ST. PAUL NEWS.

OUR RAILROADS.

A Record of the Progress of the Past and Previous Years by Commissioner Baker.

How the System of Minnesota Railroads Has Developed.

Gen. Baker Elaborately Discusses the Relations of the Railroads to the Producers.

The GLOBE has received advance sheets of the annual report of Gen. James H. Baker, state railroad commissioner, which is a document of unusual interest. We give the following extracts from his report:

The year has been an average one in the general business of our railways. While construction has fallen off, betterments have continued to mark the general management.

During the year closing December 1, 137.45 miles of railway have been built, making a total of 3,905.38 within the borders of state, as compared with 3,769.13 miles in 1882.

There has been some chrage in mileage since our last report by the material alteration of track of some of the roads, also the official report changes the mileage, as estimated by the commissioner, of some of the branches reported last year.

The net gain in the state to December 1, is 136.25 miles.

Of the seventy-nine counties in the state, seventy-three are now supplied with reasonable railway facilities.

The total cost of all miles of railway operated in the state up to June 30 was $159,-071,150.44.

The average cost per mile of railway, operated in the state up to June 30th, was $43,-968.66.

The total amount given to these railways by the people of Minnesota, in lands and bonds, on a cash basis, was $76,663,090.

The average amount per mile, given to these railways by the people of Minnesota, in lands and bonds, on a cash basis, was $20,-432.

The passenger earnings of all lines in the state of Minnesota for the year ending June 30th, was $5,818,254.02.

The average rate per passenger per mile in the state of Minnesota was 2.84 cents.

The average amount received from, or the the earnings from each passenger in the state of Minnesota was $1.31.

Average distance traveled by each passenger over Minnesota lines, 48.7 miles.

The total number of passengers carried during the year was 4,413,775.

The freight earnings of all lines in the state of Minnesota for the year ending June 30, was $16,530,435.71.

The total number of tons of freight carried during the year was 7,825,704.

The express, mail and miscellaneous earnings of all lines in the state of Minnesota for the year ending June 30, was $1,109,399.89.

The gross earnings of all lines in the state of Minnesota for the year ending June 30, was $23,508,089.62.

The total average gross earnings per mile of railway in the state of Minnesota was $6,228.99.

The total operating expenses of all lines in the state of Minnesota for the year ending June 30, was $13,295,337.45.

The total cost of operating the lines of railway in the state of Minnesota was $3,528.-55 per mile.

The total average percentage of operating expenses to gross earnings for all lines in the state for the year was 56.55.

The total indebtedness of all roads in the state, June 30, was $122,519,034.78.

The total amount paid the state on account of taxes due from railways for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1882, was $613,865.64.

Average distance traveled by each passenger over entire lines, 43.9 miles.

Average earnings from each passenger over entire lines, $1.06.

Number of passengers carried over entire lines, 15,961,112.

Total earnings of entire line for year, $73,-852,569.43.

Total taxes paid by all companies on their entire lines for the year, $1,899,026.22.

Construction account for year, entire lines, $34,833,242.54.

Amount paid in addition to operating expenses for year, entire lines, $65,824,416.53.

Acres of railroad laod sold during year, 527,291,11.

Amount received by railway companies during year for lands, $2,142,469.18.

Elevator capacity in state of Minnesota, 23,505.200 bushels.

ACCIDENTS AS FOLLOWS.

Total number of passengers killed, 4.

Total number of passengers injured, 20.

Total number of railway employes killed, 75.

Total number of railway employes injured, 240.

Total number of all others killed, 59.

Total number of all others injured, 23.

Total number killed or injured during the year, 421.

Total number killed and injured for past ten years, 1,876.

Total number of employes on all railways in Minnesota. 23,145.

