

point, he being the president of that important undertaking. We may mention that Mr. Allan has the advantages accruing from wide and frequent travel, and from a knowledge of several foreign languages, so that his conversation and opinions are of peculiar interest.



WINNIPEG BOARD OF TRADE.

On Wednesday afternoon, Feb. 8th, was held the twenty-sixth annual meeting of the Winnipeg Board of Trade. The gathering was in the board room in the Grain Exchange building. A review of the work of the Board for the past year was given, the retiring president's address was delivered, routine business transacted, new members admitted, and finally the officers for the ensuing year elected. Some sixty members were present.

The retiring president, Mr. H. W. Hutchinson, delivered a lengthy address, and he began by disclaiming any intention of referring at length to matters treated in the report of council, which we have summarized elsewhere in this issue. He spoke about the growth of Canadian trade; told of the remarkable progress of the North-West—into which 130,329 settlers had come in the last fiscal year, i.e., 51,000 British, 43,000 Americans, 36,329 from elsewhere; Manitoba wheat in the United States; spoke of grain inspection; transportation and the growth of railway mileage and equipment in the prairie country; Winnipeg's advancement; better equipment for fire protection in the city; St. Andrew's Rapids improvements; the growth of membership by forty during the past year. It was an interesting story. The address was well received, and



CHARLES N. BELL, SECRETARY WINNIPEG BOARD OF TRADE.

the chairman thanked for his services to the Board during the year. The council's report was adopted as read. The treasurer's report showed a net gain of \$567 for the year, and a balance in hand of \$2,126.

The election of officers was then proceeded with, and resulted as follows:

President, A. L. Johnson.

Vice-president, G. F. Carruthers.

Treasurer, Andrew Strang, re-elected.

Secretary, Charles N. Bell, re-elected.

Council, H. W. Hutchinson, J. W. Dafoe, W. Sanford Evans, F. W. Drewry, J. H. Ashdown, William Georgeson, H. M. Belcher, D. W. Bole, M.P.; John B. Persse, John Love, D. K. Elliott, F. H. Heubach, E. D. Martin, D. E. Sprague, John Aird, and T. R. Preston.

Fourteen standing committees were chosen.

Mr. Hutchinson gave a dinner, in the evening, at the Manitoba Club, to the members of last year's council.

The incoming president, Mr. H. L. Johnson, has won his position by faithful and persistent work. A willing and ener-

getic member of council, he was always to the front when measures were to be considered, and gave ungrudging attention to the business of the Board. For years he has been manager at Winnipeg for the Ames-Holden Company, is of good business capacity, and has many friends. To our regret, Mr. Johnson has no photograph of himself to send, else it was our intention to have reproduced it for this issue. We are able, however, to give a portrait of Mr. Charles N. Bell, for many years the well-known secretary of the Board and a prominent personage in the history and development of Manitoba.



NORTH OF ENGLAND LETTER.

Reports from Canada's Commercial Agents in all parts of the world receive publicity in this country, and some that we find in the official journal of the Board of Trade are genuinely informative. But of the agents in our midst, one ventures to say that we hear too little, and that it were better for both nations if we were to hear and see more. Mr. J. B. Jackson, of Leeds, has been addressing Chambers of Commerce within his own sphere of influence, and it is highly likely that his activities will have a good effect. In many other ways agents can keep their office before the public. Whether your neighbors in the States select their Consuls because of their oratorical gifts is not perfectly certain. Yet it is not to be denied that at functions, public as well as commercial, the speech of the local American Consul is quite a feature of the evening. Why should not your agents be encouraged to take a hand in the social side of public life? To an extent they do so already, but it is demonstrable that the silver tongues of United States Consuls are better known than the voices of Canada's agents.

There are reasons for this state of things, apart from any questions of individuality. Every exporter comes to know the United States Consul as a matter of necessity. So many questions arise out of tariff schedules, and so much supervision is bestowed on invoices, that it is impossible not to have more affairs to transact at the Consulates than most people care to trouble with. As the officers themselves are, with rare exceptions, the soul of courtesy and ready to oblige all-comers, they have good opportunities of first making, and then improving acquaintanceships of value to them in discharging their own duties. No invidious comparison is intended; it is recognized that the agencies are of much more recent growth than the consulates; but some contrast is inevitable, and it is the regrettable truth that your agents are some distance "out of the swim." It would pay Canada over and over again to have all her agents in most intimate touch with all phases of English life. The means may be left to them or their official superiors to devise with a simple intimation that the *rapprochement* is emphatically worth contriving.

Be it said that official England has little to teach Canada in the business of appointing and maintaining Commercial Agents. We have eight or so in various parts of the globe and two out of the number are conspicuously willing and able men. How the others attend to particular enquiries, made privately, one does not know. But such general instruction as they vouchsafe to the trading body is not so important that it could not handsomely be spared. Although our consular and commercial reporting system is thoroughly weak and futile, we are denied the half-promised Ministry of Commerce. Or so well informed rumor runs, and perhaps the disappointment need not be taken bitterly. In truth, the scheme outlined was little better than a change of names and an enhanced salary list for the Board of Trade. Reform can be dispensed with until a clean sweep and a new organization on sound principles can be effected.

The woes of tanners in Canada are shared to the full by their English compeers. In truth the business is one of extreme difficulty, and our tanners are not at all relieved to know that we import some 16 million dollars' worth per year of the hastily made leather of the United States. Boots, it would seem, are to be dearer, although our boot-makers are certainly reluctant to pay the prices producers ask for new contracts. Some tanning firms, rather than sell at the rates ruling, are declining orders which have long been theirs. Those who use wet hides off native cattle, or off transatlantic beasts killed