

CHANGES IN THE CONSTITUTION.

The advisability of holding more frequent meetings of the full board was discussed at the last annual meeting, and after due notice of motion had been given, the constitution was amended at a general meeting held on the 28th February, 1890, as follows:

Sec. 4, Sub-Sec. 2 was made to read as follows,—

"Monthly general meetings shall be held on the second Tuesday in each month, and if any of these days shall happen to be a legal holiday, then the meeting may be held upon the third Tuesday. Notification by circular, or otherwise, shall be sufficient for ordinary meetings."

After a year's experience under the amended constitution, the council can only report that the change has not met the expectations of its supporters. The monthly meetings have, as a rule, not been as well attended as were the quarterly meetings under the old regulations.

The council recommends that the former system of quarterly meetings of the board, with monthly meetings of the council, be again adopted.

If any change is required to have the general business of the board transacted by a larger number of members it might be advisable to increase the number of members composing the council. It is understood by the council that notice of motion to that effect will be made at the annual meeting.

RED RIVER NAVIGATION.

On several occasions during the year the board has urged the Dominion Government to proceed with the improvements to the navigation of the Red river. In February, the secretary, with the Manitoba members and senators, waited, as a deputation, on the minister of public works, and on his return from Ottawa, the council appointed a deputation to wait on the city council to urge that body to send Major Rutan, the city engineer, to Ottawa to further press the matter strongly on the attention of the department. Major Rutan was sent and presented the case to Sir Hector Langevin, and secured the insertion in the estimates of a sum for the securing of information still required by the engineers of the public works department. In September last, Sir Hector Langevin met the members of this board in their board room and the whole matter was gone over again with him. He asked that a full statement be again prepared for him that would show the value, present and prospective, of the trade and traffic to be secured by improved navigation of the Red river between this city and Lake Winnipeg. This statement has been forwarded and your council trust that active operations will no longer be delayed.

The council are satisfied that they represent the board when expressing their very great dissatisfaction with the procrastinating and dilatory cause of the Government in connection with these required improvements. For years promises have been given and feints at active work have been exhibited but nothing of material advancement has yet been shown.

HUDSON'S BAY RAILWAY.

In March last the board forwarded to Ottawa the following petition:

"The memorial of the Winnipeg board of trade most respectfully sheweth:

That situated as Manitoba is, in the centre of the North American continent, its inhabitants very severely feel the want of a shorter and cheaper route to the markets of the world.

It has been demonstrated by the experience of the Hudson's Bay Company for over two centuries, that a safe and practicable route exists, via Hudson's Bay and Strait, a route by which the early settlers of the colony entered the country and the produce of the chase of the entire Northwest was conveyed to the commercial centres of the old world, by means of very ordinary sailing ships, which in return brought out the necessary supplies of manufactured goods, live stock and implements. The construction of a railway to connect the existing and future lines of railway in the province with Hudson's Bay would be of immense benefit to this country by affording a cheap and ready means of access to tide water; by reducing the cost of transportation of our cereals, live stock and dairy products to the markets of Europe, and by offering to immigrants a shorter and more direct route to the very heart of the Dominion, would tend very materially to promote and encourage the rapid development of Manitoba and of the whole Northwest.

In view therefore of the great importance the Winnipeg & Hudson's Bay railway would be to this country, to the Northwest Territories and the Dominion at large, your memorialists would most respectfully pray:—

That your Honorable House will be pleased to grant such substantial aid as will enable the Winnipeg & Hudson's Bay Railway Company to undertake the immediate construction of this great enterprise and carry it out to completion.

And your memorialists as in duty bound will ever pray."

PROPOSED REMOVAL OF DOMINION LANDS OFFICE.

In March last, in consequence of a speech made by the Minister of the Interior in the House at Ottawa it was understood that the Dominion Government had in contemplation the removal of the Dominion Lands Board from Winnipeg to Ottawa. Very strong feeling was excited regarding the proposed change in the system of administering the Dominion Lands business in this country, and at a meeting of the board on the 8th of April, the following resolution was unanimously passed and forwarded to Sir John A. Macdonald.

"Whereas, it is currently reported to be the intention of the Dominion Government to disturb the existing arrangements for the administration of Dominion Lands in Manitoba and the Northwest Territories by doing away with the Lands Board at Winnipeg, and returning to the former system of transacting the business relating to Government Lands direct with the Department of the Interior at Ottawa.

"And whereas, such removal would cause great inconvenience, irritation and loss to the people of this province and the Territories.

"And whereas, for the encouragement of immigration and the more rapid development of the resources of the country, it is, in the opinion of this board, most desirable that every facility should be here afforded settlers in obtaining titles to their lands, and the transaction of such business as they may have with the

Department without the delays consequent on a reference to Ottawa.

"Therefore be it resolved, that this board does hereby protest against such proposed action, and in the interests of the settlers would respectfully urge upon the Government the enlargement of the powers of the Commissioner sufficient to enable him to fully and finally dispose of all matters properly coming before him."

A deputation of members of the board also waited on the Hon. Mr. Dawdney at the time of his visit here last summer and urged the views of the board on this subject.

So far as the council is aware no action has since been taken by the Dominion Government to disturb the existing arrangements.

TRANSFER RAILWAY.

On the 26th of June last the board at a special general meeting passed the following resolutions:

"Whereas it is of the greatest importance that every facility for the interchange of merchandise from one part of the country to another should exist;

"And whereas the principle has been recognized by the general railway act of the Dominion, providing for connections between railroads which intersect;

"And whereas the Northern Pacific & Manitoba Ry. has now a railway system within the province of 265 miles, and, with their connections from a competing line, and portions of this line have been in operation for more than one year, but up to the present time no connection with the Canadian Pacific Ry. has been made;

"And whereas, the Winnipeg transfer railway was built at very considerable expense, largely for the purpose of providing such connection;

"And whereas, this board recognises the fact that the advantages derived from such competition are minimized for the lack of such connection and that the public convenience requires such means of transfer, and the want of it has been occasioned and will continue to occasion much loss and delay by necessitating the teaming of goods from the one road to another;

"And whereas, the Winnipeg transfer railway did, on or about the beginning of August last make application to the railway committee of the privy council to approve the plans of connection with the Canadian Pacific railway, which was intended to enable the interchange of traffic between that road and the Northern Pacific and Manitoba railway, and since that time have renewed and have now pending before the committee an application for such connection;

"And to and whereas in the opinion of this board every effort should be made to secure such connection without further delay;

"Therefore be it resolved that this board again respectfully, and most urgently, request the railway committee of the privy council to provide for said connection, and that a copy of this resolution be forwarded to the Hon. the Minister of railways, with a request for immediate action in the premises."

Again, on the 9th of September a telegram was sent from a general meeting of the board urging on the railway committee the necessity