As there will be no session of the legislature during the present year, recommendations properly incident to a report specially prepared for that body would be wholly out of place in the off year of the biennial system. Such recommendations as experience and study may convince the commissioner as judicious will, therefore, be resumed for the ensuing year. It will be remembered, that, in the last report, he pointed out certain marked defects in our meagre railway code, and ventured to recommend some specific amendments to supply apparent deficiencies, and to govern and fix more fully the responsibility of our railway companies to the public. The general conclusions then reached remain unchanged. Time and experience have but increased the necessity for some adequate and reasonable system of state supervision of our railway system. Experience and observation have suggested some modifications of detail, the better to secure results desired, but the general fact that some more effectual control of railways is absolutely essential to the public interests in this state, is a matter of conviction with the commissioner. It is also believed that public opinion in the state is overwhelmingly in harmony with the commissioner, in the purpose to secure some reasonable, controlling, and restrictive legislation. It is true that the recent legislature failed even seriously to consider any law upon the subject of further state control. A very large majority of the members elected to that body, at one time or another, advised the commissioner, that it was their purpose, and the expectetion of their constituents, that such legislation should be effected. How so well fixed and original a purpose could have been turned aside, is a matter for serious consideration. It is time for the people gravely to consider if these corporations have the power and disposition to unduly control our legislative body. The power of our railways is rapidly increasing. Their enormous wealtn, their rapid growth, their increasing numbers, their ability to summon their whole resources in a contest as against the state, must fill the thoughtful mind with apprehension, and admonish us of the necessity for subordinating them speedily to the will of the people.

As to the bill proposed at the last session, all of its essential features, so far as the commissioner was concerned, were copies of the Massachusetts or Illinois laws, the principles of which had been fully tested in the courts and by actual practical working. Some other features had been engrafted upon it by leading members of the legislature, but if there was anything in it which did not meet with legislative favor, it could easily have been remedied, had the disposition to pass any bill continued to find favor with the law-making power.

While the office of railroad commissioner affords ample work and employment for the office as it is now organized, yet it is not clothed with such power as enables it to meet the greater expectations and the necessities of the people. The duties of the commissioner, as to tax revenues, as to discriminations and abuses, the hearing of complaints and their adjustment, the examination of causes, and prevention of accidents, the inspection of roads, bridges and trestles, the examination of companies' books, the gathering and digesting of all manner of railway statistics; these and kindred matters keep the office busily engaged. But that this department of the state government should accomplish certain higher and more important work constantly in demand by the public, it is necessary that the authority of the office be enlarged. Complaints are steadily on the increase. I venture to believe that the people of the state will at another session of the legislature invest this office with such authority as will make it of like practical utility to the public, as similar departments in other states now possess.

TAXES UPON GROSS EARNINGS.

A notable increase in the taxes from gross earnings is a marked feature of the year. The taxes upon gross earnings for the year, 1881, were $415,222.99. For the year 1882, they were $613,865.64, an increase of 47 per cent. in a single year.

This marked increase is referable to the rapid growth of railway business in our state. Some of it is also due to a careful scrutiny of the sources of the revenue by this office. In the last report we considered the relation these taxes bore to the support of the state government; there is comparatively little change in the general conclusions then reached. These taxes go, first, for the payment of interest on the refunded debt of the old state railroad bonds, the interest on which, for this year, amounts to $117,245. There is also applicable to this special interest fund the interest on the Internal Improvement Land Fund, which now amounts to about $30,000 per annum. The residue of the taxes upon gross earnings goes into the treasury for the benefit of the state institutions fund. It is probable that $12,-467, with penalty and interest, will yet have to be added to the taxes of 1881, as the suit against the Northern Pacific R. R. Co., has been decided in favor of the state by the district court.

Should the decision be affirmed by the supreme court, of which there is little doubt, the taxes for 1881 will be increased by that amount.

Attention is invited to table XXIV. which presents a statement of the gross earnings of the several railways, and the taxes paid by each, for each year, from the opening of the first railway in the state, to the present time. It exhibits, as on a map, the growth of the railway business in Minnesota.

THE WORK OF THIS OFFICE AS AN INTERMEDIARY.

