

have eastern representatives on our standards. It is to be hoped that the majority, and in the case of a tie, the gentlemen here present, will consider me lacking in respect for them when I say that I think the time has now come when the west knows enough about the merits of its own product to do all the work of standard making such crop standards as are necessary.

Comparing the Crop Areas.
of the province in the first year of the exchange history with that of the past year, the difference is very marked, though I am sorry to say a corresponding difference is not found in the crop itself. In 1887 there were sown 2,257,243 acres, and the yield that year was 12,266,000 bushels—the

Yield of the Province.
Last year, the acreage sown to wheat was nearly 1,800,000, and I regret to say the yield is closely pressed by 1887. Thus we have between the first year in which we took statistics and the last, a meeting of two extremes, but we have in between a splendid average, an average, in fact, which it is no exaggeration to say is the highest average wheat yield on the American continent. Statistics since 1857 raised wheat crops from a largely increased acreage that almost equal the great yield of thirty bushels an acre in that year; and if the law of nature holds good this year, we will raise a crop that will astonish ourselves. There ought to be in wheat in Manitoba this spring over 2,000,000 acres, and in the Territories 400,000 acres more, so that a fifty million crop is no flight of fancy. The mistake we seemed to attend the labor of our farms last year may not have been an unmitigated evil. The drought that stunted all growth may have been but a protest of nature against a too lavish drain on her resources which compelled a compulsory fallowing of the soil, but the rain which followed, while it seemed to increase the farmers' burdens, has certainly put the soil into most magnificent condition for a crop next season, and I think we will see a further record broken in the crop returns of 1901.

Corresponding with the advances made in the production of the great staple of the country, has been the improvement in the methods in all ways of handling it. The use of the elevator system; that has been referred to so often, and even by its opponents in such flattering terms, as being the best in the world, that I will not overstate. From the handling of the crop from the farmers' wagon through the elevator to the improved in the railroad freight equipment, and there has been as much improvement in the style of the car and facility of freight movement as there has been in the increased luxury in passenger travel. But it is when we leave the railroad and get down to Lake Superior that we mark the greatest advance in

Methods of Moving the Crop
We look now in vain for the old wooden schooner that used to carry from Fort William what we called a cargo. Twenty thousand bushels formed quite a good sized vessel load not so many years ago, but its memory even is now forgotten in these days when steamers that carry a quarter of a million bushels can be loaded at our lake port.

In connection with shipping, I may note a change that affects us more as Canadians than as Manitobans. I refer to the rise and decline of Buffalo as the great lake terminal to which our shipments were consigned. A few years ago it seemed as if Buffalo and New York would be the successors of Toronto as the markets that commanded our grain trade, and for one or two years they did certainly occupy first place. The alarm, however, which the eastern Canada saw their harvest in the Northwest being diverted to the Buffalo route stirred up our railway companies, and resulted in such a lively bid for this traffic which they felt naturally belonged to them; that the past two years we have seen the Georgian Bay and Canadian Atlantic ports get a lion's share of our trade.

The government, too, has been liberal in its efforts to secure for Canada the full advantage of the great waterways with which nature has endowed our country and the deepening

of our canal system to a point that will favor direct passage to vessels leaving 70 feet, will do much to secure to Montreal the full advantage of the situation as guardian of the greatest waterway on the continent entitles it.

The improvement of the Montreal and other all-Canadian routes is of as much interest to us in the west as to those with the eastern seaports, and we can appreciate the efforts of successive governments to establish and promote equip Canadian terminals from which our grain can be shipped all the year round. Much has been done for Montreal and St. John and now we see the ancient port of Quebec rousing itself to partake in the handling of the fruits of the young west. I am glad to see that active steps are now being taken to form a Canadian Lloyd, which will remove

The Greatest Barrier.
to successful grain shipment by the St. Lawrence route. It is hard for us here to understand why marine insurance companies should so long have discriminated by increased premiums against that route, but it is to be regretted that the St. Lawrence grain shippers in the past were not on an equal footing with those on our American ports, and then there can be no doubt but the natural advantages in will establish Canadian rivals to the greatest seaport of the United States. The question of transportation bids fair to continue to be the most important one in the coming years. We have in the past twelve years seen the cost of carrying wheat from the prairie to the seaboard, reduced nearly 50 per cent. A reduction of 35 per cent on the present rates in railroad freight to the lake ports alone is most a certainty, and this, with a further reduction owing to the cost and improvement in lake carriers and the further enlargement of our canal system will bring us nearer the European market than would have lately been thought possible even by those who dreamed that prosperity for Manitoba would be reached only by way of Hudson's Bay.

