

Grain Storage in Winnipeg.

To the Editor of the Commercial

SIR: In your issue of March 27, under the heading of "Chicago Board of Trade Returns," you call attention, by way of comparison, to the present position of Winnipeg in view of the cultivation of our prairies. The article is well worth the study of every one interested in the welfare of our city, bearing, as it does specially, not on the question of goods imported for distribution, but directly on the products of the soil for export. Winnipeg has done wonders in the way of establishing herself as a wholesale distributing center for imported goods, and the customs returns in this particular way will astonish the merchants of slower and less favorably situated places. But her merchants and property holders would do well to bear in mind that the work accomplished is only one part of a great city's duty or a great city's privilege. It must occur to most minds that the enormous totals of imports have not been handled to feed and clothe an idle population scattered over our prairies, but to support an energetic immigration intent on producing such quantities of cereals as will immediately raise us to the position of an exporting country, and the time has now arrived for our citizens to bestir themselves—considering the rapid strides that are being made in agriculture—and to move in the way of securing at the outset that the export business of the country shall be centered here. Timely action in this very particular has contributed more than anything else to build up the city of Chicago, and it can hardly be supposed that our business men will allow any other point to get a firm hold of this most lucrative part of a city's work. The acreage of land to be put under cultivation this season will produce a large surplus over local requirements, and it will be impossible to handle the coming season's crop by the old methods. It appears to me that, were our citizens alive to this fact, they would immediately see to having an elevator system established here for the storage and handling of grain against the coming harvest, and take the first and most certain step towards making Winnipeg the grain center of the Canadian North-west.

When it is considered that the elevator capacity of the city of Chicago amounts to over 25,000,000 bushels, and that we have in our surrounding country an admittedly superior field to be cultivated, it were in the highest degree suicidal for this city to neglect the present opportunity of making it the headquarters of the export trade. Unless this is secured we have no guarantee that Winnipeg will develop into a commercial center of the first-class. Let our citizens make a beginning, and the result of the first season's transactions will prove the wisdom of the step taken.

It is usual to compare the future of Winnipeg with what Chicago now is, but let it be kept in mind that export business, rather than import work, has contributed to the present position Chicago holds in the commercial world. Our prospects are better to-day than her outlook at the first seeing—every facility exists to make the enterprise a success—every institution,

financial and otherwise, bearing on the undertaking, lies ready to hand, and business men cognizant of the benefits arising from an established elevator system do not need to be told of the impetus which such an enterprise in our midst would give to every branch of legitimate trade in the city.

I am yours, etc.,

A GRAIN MERCHANT.

Board of Trade.

At the regular quarterly meeting of the Winnipeg Board of Trade the membership list was increased by 94 new names. The question of a fire by-law was discussed, and it was decided so ask the city Council to take some action in the matter, as the present position has a most injurious effect upon insurance. The president reported the proceedings of the council since the annual meeting on the 30th of January. The draft of a letter sent to the Minister of Inland Revenue, asking for legislation in the interests of the grain trade of the North-west, was read. It set forth the prospect of the vast amount of grain that would be raised in this country, which fact had induced the Board to take the necessary steps for getting inspection so as to grade the wheat here as it is shipped. The government were asked to make such amendment to the act regarding the inspection of grain, etc., as will allow of Fife wheat raised in this country being graded higher than No. 2. The law as at present, does not allow Fife wheat which grades in Minneapolis as better than No. 1 to be graded higher than No. 2. The president also stated that he had written to Ottawa in reference to the matter of the petition from the Board for the placing of a sum in the estimates for the sending of a steamer to Hudson's Straits to ascertain their condition in regard to navigation, with the view of determining the length of time during the year for which ports on Hudson's Bay would be accessible by vessels. The date of the annual meeting of the Board was changed from the third to the second Tuesday in January.

BRANDON.

Coombs & Stuart, whose store is at present on Sixth street, are about to procure a stand on Rosser avenue, between Eighth and Ninth streets.

The Massey Manufacturing company is building one of the largest implement warehouses in the city on the corner of Princess avenue and Ninth street.

The election of J. A. Smart to the position of director for Brandon on the North-west Fire Insurance Company Board gives general satisfaction to the stockholders here.

John Watson, of Ayr, has leased a lot on Ninth street from Mr. J. Mobbs for the purpose of erecting an implement warehouse, as he finds that his offices at the East-end are too far out of town.

Mr. John Peter Grant, Winnipeg's clever insurance man, lectured here on Thursday evening in aid of the Church of England, insurance being the subject. He realized quite a fund for the good cause.

The citizens held a public meeting on Friday evening to consider the advisability of granting

a bonus to the C. P. R. if that corporation would agree to build 20 miles of the Souris branch this year. At the meeting it was decided to offer a bonus of \$50,000 if the C. P. R. would agree to put the workshops here.

During the last week business has made vigorous strides on the road to improvement. Immigration flows in, and the station presents a most busy appearance. The yards are full of freight. The number of cars received is increasing every day, and the C. P. R. officials are preparing for a greater boom than they had last year.

The Imperial Bank, which is under the able management of Mr. A. Jukes here, is about to erect one of the finest buildings in the town on the corner of Rosser avenue and Tenth street. The plans are now being drawn by Mr. Rowan, of Winnipeg, and the building will cost in the neighborhood of \$9,000. It will be of brick and heated throughout with steam.

EMERSON.

Mr. John Crawford, baker, has assigned.

Plenty of horses and cattle are on sale at the different feed stables in town.

The resignation of Mr. Burnham has necessitated the holding of a new election.

Large parties of immigrants are being passed through the customs every day. The larger part of the arrivals are for the west.

The Emerson Agricultural Society have received their share of the \$10,000 awarded to agricultural shows, amounting to \$341.35.

Business during the past week has been very good, quite in keeping with the expectations of those engaged in it. Very little grain is being offered.

The Park Street bridge will be completed in a few days. It has been built quite substantial, and is intended to be flood-proof. Its opening will be attended by some kind of ceremony.

Mr. C. B. Russell, who has held the express agency here for some time, has resigned, his place being filled by a gentleman from Milwaukee. He has gone east for a trip, and may be reinstated upon his return.

The railway bridge has been advanced about as far as possible before the water raises. The piles are all driven and sawn off below the surface of the water, and the completion of the concrete work is going on. The water has started to rise, but not enough yet to cause any annoyance.

Messrs. Noble & Follis have commenced the erection of a building next to Walton & Bird's hardware store. It is to have a frontage of 30 feet, two stories high, and to be of solid brick. The other portion of the burned district will be cleared soon, preparatory for building.

The alterations and additions to the St. Boniface Soap Works, which have been going on for some time, are completed, and the works will be open for public inspection on Wednesday. In the evening, Messrs. Wall, Bessette & Leconte, the enterprising proprietors, celebrate the opening by a banquet to their friends and patrons in the Grand Hotel.