

like St. Paul, he replied that the traffic in the latter city was divided among eight or ten roads, while ours was confined to the C.P.R.

The chairman.—Do you think that reduced local freight and passenger rates would have any effect in increasing the traffic?

Mr. Ashdown.—I think decidedly that if Mr. Van Horne had carried out the policy he announced, the population of this country would have been vastly in excess of what it is to-day. He stated that the C.P.R. company would carry fuel at cost; settlers' grain at a mere shade over cost; "and then, gentlemen," he added, speaking to members of the board of trade, "you may expect to pay a fair figure on your merchandise."

The questions having been repeated whether in his opinion, if there were lower local rates, there would be considerably more traffic and considerably more freight business, Mr. Ashdown answered, "I think so, decidedly." He went on to say that not only were the rates too high, but the service was defective. Coal oil had been held at Calgary two weeks awaiting shipment; and it was a common thing on branch lines to have ordinary freight lying for a week. In conclusion the board of trade charged the C.P.R. company with having put in force and continued on the western division through the whole country from Fort William to the Rocky Mountains a scale of charges on merchandise, building material, fuel, produce and everything carried by it, incoming and outgoing and from point to point within the country, altogether too high and out of all proportion to the charges for the same service in other parts of Canada, except, possibly, British Columbia. Owing and operating a road built with the money of Canada and intended to be operated in the interests of the Canadian people, it had in the matter of charges grievously injured our people and seriously retarded the progress of the West. This board of trade had time and again called attention to this without effect. It now asked that the government should find and put in force a remedy.

Financial and Insurance Notes.

The insurance companies in Manitoba contemplate increasing premiums 5 per cent. in view of the provincial tax which is to be imposed on all companies after the expiration of this year.

The Pilot Mound Sentinel says: "Mr. Dow, administrator for the estate of Wm. Lang, completed the claim papers for Mr. Lang's life insurance in the Great West Life Assurance Co. last Friday, and the cheque for the money was remitted on Tuesday. The Great West Life Assurance Co. is growing in popularity in Manitoba.

The Quebec provincial government is moving in the matter of regulating the mutual benefit insurance societies. It is proposed to compel such societies to present annual reports to the government, and they will be restricted in other ways, with the object of preventing them from making too rash promises to their members.

Grain and Milling Matters.

W. A. Hastings, of Montreal, president of the Lake of the Woods Milling company, was in Winnipeg last week. He stated he was here principally to lay out some spring work, as it is the intention of the company he said to build thirteen elevators in the province and territories next spring to meet the increasing demands for grain storage facilities. Six of these will have a capacity of 40,000 bushels each, six others will be capable of holding from 10,000 to 16,000 bushels each, and one of them will be a large receiving elevator located at some central point. It is probable the largest one will be at Portage la Prairie,

where the company have a mill. He said: Our exports this year to Newfoundland are greater by ten times over last season.

Dow & Curry have erected a grain warehouse near their oatmeal mill at Pilot Mound, Man.

During his recent visit to Winnipeg W. W. Ogilvie said: "We have decided to build six new elevators in Manitoba in the spring. Owing to the increase of the grain production, the opening up of new stations and new districts makes this necessary."

The Neepawa Register says "Those having stock in the Farmers' Elevator are becoming apprehensive lest they lose all the money invested and the probabilities are, if the necessary stock is not soon subscribed, this will assuredly happen. The present indications are that the whole affair will pass into the hands of the present manager, John Crawford.

British Grain Markets.

The London Miller of December 4 has the following review of the course of British wheat markets during November:

