

The election of officers for the ensuing year was the next business. The gentlemen whose names follow were unanimously chosen:

President—F. H. Mathewson.

Vice-president—Thomas Anderson.

Treasurer—Andrew Strang (re-elected).

Secretary—C. N. Bell (re-elected).

The board of arbitrators of last year was re-elected, with the exception that Mr. S. Nairn was substituted for Mr. W. B. Scarth, who is no longer a resident of Winnipeg. The members are: Messrs. K. McKenzie, E. L. Drewery, G. F. Galt, G. J. Maulson, S. A. D. Bertrand, J. H. Brock, R. T. Riley, S. Spink, John Galt, Wm. Hespeler, J. E. Steen and S. Nairn.

Notice of motion was given by Mr. Strang, that new members be required to pay only the annual fee of \$10, the entrance fee of \$15 additional being abolished.

At the board's banquet in the evening, where Mr. Riley was able to preside, the premier of the province, Hon. Mr. Greenway, reminded his hearers, Winnipeg business men, that their prosperity and all material progress in every line of trade and industry depended entirely upon the well-being and advancement of the farming community—the back bone of the Northwest. These farmers, in his opinion, "are suffering hardship from the tariff and prices of lumber, which prices are 25 per cent. more than they should be. They also have a grievance in the high rates of freight exacted by the railways."

Mr. George F. Galt and Mr. Ashdown, responding to the toast of "Commercial Interests," dwelt upon the recent gratifying developments of finance and manufactures in the province; the former eulogized our railways and their management, advocated irrigation in Alberta and improved navigation on the Red River; the latter wanted to see more manufactures in the province and a better settlement of the lands around Winnipeg. Mr. Stephen Nairn and the mayor of the city were the closing speakers, and a good example was set in enabling the diners to break up about midnight.

BRITISH COLUMBIA NOTES.

FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT.

The Province's Customs and Inland Revenue returns for January, taken in the aggregate, show considerable increases on the like figures of the same month of last year, and other indications also evidence steady, if somewhat slow, improvement of general trade in Vancouver and Victoria. Meanwhile, naturally enough, advance is proceeding more rapidly in the towns of the up-country mining districts, the ore and bullion output, and profit returns of which should—conservatively estimated—this year prove more than double those of 1895. There is still great want of self-confidence in New Westminster and labor unsettlement, caused largely by Mongol invasion of the white labor market, seriously prejudicing the trade of Nanaimo, in which city there have recently been several assignments of well known local traders. The Chinese mine labor issue is one that will not readily "down" in the Vancouver Island coal districts, and it is understood that in deference to public opinion, steps will shortly be taken in the interest of white labor, to test the constitutionality of the Provincial Act which prohibits the employment of Mongol labor under ground in the mines. This legislation, based on the plea that Chinese and Japanese workers cannot well be made to understand precautionary regulations against explosions and other accidents, is obviously also intended in "economic protection" of white labor. It is at present very much of a dead letter, and as a result the many cheap Chinese mine workers of the Comox coal district press very hardily the white colliery population of Nanaimo. The Chinese mine workers are, moreover, suffered to live, crowded together, under such unsanitary conditions, as conduce not only further to degrade their social status, but also to increase very seriously their power to oust white labor by wage underbidding. Hence the Mongol-labor question, as affecting the Vancouver Island coal districts, increases alike in extent and perplexity, while traders in general there complain most bitterly of the substitution of good white customers by almost profitless Chinese, living largely on rice and cheap vegetables, coarsely clothed in Oriental raiment, housed in hovels, and spending on the Island the veriest minimum of their wages.

The Chinese are at last beginning to realize their opportunity of exploiting salmon canning as owners, as well as workers, and the Quong On Wo Co., of New Westminster, will this season engage in salmon canning and packing on the North Arm of the Fraser River. This is a proposed addition to New Westminster's industries, which, unlike the other projected new canneries about that city, is not altogether favorably regarded locally. The Chinese will certainly run their concern cheaply enough. Meanwhile the fortunes of New Westminster's trade of 1896 very largely depends on the success of the efforts now being

made to regain for the city some of the ground of late years lost by it as regards its share of the salmon fishing industry of the B.C. mainland.

