

BOARD OF TRADE EVIDENCE, BEFORE FREIGHT RATES COMMISSION.

The following evidence on behalf of the Board of Trade was given before the Departmental Commission by J. H. Ashdown December 13th, 1894. The whole was accompanied by Tables of Rates which had been carefully prepared by the Secretary and are now to be found on file in his office.

From early times the vicinity of the junction of the Assiniboine and Red Rivers was recognized and used as a distributing centre for goods for the entire country between here and the Rocky Mountains on the West, and the boundary to the South. It was natural, therefore, that so soon as the settlers began to come into the country that its interests as a distributing centre should be enlarged, and they have been, and it has continued to hold its position in that respect throughout, and we have had the statement of the C. P. R. officials continually, that 90% of the merchandise coming into this country is distributed from this point. Whether these figures are correct or not, certainly the main business of the country has been done from here, and consequently anything that affected the prosperity of our city or any section of the country where goods were so distributed was a matter of great interest to us; and it was but natural under these circumstances, having interests so diverse and so different from those of other points that a Board of Trade should come into existence, and we find that Board early took a strong interest in regard to the question of freight rates, and on July 20th, 1892, they memorialized the