The month's trade began on the 1st with a dull market at the Baltic, and 19s 6d accepted for cargoes of No. 2 red winter wheat on passage. On the 2nd, at Liverpool, 4s 5d per cental was accepted for red winter arrived, and 4s 10d for Californian. Trade was flat. On the 3rd, at the Baltic, No. 2 Calcutta wheat on passage made 21s per qr. Business was quiet but steady. On the 5th November Mark Lane showed a trifling improvement in English wheat at 6d advance from October's closing prices. On the 6th, at the Baltic, 6 1/2 advance was made on red winter cargoes, which, at 20s, were in better request than on the 1st; they had been at 19s 6d per qr. On the 7th, at Liverpool, 4s 6d was paid for red winter, and 4s 11d for Californian, being a penny per cental rise from the 2nd. On the 9th the market was still slightly in sellers' favor, and at the Baltic 20s 3d was paid for red winter. For Californian 21s 9d was paid. On the 12th, at Mark Lane, any new English wheat in a dry condition was worth fully 1s advance, but owing to the flooded state of the country such samples were very scarce. A rise of fully 6d per qr. was admitted on American wheat and flour. On the 13th, Liverpool was decidedly strong, the news from American pointing to a very large home use of wheat. Accordingly, we find that 4s 9d demanded for red winter, and 5s 1d for Californian, being a rise of 3d to 4d per cental on the eleven days. On the 14th, the Baltic was strong, and 21s was paid for No. 2 red winter, 25s for Californian, 21s 9d for Australian, and 22s for No. 2 Calcutta. On the following day red winter cargoes were held for 22s, but 21s 6d was the best offer. On the 16th, Liverpool was firm, but prices made no further advance. The country markets on the 17th were generally 1s dearer for English wheat; a few, including Reading, were 2s dearer. Mark Lane on the 19th quoted 1s advance on all sorts of wheat, and 6d improvement on all descriptions of flour except top-price; a rise of 1s 6d on maize helped wheat. Liverpool on the 20th was strong and 1s 11d was made for No. 2 red winter. On the 21st, the Baltic was also in sellers' favor; 21s 9d was made No. 2 red winter, 25s for Californian, and 24s 6d for hard Manitoba. The new Argentine crop was offered for February shipment at 21s 6d per qr., and the new Australian crop for January shipment at 21s 9d per qr. On the 23rd, at Liverpool, 5s 3d was paid for arrived Californian. This was about the best price of the month. The markets of the 24th were stationary, but London on the 26th was weak and a little inclined to go back. On the 27th,

at Liverpool, 4s 10d was accepted for red winter and 5s 2d for Californian, and at the "Baltic" the prices taken for cargoes at the end of the month were 21s 8d for red winter, 21s 6d for Californian, 21s 6d for No. 2 Calcutta, and 21s 3d for hard Manitoba wheat.

November has been a month of flooding rains. The weather has been pleasant on the whole, for the heavy rainfall left bright patches of sunshine between the tropical showers, and since the 17th the downpours have for the most part ceased. Threshings, however, have been discouraged, and farmers' deliveries have been much under an average. The death of the Czar at first strengthened the markets, as it was regarded as removing an important guarantor of European peace. But the new Emperor has started his reign under such excellent auguries, that all political influences have been withdrawn from holders' side of trade. The impression, none the less, remains that November has not only seen value at its lowest, but has witnessed the first upward step. The last three days of the month were not strong, but the rise made between the 10th and the 23rd was not materially modified.

The New Cabinet.

Mr. Bowell has been called upon to form a new government, as successor to the late Sir John Thompson. The new cabinet has been announced as follows:

Hon. Mr. Bowell, premier and president of the council.

Hon. Mr. Foster, minister of finance.

Hon. Mr. Costigan, minister of marine and fisheries.

Sir A. P. Caren, postmaster general.

Sir C. H. Tupper, minister of justice.

Hon. Mr. Haggart, minister of railways and canals.

Hon. Mr. Oumet, minister of public works.

Hon. Mr. Angers, minister of agriculture.

Hon. Mr. Ives, minister of trade and commerce.

Hon. Mr. Daly, minister of the interior.

Hon. Mr. Patterson, minister of militia.

Hon. Mr. Dickey, secretary of state.

Sir Frank Smith, Dr. Montague, M. P., and the Hon. Donald Ferguson without portfolios.

Mr. Foster will be the leader in the House of Commons.

British Grain Trade

The Mark Lane Express of December 17, in its weekly review of the British grain trade, says: "English wheats have been 6d and foreign 1s lower owing to large arrivals of Russian and Indian products. California wheats are quoted at 25s, hard Manitoba at 21s 9d, and No. 2 red winter at 22s 3d. Barleys have been firm, corn 3d cheaper, and oats quiet. To-day wheats continue weak, barley and corn dropped 3d. Oats are in buyers' favor and flour is slow of sale. Linseed dropped 6d."

Pork Packing and Provisions

The supply of hogs continues liberal, and current offerings somewhat in excess of prevailing expectations. The western packing returns for the week show a total of 535,000, compared with 470,000 the preceding week, 365,000 last year, and 330,000 two years ago—making a total of 2,890,000 since November 1, against 1,675,000 a year ago, an increase of 1,215,000. In the early portion of the week prices were well sustained, but toward the close were moderately reduced, the general average for prominent markets at the close being about 10 cents per 100 lower than a week ago.—Cincinnati Price Current, Dec. 13.