The New Westminster city council is asking the Provincial Government to submit to the legislature this session a proposal that the province shall undertake the provision of a much needed railway and traffic bridge across the Fraser. As this means a provincial guarantee of \$500,000 or thereabouts, it is certain as anything well can be that the suggestion must be rejected, since yearly deficits have lately ruled in provincial financing, and British Columbia has borrowed to the full for the time being, pending large development of a host of yet latent revenue-producing resources. Dominion aid is needed under present circumstances, if the proposed bridge is to become an accomplished fact. Its erection would certainly prove of direct and indirect benefit to nearly one-third of the present population of the province, but the bridge would for some years after building prove a heavy charge in respect of interest on cost of maintenance, pending profitable development of the resources of the large, and at present poor, agricultural population that it would chiefly serve. Hence the present block of a very desirable proposal.

Meanwhile Vancouver is about to establish a farmers' market, which should prove successful and therefore of great benefit to Fraser River and coast and island agriculturists, provided that in the case of the river producers, the Canadian Pacific Railway will aid the effort by establishing cheap transit facilities on market days. In this respect the railway has yet a great work before it in developing the internal agricultural resources of the province, and in the opinion of a majority of local industrialists this development has hitherto been stunted by rather too exclusive attention to transcontinental traffic. Your correspondent is in this voicing very general and not individual local opinion, else he would hesitate thus to write.

Proposals are now mooted to establish a marine railway, and a smelter and concentrator in Vancouver. Both undertakings are greatly needed and should prove profitable. The carrying out of the first proposal, for which sufficient capital is stated to be available to provide for the repair of ships of up to 3,000 tons burden, is temporarily somewhat obstructed by local differences of opinion in regard to the site chosen by the promoters, who ask a lease from the Provincial Government of a waterside area that is near the residential portion of the city. Hence, largely local objections at present raised to a site, otherwise very convenient. This objection has in part caused the Board of Trade to suspend decision on the matter, which has lately been discussed by its members. If, however, the success of the proposal be altogether thwarted, it may safely be predicted that a very necessary extension of Vancouver's shipping facilities will be for several years postponed.

The Vancouver city council is, through a special committee, inviting suggestions and proposals for the local establishment of an ore smelter and concentrator, and there is little doubt that the city will give all necessary and reasonable support to a sufficiently capitalized, properly organized, and generally *bona fide* undertaking of this kind. Such an establishment would doubtless draw from the Kootenay mine country large supplies of crudely treated ore for refinement, and also induce the opening out and working of many mine claims, known to exist on the southern coast and islands of the province, but as yet wholly undeveloped. What Tacoma has done—largely with British Columbia ores—and what Seattle proposes to do, Vancouver, with equal advantages by land and sea, should readily compass—coal, lime and iron for fuel and fluxing being all available and procurable by cheap and easy ocean transit. The Tacoma smelter and refinery, it may be noted, thus treated in 1875 nearly \$700,000 worth of ore, and in December last made an output of \$92,000 in value, the industry then employing 79 workers, and paying over \$6,100 in wages for the month.

Notes of important mining developments must perforce stand over to a later letter.

Vancouver, 5th Feb., 1896.

CANADIAN PACIFIC RAILWAY.

It is matter for congratulation to find the Canadian Pacific Railway paying a dividend on both preference and common stock—not alone because of the country's interest in this road for its own sake, but also because of the improvement in trade conditions over those of a year ago, which the fact implies. When, a year ago, the road passed a dividend, and not only that, but reduced the pay of its employes, there were those who said gloomy and despairing things. These people may now take heart from the improved receipts of both the Grand Trunk and Canadian Pacific thus far this year, and cease to be prophets of evil. The gross earnings of the road were \$18,941,036 and the working expenses \$11,460,086, leaving net earnings \$7,480,950. To this must be added interest earnings, \$112,246, and interest from Duluth and Atlantic road, making receipts \$8,033,863. Deducting fixed charges and deducting 1st October dividend on preference stock, there is a sur-