

WINNIPEG'S STREETS

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Winnipeg, it is not at all surprising that this should be the case, as the addition of a heavy frontage tax to the heavy general tax is regarded as a great hardship, and would no doubt be more than many persons could stand.

The Commercial opposed the frontage tax system at the time it was first introduced here, and after trial for a number of years, it looks as though the system would have to be abandoned, at least partially, if any reasonable progress is to be made in improving our streets. As the matter now stands, very little progress has been made in the past ten years. A number of the streets have been paved with cedar blocks, but this class of paving has proved a dead failure here, and most of the streets so paved are not fit to drive upon and require re-paving at once. Notwithstanding the utter failure of this class of paving, the council has this year re-paved a large portion of Main street with the same material.

Owing to the tendency of our sticky soil to roll up on the wheels and be carried along and deposited in other places, the paving of a street here and there is not satisfactory. What is required is a comprehensive system of paving by districts. Where a single street is paved and is left surrounded in every direction by the mud roads, the paved street is soon buried beneath the load of mud carried upon it on the wheels of vehicles coming from the mud roads.

A point which shows the injustice of the frontage tax system is the fact that when a street has been paved, those who have occasion to drive will go long distances out of their way to use the paved street. Thus a few are compelled to bear the full cost of improving a street for the benefit of many. Last spring, when the streets were in exceptionally bad condition, many of them being simply impassable, it was difficult to get delivery of goods except along the paved streets. It is a fact that in some cases goods were taken out to points along the paved streets by horse vehicles, and thence delivered by hand carriage to other streets in the vicinity. In this way those who paid for the paving of the streets provided an accommodation to others in the vicinity who contributed nothing toward the work.

ASSISTING THE DAIRY INTERESTS.

Prof. Robertson, Dominion dairy commissioner, has issued a circular stating the manner in which the government proposes to aid the dairy industry in the Territories. The plan is practically the same as was reported previously in The Commercial. A loan sufficient to properly equip a cheese or butter factory will be made by the government, where associations are formed to carry on such industry, after certain conditions have been complied with. The company must first be incorporated and registered, and it must next provide suitable buildings, according to plans approved by the department, and the site must also be approved by the department. A water supply must also be provided, and the milk from at least 400 cows must be guaranteed.

The government will take the management of the factory, and will manufacture and market the butter at a charge of 4 cents per pound, allowing certain advances to patrons. In addition to the 4 cents, the government will charge a further sum of 1 cent per pound, to repay the loan advanced to the company, or for such other purpose as the department may direct. The government will allow a sum not to exceed 7 per cent on the value of the buildings for rent. When the loan is repaid, the government will step out and hand the factory over to the association, the patrons receiving shares in proportion to the amount paid in by them.

In districts where creameries are now established, and where it is desired to bring them under the control of the government until they become thoroughly established, this will be done by modifications in the regulations to meet the case.

The object of the department in taking the control of new or old factories, is to secure the establishment of properly equipped factories on a sound basis. Where the factories are left to private enterprise, there is often a lack of sufficient funds to provide a properly equipped establishment, and the manufacture of dairy produce is thus undertaken under circumstances which prevents the production of a high grade article. With the aid of the government loan this disadvantage will be overcome. The placing of the factory under the control of the department will further ensure the employment of a competent maker to take charge of the factory, and it will also ensure the marketing of the product in the best form. The gradual repayment of the loan is arranged for in such a way by charging 1 cent per pound on the butter manufactured, that it will not be felt by the patrons, and by the time the loan is repaid and the department is ready to step out and hand over the factory to the company, sufficient experience will no doubt have been acquired by the company to enable them to continue the industry successfully.

THE FARMERS' INSTITUTE.

It is a matter for regret that the Manitoba Farmers' Institute has been placed in a somewhat discreditable position of late. First it, or at least some of its officers, which amounts to about the same thing so far as the effect upon the public is concerned, incurred the political displeasure of certain parties. The Commercial does not believe that the acceptance of a position in the institute should interfere with the liberty of any one in political matters, and on this score we are rather inclined to sympathize with those members of the institute who incurred the displeasure of some politicians. It was charged that certain members of the institute had used their position as officials of that organization to further their political desires. If they did, it is only doing what almost any politician would do, and there is very little room for throwing stones in this case. The Commercial knows nothing about the truth or falsity of the charges, and, moreover, we do not want to know anything about the matter. We would just point out, however, that men in a semi-public position like leading officials of the institute, would be very

liable to have such charges made against them, if they took any hand in politics at all, and it is altogether probable that a great deal more has been made of this matter than there was ground for, if indeed there was any ground at all for the charges.

Next the institute got itself into trouble by endeavoring to introduce changes in the Manitoba wheat grades which were not in accordance with the wishes of either the farmers' or the handlers of grain. A very disagreeable muddle was narrowly averted. As it is, matters have turned out all right, but a great deal of dissatisfaction has been aroused on account of the action of the institute in this matter, and we understand a number of the members of the association feel the matter very keenly and resent strongly the action of the officials of the institute in this matter.

It is to be hoped, however, that the usefulness of the institute will not be impaired by these occurrences. It has a good work to perform, and by adhering strictly to matters pertaining to agriculture, the institute should be a great power for good in the country. When commercial questions like the grading of grain, for instance, or other matters not strictly pertaining to agriculture are taken up, the institute is very likely to get into troublesome water.

THE UNITED STATES ELECTIONS.

The result of the elections in the United States is regarded with great satisfaction throughout we may say the civilized world, as being a triumph for law and order and honesty and morality. The policy of the free-silver party, which practically meant repudiation of honest obligations, has been repudiated by the people, and the triumph of sound monetary principles has been complete. The silver people carried almost a solid South and several large silver producing states, but the great commercial, industrial and agricultural states of the east, north and west have refused to countenance repudiation.

It is a peculiar position, that while McKinley stood for honest money, his party is attached to the fallacious trade policy of protection. It is a strange mixture of economic heresy and financial solidity. We do not expect, however, that the result of the elections will lead to a return to that extreme protection that characterized the last Republican administration. In the recent contest party lines were largely obliterated. Protection was lost sight of in the battle over the monetary question. Thousands of leading men who are opposed to high protection, threw in their forces to assist the Republican candidate, and these men will have great influence in preventing a return to protectionist extremes. No doubt there will be some changes in the tariff by the new administration, but not to such an extent as characterized the last Republican attempt at tariff legislation.

Prof. Coleman, mineralogist for the Ontario government, who has returned from Sudbury, where he went to investigate the alleged discovery of coal in Algoma, says there is no coal there. He found anthraxolite, but that was all. The latter is not a valuable substance for fuel.