A very important duty of the commissioner is to stand as a friendly umpire between the public on the one hand, and the railway interests serving it, on the other. For this purpose he investigates local complaints of classes and brings the attention of the railway managers to their consideration, and stands as an impartial arbitrator. Work in this direction results in great advantage to the public. In this manner very many cases are disposed of quietly and without any litigation. Bitter controversies, antagonisms, and even law suits, are thus averted. The number of cases of this sort are constantly on the increase, and are very generally adjusted with mutual satisfaction to both parties. We will illustrate this practice by one example:

The Chicago & Northwestern Railway company, September 1, 1883, made an advance in freight charges for wood carried to different points on the line of their road, of from 50 to 100 per cent. The dealers and consumers of wood on the line of this road where the tariff was raised immediately found much fault with so heavy an increase of freights many claiming the advance to be in the interest of coal monopoly. This office was in receipt of many complaints from parties living at different places on this line, from this cause. The complaints made were carefully considered by the commissioner, and after examining in detail the freight charges on wood, before and after this advance, together with cost of carriage, he came to the conclusion that they were excessive. The commissioner addressed a communication to the general manager of the road, setting forth the facts, and urging that such rates be reduced. The manager treated the subject with due consideration, and the negotiation concluded with such a reduction of the new tariff rates as was considered reasonable by this office and proved entirely satisfactory to the parties complaining. The following table exhibits the changes effected by the intermediary efforts of this office.

This table shows the reduction on wood fuel in dollars and cents, per car of 24,000 pounds, from Janesville, Minn., Smith's Mill, Eagle Lake, Mankato, Mankato Junction, Kasota and St. Peter to points named:

Oshawa	from	$ 9.20	to	$8.40
Sleepy Eye	"	14.40	"	10.80
Morgan	"	16.80	"	12.00
Paxton	"	19.20	"	12.60
Redwood Falls	"	16.80	"	13.20
Springfield	"	16.80	"	13.80
Sanborn	"	18.00	"	14.40
Lamberton	"	19.20	"	14.40
Tracy	"	18.00	"	15.60
Amiret	"	18.00	"	15.60
Marshall	"	19.20	"	16.20
Gary	"	21.60	"	19.20
Watertown	"	24.00	"	21.60
Clark Centre	"	26.40	"	22.80
Raymond	"	26.40	"	24.00
Doland	"	31.20	"	25.20
Frankfort	"	33.60	"	26.40

And all other places in proportion.

CONCERNING THE GRADING AND SHIPPING OF WHEAT—AS TO GRADING.

There is no misunderstanding, of the tone of public sentiment this season, in reference to the grading and shipping of our staple crop. The dissatisfaction is general, and the denunciations of the systems prevailing are bitter. To investigate and discuss the matter with dispassionate candor, is a public duty. Undoubtedly there are many things, as in all vexing questions, to be said with reason upon both sides of this question. To ascertain the truth and promote the general welfare, should at least be the object of official inquiry and comment. The general situation this year, is aggravated by some untoward circumstances. The unusually low price of wheat, the scare over frosted wheat, and the more rigid classifications growing out of this, all tend to aggravate the situation. Two classes of complaints reach this office touching the matter in question; the one affecting the grading and the other the freighting of grain. After sifting a large correspondence, visiting a number of stations, and carefully examining, upon the ground, the character and nature of these complaints, we have reached, so far as our judgment goes, comparatively definite conclusions.

As to the grading of wheat, this office has no official connection by law with the business. There is no statute making it the duty of any public officer to supervise or in any manner control the inspection of grain. As an incident, however, to the shipping of grain, many complaints affecting classification reach this office, so without going after facts they have come to our province of observation.

These general complaints allege caprice and self-interest, by those in charge of elevators, in their grading. There is with us no fixed standard which is of binding force, or of uniform character. Indeed, it is one of the unsettled problems of this vexed question, to devise such tests and safeguards as will fairly and uniformly protect all parties. The people have struggled with this problem in our state for fifteen years, and we are but little farther in advance than when we began. The problem as to varieties and qualities of tea, after an effort of a hundred years, have not yet reached anything like a finished solution. Not unlike to such articles, are the different varieties and conditions which surround wheat. The judgment, too, of even trained experts, however conscientious, will vary. Buyer and seller are doomed to be wide apart in their judgments of the article offered.

