

PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS.

On this, the occasion of the Annual Meeting of our Board, I propose to depart from the course hitherto pursued by our presidents and lay before you a few thoughts in connection with the transactions of the year just ending.

In the beginning of 1887 you inaugurated the system of a paid secretary, believing as you did that the interests of your Board could best be served by having not only a local habitation, but some one to collect facts and figures together and to be able at all times to do the work of the Board. The result has been, in my opinion, decidedly satisfactory, and you now have in the rooms the nucleus of what in a short time must prove very valuable statistical records. The collection of them, so far as it has proceeded, has been a matter of considerable work, but happily to the Board one of but little cost. It will, probably, be advisable in the future to go further in this respect, and where desirable material cannot be obtained without cost it should be incurred in order to make the information as thorough as possible.

The work done during the past year has been very considerable, and I propose to add to the reports of your Council by calling your attention to a few items connected with the same.

FREIGHT RATES.

Your Board has, from the commencement, made it a cardinal principal that, as this is an agricultural country, it is to the interest of your members that every possible aid should be given the farming community in such manner as lies within the power of your Board. It was with a view to the benefit of that class in particular that, in the fall of 1881, your board appointed a committee which waited on