The affairs that more closely concern the Winnipeg Grain Exchange and the Manitoba grain trade for the year has been a milestone of most important events. This room was the stage of the investigation by a royal commission into the method under which the grain trade was conducted. The lamented death of the head of the commission, Judge Senkler, was a shock not only to his older friends, but to those of us whose brief acquaintance with him had led us to admire the impartiality which he displayed in the conduct of the investigation. I may say, almost at his post, that it is to his too conscientious discharge of his duty.

The Result of the Royal Commission
has been the Grain Act, which now regulates the trade. It was a tribute to the importance of the grain trade, that the principles under which we should have been codified in these past years, have worked for these past years, should have been codified in the grain bill and marked by the approval of the government. For, after all, there is nothing very new in the act. I find in the first council report 12 years ago a recommendation for the adoption of one of its principal features—the appointment of government weighmasters at Fort William, and many other of its provisions are simply the results worked out by the trade through years of experience. We see some of the provisions of the act bear somewhat severely on the trade, grain dealers generally have accepted the situation and have endeavored loyally to work in strict accord with both the letter and the spirit of the law. For the first time they have a tribunal to appeal to, where they may have victory and ignorant charges of dishonesty and ill-treatment investigated by an impartial government officer, directed to properly perform his duty without fear or favor.

Another important matter that occurred in the past year was the recommendation made by the standard board and this exchange, to have a reduction made in the number of grades for the classification of our wheat. We have altogether too many grades at present, and it is believed an arrangement of these to correspond with the number and specifications of Duluth grades would largely benefit the farmers and

simplify the handling of our crop. I trust that the recommendations as forwarded to the meeting of the previous month will meet with the approval of the government, and that the next crop may pass out of the country unimpeded, and a classification more befitting the requirements of the twentieth century.

The change of the best wheat of the Manitoba inspection division from Fort William to Winnipeg, in the second year of its existence, has proved most beneficial to the trade, and none, I think, would wish to revert to the old system. One further improvement in connection with this would be the making of

Winnipeg an Order Point.
or terminal division, in the handling of our wheat. This would be of great benefit to Winnipeg, as it would be the means of creating a sample market here similar to that of Minneapolis, and it is to be hoped that the exchange will keep this in view now that the Canadian Pacific Railway Co. proposes to greatly enlarge their yards here, which will enable them more easily to give this concession to the trade.

The wheat crop of the past year, though small in quantity, and in spite of the unprecedented difficulties under which it was grown and harvested, seems to have been able to retain the reputation of Manitoba wheat for producing the first quality of flour, as we find in the unanimous testimony of millers that it has a grade equal to that obtained from the best quality of the previous season's No. 1, hard.

At the same time we cannot ignore the fact that a great deal of wheat was badly damaged, and it will be of the utmost importance for the farmers to see that what they have retained is of the best quality. It is a great deal cheaper to spend 50 cents more per acre and get good seed to economize on this and run chances of spoiling next season's crop. The reputation of Manitoba hard wheat as the best in the world, is so great that other provinces and other countries are now attempting to get a supply by cheaper methods than buying from the original producer. Ontario and the Columbia have both tried to meet the demand for Manitoba red rye wheat by growing it themselves, and now I see that the farmers of New South Wales have been following the same lead. They may take the seed, but they cannot take the soil and the climate. Manitoba and the Northwest stand alone in their monopoly of the production of this kind of cereals.

Flax, Barley and Oats.
The high price of flax this past season will tend to make a larger acreage of this seed sown than usual. We should have a wider market for this crop now than in former years, and while the recent very low prices may not prevail another year, farmers are certain to obtain a satisfactory return until our production of flax reaches a much larger figure than it has done in recent years, and paying crop to grow in this country and well suited to our climate.

