue, Augustine Presbyterian church is nearing completion and will be a fine stone structure in Gothic style, with a seating capacity of upwards of 1100. The Wesleyan church on Juno and William streets is to be improved and the capacity about doubled. The First Baptist church on Hargrave is to have an extensive addition and the seating capacity will be increased by about one-third.

The extension of the city and opening up of new streets and avenues have made it necessary to arrange for a better supply of fire stations. The authorities have therefore decided to erect five new buildings, one on each of the following streets, Sherbrooke, Gertrude, Burrows and McDermott. The plans have been prepared by Messrs. Melville Bros.

The Winnipeg Builders' Exchange held their monthly meeting on Tuesday, the 5th inst. The meeting was a most enthusiastic one and many interesting topics were discussed, a resolution being passed to the effect that each section was to be called together, a permanent chairman appointed, and the arrangements of the section kept in thorough order, preparatory to the adoption of important measures in the interest of the members.

THE BRICK OF WINNIPEG.

The brick supply of Winnipeg is fast becoming a serious proposition. For several months past the greatest difficulty has been experienced in obtaining sufficient to keep work in progress; in point of fact this has been the case since the opening of the season. Work commenced with a short supply, and it has been impossible to catch up to the demand. The local brick fields in operation have proved quite inadequate to meet the constantly increasing demand.

There are some ten or twelve brick-yards in full work, carrying some twelve pug mills, and these working at their full capacity produce scarcely 800,000 bricks per day, a total which is greatly insufficient to meet the demand of the building enterprises now on hand, the daily consumption at the present time being probably four times that number.

We understand that several of the largest contracts were originally arranged for Manitoba brick, and it was not until it was found impossible to get a supply on this side that imported brick was resorted to.

In the north end of the city, where a number of small buildings are being erected, the difficulties of obtaining a supply of brick were met in a somewhat novel way. In this district are resident a number of Doukhobors and Italians, and in order to keep up the necessary supply, a gang of these men set to work to collect the clay and mud dug out of the excavations for cellars and foundations, from which they made brick in the crudest and simplest way possible, without recourse to machinery of any kind whatever. The mixing of the clay was accomplished with the naked feet, and the moulding done by hand, the bricks being spread out on the ground to dry, afterwards being stacked in rough kiln fashion in the cellars from which the mud was dug and there baked for use. In this way they have not merely succeeded in keeping enough for foundation work, but have made sufficient to complete a small hotel throughout, for their own local use. The bricks made were at first much larger than usual, and the novelty was by no means reduced in watching the bricks being laid, the workman having to lay down his trowel each time and take up the brick with both hands. It certainly speaks well for the adaptability of these settlers, who had probably never made a brick before in their lives.

The brick in favor in this district is the common white clay brick, and one for which the local clay is particularly suitable. It stands the severe climate remarkably well, and in time gets as hard as stone. However, the clay from which it is made seldom runs at a greater depth than a few feet, and thus makes it a necessity to frequently shift location, a circumstance which prevents the brick-yards from adopting many of the more modern systems, which would probably increase the output.

We understand, too, that at a much greater depth a good supply of fine blue clay can be struck in certain localities, but up to the present it does not appear to have attracted attention, the general disposition being to pass on and keep near the surface.

Last season closed leaving no stock on hand and it looks at present as though this season will close with work standing still for need of brick.

WINNIPEG STONE MASONS AND THEIR DIFFICULTIES.

The present condition of the stone industry cannot by any means be considered satisfactory in Winnipeg and the surrounding districts, not on account of lack in trade prospects, for as for these the possibilities are certainly without limit.

The general rule favoured by Winnipeg architects is to make provision for "native" stone on all heavy buildings, and also on all dwellings of a substantial character, up to the first or second floor lines. This in itself means the absorption of a quantity of stone, mostly of a general and uniform character, so that there would appear to be no valid reason why the production of these blocks should not be continued without any interruption and at a rate which would keep pace with the advancing conditions of the city. Considering, too, that there appears to be ample supply to draw upon, and from all accounts plenty of men to considerably increase the output, it seems the more to be regretted that the present unsatisfactory conditions prevail.

The new Public Library which is well under construction and which should be finished by September next, is one of the greatest sufferers from deficient supply. It is to be almost a stone building throughout, and it is found impossible under present arrangements to obtain sufficient to keep the work going ahead; instead therefore of being "finished" within the specified time, it will be as much as the contractors can do to get the walls and roof up by the time now fixed for finishing.