

The Local Board — Its Functions and Influence

There is, however, no royal road to this achievement. The Management cannot overlook the fact that the Company's business must be conducted on a business basis; they are trustees of the shareholders' capital, which they dare not knowingly imperil. They must pay due regard to expenses in all matters, and they should not be asked to keep an elevator open to be operated at a loss on the actual working expenses of that elevator. There should be at a point enough grain business and business in farm machinery and other supplies, the returns from which shall more than cover the operating expenses, before an elevator should remain open. The Management can only review each point on its own merits, and if the business done or in sight does not warrant the expense, they have little option but to close the elevator for the season.

Here is the Local Board's opportunity. Crop and other conditions may make the handling of the situation difficult and perhaps impossible, but the Board should get together and face it. In the interests of the entire farming community at the point, the position should be explained to each farmer, either personally or by letter, or at a meeting. If it is desired to keep the elevator open they have it very largely in their own hands to achieve this by doing sufficient business warrant it. The elevator agent is there to co-operate with the Board and the farmers, and can give or get full information on all lines of business handled by the Company. During the busy season, however, he cannot leave the elevator to go after business, but he is