

ally in value. If the Eastern farmers are contented with their former returns per acre, it is true that competition with the West must be disastrous to their interests. But is it not possible that the lost ground can be more than regained by the adoption of more thorough and effective means of assisting the natural forces in the work of growing grain and other products of the soil?

THE FAILURE RECORD.

Less than three months remain of the current year, and unless unexpected disasters are in store for Canadian trade interests, 1897 will close with a fairly satisfactory record, so far as business failures are concerned. In the past nine months the total number of failures of corporations, firms and individuals in Canada was, according to *Bradstreet's* estimate, 1,501 as compared with 1,663 last year. The total liabilities were \$10,653,212, contrasted with \$12,262,862 a year ago. This represents a decrease of more than nine per cent. in the number of failures and 10 per cent. in the amount of the liabilities which they represent. This record indicating a healthier condition of trade is very satisfactory.

In the United States there have been 9,893 business failures during the past nine months, a falling off in number of 1,447, compared with the like period of 1896 of nearly 13 per cent. The larger percentage of decrease in the number of failures in the United States than in Canada, cannot be taken as an indication of greater prosperity in the American Republic; but rather serves to emphasize the numerous failures that took place there a year ago. In the past nine months there were 534 failures more than in the like portion of 1895, a gain of nearly six per cent., and almost as large an increase as contrasted with the corresponding total in 1894. The total liabilities of failing corporations, firms and traders in the United States since January 1st last amount to \$118,484,000, compared with \$171,350,000 in nine months of 1896, a decrease of \$52,866,000, or more than 30 per cent., about two and one-half times the proportion of decrease in the falling off in number of failures.

The failures in Canada are fairly well distributed over the different Provinces, in proportion to their commercial importance. Ontario in the nine months of 1897, had 679 failures, representing \$1,809,232 assets, and \$4,224,322 liabilities, as compared with 535 failures in Quebec, with \$1,523,641 assets, and \$4,754,825 liabilities. In the nine months of the previous year 709 failures in Ontario represented \$1,753,180 assets, and \$3,891,212 liabilities, as compared with 665 failures, assets of \$2,112,943, and liabilities of \$6,066,695 in the Province of Quebec. It is interesting to note that although in both years there were more failures in Ontario than in Quebec, the amounts involved in the latter province have been, with the exception of the assets in 1897, greater than those in Ontario. The failures for the past nine months, compared with those of the same period, 1896, are distributed as follows:

Provinces.	No. of Failures.		Assets.		Liabilities.	
	1897.	1896.	1897.	1896.	1897.	1896.
Ontario	679	709	1,809,232	1,753,180	4,224,322	3,891,212
Quebec	535	665	1,523,641	2,112,945	4,754,825	6,066,695
New Brunswick	45	52	110,990	164,610	237,850	313,211
Nova Scotia	187	111	295,722	228,718	647,042	482,520
P. E. Island	8	12	26,850	16,528	61,702	29,368
Manitoba	38	20	205,207	139,575	405,729	272,301
Northwest Ter.	7	18	35,700	37,387	65,342	96,303
Brit. Columbia	52	64	134,818	594,357	256,400	1,068,386
Totals, Canada	1,501	1,663	4,141,860	5,065,922	10,653,212	12,262,862
Newfoundland	14	12	17,850	18,622	39,100	42,866

GRAIN STORAGE FACILITIES IN WESTERN CANADA.

The key to the grain markets of Manitoba and the North-West is the possession of storage facilities. As a rule the farmers of the West have incomplete accommodation for the storage of grain. The dearth of lumber has prevented them from building more than sufficient shelter for themselves, their families, and live stock. The grain must as a consequence be shipped immediately by rail to the East or placed in the elevators of grain merchants. It is not an easy matter for the individual farmer to secure cars at the moment his wheat comes from the threshing machine, and, as a consequence, he is obliged to sell it to the owner of the elevators. This system of trading has given rise to many evils, and is detrimental to the best interests of the province.

Frequent complaints are made that the merchants have combined as to the prices which should be paid farmers for wheat, and strengthened by the possession of storage facilities, they are in a position to bear the market to suit their own convenience. From the "syndicate" headquarters, it is alleged, uniform instructions are sent to buyers throughout the country. In this way, competition on the part of the shippers, if not eliminated, is at least reduced, and the grower's do not get as much for their grain as they would had the trade been left to regulate itself. The Government has been asked to investigate this matter, and the complaints of monopoly have been numerous enough to justify Government action. It has been suggested that the grievances could be removed by the erection of public elevators by the Government, in which the farmers could store grain upon the payment of reasonable charges.

The farmers have in their own power the ability to remove the monopoly, if it exists, in a much more satisfactory manner, and at the same time obtain other substantial advantages by building farm granaries. The manager of the Ogilvie Milling Company, in an interview with the *Winnipeg Commercial*, points out many advantages to the farmer from facilities for storing grain on the farm. Where there is no farm storage everything has to stand until the grain is hauled to the elevators. Fall ploughing is delayed when the ground is in the best condition for this work; with farm granaries the wheat could be taken to the market after the ground was frozen and ploughing had become impossible. As soon as a farmer stores his wheat in an elevator, it is at once added to visible stocks, and the enormous increase of wheat supplies in store depresses prices. Thus the farmer directly forces the price down, against his own interests, by throwing his wheat into public storage. Farm granaries would give the farmer time and opportunity to clean his grain, and thus market it in a marketable condition. Railway freight is now paid on tons of seeds, which should be taken out of the wheat on the farm. As an instance, Mr. Thompson stated that they had taken out 181 bushels of seeds out of one car of wheat. This is a loss to the farmer of freight and dockage. These screenings would be available for feeding purposes on the farm. Business would, in the event of the general adoption of farm granaries, be more evenly distributed throughout the year, and there would be a better circulation of cash and less credit business.

—We made reference, a week or two ago, to the growth of the city of Ottawa in activity of business and in population. We now learn that during the past year the value of assessable property in that city increased by fully \$900,000. As the assessment for 1897 amounted to \$21,947,675, the present assessment therefore amounts, in round numbers, to \$22,900,000. The population is now claimed to be 53,000, which is an increase of more than 1,800 within the twelve month.