

## BOARD OF TRADE.

## ANNUAL MEETING.

## REPORT OF A BUSY YEAR'S WORK.

The annual general meeting of the Board of Trade was held on Tuesday, the 26th January, in the board room, when there was probably the largest attendance ever seen at any of the board meetings.

President Kenneth MacKonzio occupied the chair, and opened the meeting by calling on the secretary to read minutes of last meeting, which were read and approved.

Some discussion took place on the exemption law, and very strong expressions of disapproval were made by several of the speakers. Messrs. Galt, Ashdown, Luxton, Whitla, Jones and others took part in the discussion, and a strong determination was manifested in favor of sweeping amendments to the same.

The question of discriminating rates on the C.P.R. was also brought up, and very decided expressions upon the subject made by Messrs. Whitla, Ashdown, Galt, Jones and others.

Mr. Ashdown also introduced the question of settling with immigrants the vacant lands in the old part of the province, and especially around Winnipeg.

Eventually it was agreed that these matters be left for discussion at an adjourned meeting to be held next week.

The president called upon the secretary to read his annual report of the Board's work, which was read and, with one or two trifling changes in the wording, unanimously adopted. The report was as follows:

## SECRETARY'S REPORT FOR 1885.

To the President and members of the Winnipeg Board of Trade.

Your council beg to submit this the seventh annual report of the Winnipeg Board of Trade.

The duties and labors of your board commenced last year, when there were evident signs, that the cloud of depression, which had for two years hung over this city and Province, was likely soon to clear away, and a period of prosperity be entered upon, and although the work of commercial recovery has had its interruptions, it is pleasing to know it has made considerable progress.

About the first act of the past year was the publication of the board's report for the former year, together with a statistical report of the city's trade affairs for the same year, which was issued in pamphlet form, and distributed liberally and widely over this continent and Europe.

Your board deemed it advisable early in the year to co-operate with the boards of Montreal and Toronto, in pressing once more upon the Dominion Government the necessity of the passing of some act which would compel the equal distribution of insolvent estates. With this aim a petition was circulated and signed by the leading business men of this city, and forwarded for presentation, along with similar documents from other boards in Eastern Canada.

Judging that there was little or no hope of securing the passing of such an act during the

past session of the Dominion Parliament, your board also petitioned the Manitoba Government in favor of the passing of an act similar to the "Creditors Relief Act" of Ontario, which would in a measure take the place of more comprehensive insolvency legislation, such as would be expected from Ottawa.

As you are all aware, no legislation on insolvency was undertaken last session, and your board's representations to the Local Government, while they elicited liberal promises from Attorney General Hamilton, brought no legislative relief.

Another matter brought prominently before your board and which received attention, was the question of immigration for the province. Your board appointed a committee, who in company with another committee of the City Council pressed the matter upon the Local Government, showing how the immigration to this country from all parts has for years been carried westward into the Territories, to much less desirable homes than could be found within Manitoba. The organization of the Government immigration Bureau was undertaken, showing that the Government had at least some desire to accomplish what was pressed upon them by the committee of your board and others.

A piece of very unjust and mischievous legislation enacted during the last session of the Local Legislature, and known as the administration of Justice Act, met with the prompt and determined opposition of your board. Said Act contained exemption provisions, which were of an unwarrantable nature in themselves, and were so arranged as to apply to debts contracted before the passing of the measure, showing evidently that as a whole the Act was a matter carefully studied in the interests of the dishonest, and for the injury and loss of the industrious, and interfered seriously with the trade arrangements of the Province. Your board at considerable expense and much trouble opposed the measure, and forwarded to the Minister of Justice at Ottawa a petition calling for its disallowance, signed by three thousand three hundred and forty (3,340) citizens of the Province, which was presented by your president, accompanied by one of the most influential deputations that could wait upon the honorable gentleman. Your board regret to state however, that while the honorable minister and the right honorable the premier of the Dominion admitted the injustice of and condemned the act complained of, no disallowance of the measure could be secured at Ottawa.

Your board are pleased to state that the long-delayed appointment of Capt. Clark as grain inspector for this province was made in time for the opening of the present grain season, and that a system of grain inspection here has already done much to bring that trade into thorough organization.

In connection with this same matter your board of grain examiners, through your secretary, have been in frequent communication with the department of Inland Revenue, regarding the amendments to the Inspection Act passed at the last session of the Dominion Parliament, and in no small measure are we indebted to their efforts for an amended inspection act,

which while it may have some defects, is framed so as to guard well the interests of both grain dealers and growers in the northwest.

At the request of the leading hide dealers and butchers of the city your board took steps for the appointment of a hide and leather inspector for this city. A board of examiners were appointed, and candidates for the position examined, resulting in the unanimous selection of Mr. W. J. Bird, a selection which your board ratified, and which your secretary was placed before the Department of Inland Revenue at Ottawa in regular form. As yet Mr. Bird's appointment has not taken place, but the delay has not yet been greater than is generally experienced in connection with such appointments.

During the past summer and fall several prominent individuals from Ottawa have visited this city, and your board have not been slow to impress matters in the interests of Manitoba trade upon such. A petition asking for the discontinuance of the railway disallowance policy of the Dominion Government, which has been such a burden on the trade of the Province, was presented with the signatures of the best men of this city attached, to the Honorable the Minister of the Interior during his late visit, and elicited from him an expression of the hope and belief that the policy of the Government would soon cease to call for the maintenance of this railway restriction.

A deputation from your board also waited upon the same gentleman and the honorable the Minister of Militia, to press upon both the necessity for early settlement of claims for losses sustained by men in trade during the late rebellion, and for goods supplied and services rendered by the same class during its suppression. Both gentlemen promised that no unnecessary delay in such settlements should occur.

Your board have heard from time to time the complaints of the business men of this city regarding unnecessarily high rates of insurance, and have had a committee at work in conjunction with the city council to secure a reduction of those rates from the companies doing business here. Their efforts have in some measure been seconded by the local Board of Underwriters, and there is a probability that more or less of a reduction will soon be made. Your committee, however, deem it wise that this matter should be persistently pressed.

Complaints from the importers of this city against the uncivil and arbitrary conduct of the heads of the Customs Department here had become so numerous that a short time ago your board were compelled to memorialize the Hon. the Minister of Customs for the removal of the collector and surveyor at this port. A committee appointed to look into this matter reported most unfavorably with regard to both of these officers, and furnished voluminous correspondence of the most convincing character in support of their report. Your board, therefore, reluctantly forwarded the same, with a request for the removal of these officers, to the Minister of the Department.

By the terms of a recent order of the Governor-General-in-Council, the inspection and other arrangements connected with the grain handling of Manitoba are practically entrusted