

Another important matter, which early in the year received attention from your Board, was the question of the drainage and colonization of the vacant lands around the city. Your Board, by resolution, expressed its decided opinion as to the duty of the Local Government, to undertake this work of drainage and colonization, and appointed a committee to wait upon the Provincial Premier and his colleagues to press the matter upon their notice—a work said committee attempted, but without success. In fact, your Council cannot but state their opinion, that their appeals during the past two years to the Local Government and the now defunct Legislature, have met with no favorable response and even scant courtesy. It is to be hoped, however, that with two members of the Board holding seats in the newly-elected house, our future claims will receive more consideration.

Later in the year, your Board made another effort in the direction of colonization, and appointed a committee to collect facts about the vacant lands around the city, and in other ways see what steps could be taken to accomplish such a work. This committee has been at work upon this difficult and intricate undertaking, and although they are not yet in a position to present a full report upon the subject, they have gathered sufficient information to satisfy themselves and your Council, that a colonization movement having the support of those concerned, and backed by the proper legislative powers, cannot but be successful, and accomplish a great work for the city of Winnipeg and the whole province.

This committee have received offers of nearly one million acres of vacant lands within twenty-five miles of Winnipeg, which the owners are prepared to sell. In a few instances of land-owners living away out of the country, and unacquainted with the great changes in values, which have taken place since the "boom" of 1881, prices far too high are asked, while in the bulk of the offers the figures quoted are moderate. Those with inflated ideas are, with very few exceptions, owners of small patches, so that taking them into a calculation of the average price of land within twenty-five miles around the city, they do not materially raise the figure reached. A calculation of the average price, including such offers, would place it in the neighborhood of six and a half dollars an acre. But the committee felt warranted in reporting to your Council, that farms