

ing our standards as they were. There is no doubt but that a certain amount of confusion would have resulted to exporters who have placed their samples and sold from them, but it certainly is a great pity that through the grades in force being extremely high the export figures will show a comparatively small amount of No. 1 Hard Wheat as going out of the country this year, the bulk of the crop ranging but very little below the standard for No. 1 Hard, which calls for not less than 85 per cent. of pure Red Fife Wheat.

Your Council are of opinion that a strong protest should be made by this Board against the principle that Eastern Boards of Trade, or other organizations, shall determine on and decide on the standards of wheats grown only in Manitoba and the Northwest Territories; and that the Dominion Government after, at the request of this Board, gazetting changes in the standards of Manitoba wheat, should cancel those changes at the request of the Boards of Trade of Toronto and Montreal, without even consulting this Board.

## GRAIN MOVEMENT.

Your Council opened up a correspondence with business men at most of the principle grain shipping points in the province, with the object of securing from them authentic information of the movements of grain and the facilities offered by the railways to handle the business. In most cases returns have been received and a fair understanding of the car supply rendered has been kept up.

The returns of the Grain Inspector show the amount of wheat and other grain inspected at this point, where the C. P. R. require that all grain shipped "all rail" to the east should be inspected, but as much of the wheat inspected here is re-inspected at Port Arthur, and practically all of the wheat shipped during the season of open navigation on the great lakes passes Winnipeg without inspection, the Winnipeg Inspector's returns give no indication of the total exports. On account of the re-inspection of a good percentage of the wheat inspected here, on its arrival at Port Arthur, no total of the complete returns of the two inspectors will represent the actual exports, a state of affairs which is very unsatisfactory. The Canadian Pacific Railway tonnage returns would supply all the information required but access to these is denied by the railway authorities.

## CUSTOMS MATTERS.

Your Council have to express their thanks to Lieut.-Colonel Scott, Collector of Customs, for the prompt assistance he has given to your Council, in supplying customs statistics and information on several occasions.

A memorial was addressed by the Council to the Minister of Customs on the matter of discrimination in the extension of time to importers in British Columbia, in which to make entries of dutiable goods "in transit" when the duties were increased. An explanation was made to your council that the discrimination applied only to goods "in transit," via Cape Horn, to British Columbia.

The question of the duty charged on certain descriptions of fishing twine also occupied the attention of your council.

## COMMERCIAL UNION.

An invitation was extended to the Hon. Mr.

Butterworth and Erastus Wiman, Esq., to address a public meeting on this subject, which was accepted by both gentlemen, but unfortunately, circumstances have since prevented them from visiting the Province. No action has been taken by this Board to place on record any endorsement or rejection of the Commercial Union movement, which has been the cause of much discussion in the Eastern Provinces, and especially with Boards of Trade. Mr. Goldwin Smith addressed a public meeting in the city on the subject, which was well attended.

## POSTAL MATTERS.

In February last, many complaints were made to the Board concerning the unsatisfactory state of the mail service between Winnipeg and the points on the main line of the Canadian Pacific Railway westward, on Wednesday and Thursday of each week, there being no mails despatched to the west on Wednesdays and none coming east on Thursdays. Your Council took immediate action and appointed a committee to wait on the Post Office Inspector. After consultation with him a memorial was prepared and forwarded to the Postmaster-General, which represented the serious inconvenience to the business community caused by the existing arrangements, and asked that the local passenger trains should carry mails on days when no through trains ran. No notice was taken by the Post Office Department of this memorial, the receipt even not being acknowledged, but in the month of August the Hon. Mr. McLellan, Postmaster-General, visited the city, and was waited upon by a committee appointed by the Board to again take up the matter. The result of the visit of this deputation was, that an order was issued to send mails on the local trains between Winnipeg and Brandon on Wednesdays and Thursdays.

A petition was received from Glenboro asking the Council to use its influence in securing for points along the Manitoba Southwestern Railway, the privilege of mail service on each day that an express train ran on that line. The Post Office authorities were communicated with but so far no change has been made in the service.

## FIREWOOD SUPPLY.

In December last a deputation of the dealers in firewood, of this city, waited on your Council, and asked its assistance in procuring from the Canadian Pacific Railway some relief from the operation of an order, issued by the company, denying to firewood shippers, at points on the main line, east of Selkirk, the privilege of loading cars between stations. The deputation represented that as the privileges of cutting wood on government lands were only let for a period of one year, shippers could not afford to put in side tracks at their own expense for a year's trade, and under the new order issued by the railway company, shippers in cars would have to haul wood six miles for shipment. Your Council appointed a committee to wait on the railway company, with the result that an amicable arrangement was made, by which shippers will be enabled to load cars at convenient points. This matter was an important one, as it was estimated that under the order, firewood would cost, laid down in the city, fully one dollar per cord more than at the present.

## OFFICIAL ASSIGNEES.

In June, it came to the knowledge of members of the Council that the Provincial Government intended to appoint an official assignee, and to make some changes in the Act regulating the mode in which assignments were made. Fully recognizing the importance such a change would have to the mercantile community, your Council after considering the proposed changes in the Act, appointed a deputation to wait on the Attorney-General. The deputation placed their views before the Government and secured certain modifications which made the provisions of the Act less objectionable. As the proposed amendment stood, it was compulsory on the part of persons assigning, to do so to an official assignee appointed by the Provincial Government. The deputation had this changed so that an assignment might be made either to the assignee, or to a person chosen at a meeting of the creditors of the estate, but disallowing the privilege of an assignor placing his estate in the hands of any person of his own choice outside of the above mentioned. A provision was also secured that the official assignee should not incur but a very small preliminary expense before a meeting of the creditors was held.

## LOCAL INDUSTRIES.

A standing committee on industries appointed by your Council, held several meetings, and consulted with a number of persons desirous of acquiring information in relation to manufacturing and other industries. Numerous letters have been received during the year from persons desirous of ascertaining the feasibility of establishing works for the manufacture of implements, flax-twines, leather, etc., all of which have received attention, and information has been returned. We would suggest that every opportunity be seized for making known the natural resources of this country in minerals, fish and agricultural productions. The manufacture of the flax straw, which now is destroyed, offers a field for investors; as does the development of the coal beds of the west; the immense deposits of rich iron ore at Lake Winnipeg; the salt and petroleum deposits near Lake Winnipegosis; the building stone and lime materials, which, in unlimited quantities, are within easy reach of the city; the brick clays; the straw for paper making; poplar for wood pulp, etc., etc. Little effort has yet been made to draw attention to the value of our lake fisheries, though the whitefish from Lake Winnipeg are shipped to all the Western American cities, as far distant as Kansas City. Through a lack of appreciation of the immense area of Lakes Winnipeg, Manitoba and Winnipegosis (over 13,000 square miles), where fisheries are at present established, an attempt has been made to prevent the exportation of fish. Considering the fact that a large amount of capital has been invested in the tugs, fishing plant, etc., and that the exportation of whitefish only averages about one pound weight to every ten acres in the three lakes named, while a capable inspector superintends and enforces the fishing regulations, it is to be hoped that commonsense will be exercised if any changes are contemplated. In addition to the above three lakes, we have in the Northwest not less than 40,000 square miles of lake surface, affording an abundant fish supply, which has not yet been drawn on save by the Indians and fur traders.