The evidence seems to show pretty conclusively that there is a wide, irregular and arbitrary classification of wheat, sometimes governed by the merest caprice. We will not cumber this report by reproducing the allegations here. Some of them are undoubtedly extreme cases; others exhibit a studied purpose to deal fairly. We are unable to ascertain, and the complaints do not cover instances of injustice at the great central markets. The abuses arise chiefly at the inception of this business, when the grain is sold from the farmer's wagon into the elevator. An important case might be mentioned which was brought to the attention of the commissioner by a committee, at a station on one of the railways, which seems to develop a studied system of unfair grading. The farmers at that station claimed that they had never received a grade of No. 1 hard, and very little, if any, No. 1 regular. They thought it strange their wheat not as good as wheat elsewhere reported in the same belt, and so appointed a committee of three to follow the next shipment of thirty cars to Duluth. They there found that four of those cars went No. 1 hard, and ten No. 1 regular, and pretty nearly all above the grades as actually sold. This, at least, was a very substantial fact, and the commissioner made use of it to secure certain concessions which would otherwise not have been granted.

The enemies to wheat are so numerous that the buyer is not wanting in pretexts, if he so desires, with which to assail the character of the goods offered. There is the frosted wheat, upon which, probably, too much stress has been laid. "Dirt" is another uncertain quantity, and is found to vary from one to four pounds. Smut is another foe to the seller, and for this buyers will generally deduct all the farmer will stand. Cockle and other foul seed count heavily against the seller, and generally far more than its damage, as it goes into those screenings which bring a good price, either as ground feed or when sold for other purposes. Dampness is a variable factor, as water swells the berry and reduces is value. Such wheat is generally dried out in rooms arranged for that purpose, so that the ultimate loss to the buyer is not great. Color is an element which militates against the grade. Defects such as these constitute the army which wars against the quality of wheat in the matter of grades, and they are used with more or less skill and effect by the buyer, according to his shrewdness and the character of the seller.

These constitute the capital stock of any one desiring to descry grades. Of course they are defects, and work their measure of deterioration. With these weapons the grades are hammered, and often unmercifully. This takes place, as a rule, at the time the wheat is actually sold from the wagon at the elevator.

In order to understand fully how ihey are used. let us go back to the moment of actual sale bp the farmer, from his wagon into the elevator. We sketch the picture as we have seen it: It is a village with one clevator, a pleasant day, and ihirty-seven sleds are in line before the elevator, each awaiting his turn. A sled drives up, the man is ordered to dump in his grain quickly as others are waiting. He does so. Perhaps he can't speak English. The man inside goes through his process of fixing his grade, making his deductions for smut, dirt, etc-, and ends by giving the man his ticket. The sale was a jug handled operation, the man purchasing being judge, and jury, in his own case. The seller bore no part in the transaction, except to accept his fate. Soon in the line a man "kicks" against this arrangement; he wants some understanding; the partiet donet agree at once as to the grade, and he is told to "drive on, as others are waiting."

This illustrates the condition of things where there is no competition in buying, and makes clear the monoply of a single elevator. More small stations, where a majority of the grain is gathered up, are in this condition, than the public if aware of.

The elevator man, it is also true, runs some chances, and is induced to grade low enough to protect himself. His grades may not always be accepted at terminal points. He is therefore under constant pressure to keep grades low, otherwise any loss in grades will be charged back to him. He is so situated that his conscience does not have fair play, however excellent his judgment.

A series of facts presented from very mrny different points, fairly proves that the farmer loses, on an average, a grade in this way, and therefore a price, which would be about five cents per bushel. Many intelligent men, well capable of judging, place the loss at twice this amount.

Every recurring crop brings the question of wheat grading, fresh for consideration with such phases as arise from the varying conditions of the season. Some arbitrary standard it would appear, should therefore be set up, to which clasifications should be referable for final adjustment. In Illinois, they have a grain inspectorship, established by the state, which arbitrarily controls the clasifications, by a standard fixed by law, at the great commercial center, Chicago, and to which the standard over the state must conform. It has given satisfaction, has been long tried and with no suggestion of a change.

That system of grain inspection has found favor in all the grain markets of the east, and there the certificates of the unmixed grades of the inspection and warehouse department are sought for and sold with as much confidence as in Chicago itself.

There is also connected with this inspection department a "committee of appeals," consisting of three well-known members of the board of trade. In all matters involving doubt on the part of the chief inspector, or any assistant inspector, as to the proper inspection of any lot of grain, an appeal may be made to this committee of appeals, and the decision of a majority of said committee is held, by law, to be final. So rigid and fair is the inspection that there are comparatively few appeals taken. The cost of this inspection is given as four-tenths of one mill per bushel, and is collected from the party demanding it, and is most generally inspected in car-lots.

