

it will continue to be the duty of this Board, understanding the many drawbacks and discouragements, to persist in their efforts until the work is accomplished.

There were a great many other matters of considerable importance under consideration and about which I would like to supplement a few observations of my own but time will not permit. I will only mention in a hurried way a few which appear to me to deserve special notice.

The Express rates charged by the principal company doing business in this country have always been considered excessive and you will see from the comparative rates in the Council's report that we were quite justified in demanding a reduction. Our first efforts were not successful but I am pleased to say the company favored the people with a very substantial reduction which we were glad to accept as a sort of Christmas present.

The settlement of the vacant lands adjacent to Winnipeg has been a matter for consideration for years. I was in hopes that I would be able to report to you a matured plan but the question is still in the hands of an able committee whom I trust you will be good enough to continue in office when something practicable will, I have no doubt, be evolved.

You will no doubt read with interest the action of the Board respecting the beet root sugar industry, experimental farm in the Red River Valley, legal rates of interest, regulations respecting fruit inportation, dredging at Fort William, and other topics of more or less importance.

STATE OF TRADE.

In years past we have been accustomed to speak, hopefully of the state of trade. We always had faith in our