The production of barley has fallen out very much of recent years, but I think farmers would find it worth while to devote more attention to the grain than they have been doing. For really high grade barley there is a good demand, and it is one of the earliest crops to grow.

For the production of oats we have long looked to the territory of the M. & N. W. railway, but the new settlements in the Edmonton district bid fair to become the finest oat producers in the Northwest, while the quality is something never before attained anywhere in Canada.

It is a question of great importance to farmers in Manitoba to obtain a change of seed oats if they are to continue to grow this crop successfully, and nowhere can better oats be got than from the district just mentioned.

In regard to the building of railroads, the past year has not been so fruitful as some of the previous ones, yet the extension of the westmost branch of the Canadian Pacific and the Swan River branch of the Canadian Northern, not to mention the territory opened up by the latter road to the west of us, are sufficient to show us that railroad enterprise is not asleep in regard to the requirements of the country.

It is less than twenty years ago since I, then a visitor to Canada, was told in Ontario that the Northwest was a country of wilds, unfit for settlement by white men. It then

possessed only a single line of railway, and that an extension of a foreign corporation; to-day we see it a network of lines, with three great systems competing for its traffic. We have seen regions opened up to successful settlement that even by those who thought they knew the country were considered unfit for cultivation, and we know that districts like those of Edmonton and Dauphin, situated as yet in the farthest Northwest are second to none in the Northwest as number one grain producers. Seeing what has been done, and what remains to do, we cannot longer regard with indifference the belief so often eloquently expressed by the late Consul Taylor, that

The Great Wheat Growing Area
of the continent lies north of the 49th parallel.

I cannot trespass longer on your time, and as the report of the council will bring to your notice the more detailed events of the year, I will draw to a close. I cannot do so, however, without referring to the names which have died in the past year removed from our roll. Mr. D. G. McBean and Mr. Stephen Nairn were among the oldest of our members, and their absence from our midst reminds us more forcibly than anything else that soon in this new century changes more important to ourselves than any we have experienced, will occur and we can ask nothing better than to be as kindly remembered as those who have gone from among us. Mr. W. Ogilvie, early last January, took from the Canadian grain trade its most prominent member. Mr. Ogilvie was not personally a member of our exchange, but was too closely associated with the grain interests of the Northwest to be easily forgotten. He made the name of Ogilvie a household word in the Dominion; his acts, either in a business way or in the world of charity, were on a scale of grandeur, and the removal of his commanding personality has caused a blank not to be easily filled, not only in the business of which he was the head, but in the grain trade of Canada.

I must congratulate the exchange on the happy financial position it now occupies, it having the largest balance to carry forward in its history, and I think I express the feeling of the members when I say that we are deeply indebted to our invincible treasurer and secretary for the care and attention which he has devoted to our affairs.

In conclusion, I thank you all for your kindness in bearing with me so patiently, and I bid you adieu during my period of office, and wish you all a happy and most prosperous New Year. On motion of Mr. John Love, seconded by Mr. C. A. Young, a vote of thanks was given to the president for his able and interesting review of the grain trade, and it was ordered that his address be printed in the annual report of the exchange.

Treasurer's Report.
Mr. C. N. Bell presented his annual report as treasurer. It showed a balance on hand at the beginning of the year of \$1,022.83; total receipts, \$3,823.91, including annual dues, \$1,055; total expenses, \$1,361.44; leaving the bank, \$2,244.47, which the treasurer remarked was about double that of any previous year, not including last year. The report was adopted on motion of Mr. Farrish, seconded by Mr. Baker.

Report of Council.
The report of the council for the past year was presented and the more important matters were summarized orally by Secretary Bell. It recited the actions of the various meetings of the council during the year, and stated that the total membership of the exchange was 116. The report was adopted on motion of Mr. Muir, seconded by Mr. Clark.

Officers for the New Year.
The following officers were all re-elected by acclamation:
President, Wm. Martin; vice-president, C. A. Young; secretary and treasurer, C. N. Bell.
The election of eleven members, to constitute along with the officers, the council of the exchange, was proceeded with by ballot, after fourteen nominations had been made: Messrs. J. D. O'Brien and Bruce McBean being appointed scrutineers.