There are so many important points contained in the Illinois law governing this whole question, that the commissioner deems it his duty to publish it in full in the appendix to this report. The results of the long experience of the great grain market of Chicago, as embodied in this law, will shed much light upon all the difficulties involved.

Could not a similar state inspector be appointed by the governor of our state, of a competent man of known integrity and character, who shall not be interested, directly or indirectly, in any elevator, or in the grain business, and who might in turn appoint his subordinates, choosing men possessing special qualifications, and maintaining this authority at such points as Minneapolis, Duluth, and St. Paul, thus establishing a standard to which the practice of the state would soon conform, and to which all questions would be referable? The department of agriculture, in the state university, might be made to contribute its quota of usefulness in this direction. Young men could be specially prepared for this work of inspection, and competitive examinations established. Let us bring more intelligence to the performance of this duty. The present and prospective interest in grain-growing in the northwest is so imperial, that the time has come when it requires that some intelligent method shall be established, clothed with the sanction of authority, to free it from the caprice and irregularity which now mark the situation.

The farming interest would also feel by such an organized and well intended effort in their behalf, that there was some purpose on the part of the state to reach, and if possible, remedy real grievances where they exist. Out of such aid, he might find comfort and encouragement to better husbandry. He might see in it a reasonable hope for equal, and approximately, exact justice.

The intrinsic merit of Minnesota and Dakota wheat is so great, and its standing in the markets of the world so high, that this royal pre-eminence can only be held by the unswerving maintenance of the highest standart of grades. The price may go up ot down, as supply and demand or the freaks or speculators may govern. But the quality of our goods should never be let down. Of course men would like a No. 1 price for a No. 2 article, but they have no right to expect or demand it; on the other hand, neither have the millers nor the elevator men any right to dishonor the grades.

When a farmer has good grain, he ought to get the credit for it. He is thereby encouraged to good husbandry, He cleans his seed wheat thoroughty, selects it with care and prepares his soil with dilligence and solicitude. Let us keep up the standard, and give the good farmer his just due, by reward ing him for the highest quality of grain he may actually raise and offer for sale. To secure the grades from selfish interference by the connivance or fraud of any class of men, ought not the grades to be established by the state and be controlled by a class of men wholly disconnected with the business of buying grain?

It has been urged with marked propriety, that the elevator men themselves should not be connected with the buying of grain. They are, it said, biased by self interest; and the two pursuits should be kept apart. The Illinois system requires this. There the warehousemen simply handle and store the grain, and find their profits in a commission fixed by law. These warehouses are duly licensed and their proprietors are under bonds for the faithful performance of their duties as presbribed by law. The situation here, however, is very different. There is no great milling centre in Illinois as at Minneapolis. The quantities of grain there required are so great, and this supply must be so constant and definite, that it would appear as though that great milling centre could not be kept in operation except, by some system of supply of its own, or under its control. This must be admitted; but these elevators can be made the subjects of such legal control as would remedy complaints made. All elevators should be public elevators, and made the creatures of fixed law.

The present system of inspection in this state, it is claimed, is generally unfair to the seller. It is urged that, as at Duluth and St. Paul, the inspectors are appointed by those who own the elevators and are buyers of wheat, and are liable to be warped by self interests, grading in lower than they grade out. But it has appeared to us that there are too many men on both sides of the deal to admit of this. Conflicting interests keep the inspectors well in the line of fairness. At Minneapolis, two systems of inspection seem to prevail—one appointed by the board of trade, the other by the millers' association. When the latter only inspects in the divisions of grain to even up among themselves, no objection can be found. But when their inspector interferes in outside deals, they have two inspectors, which may not harmonize, and, it is alleged, often do not. Certainly it would be all wrong to force purchases on the grades fixed by the millers' inspector.

Such a state inspectorship as that of Illinois would put it out the power of Miller's associations, to make changes or interfere with the grades. The millers and large shippers control nearly all the markets in the state. They can combine their interests if they so desire, the millers taking the higher grades, and letting the large shippers have the lower grades at their own prices. This was the basis of the State Grangers' charge a year ago last December.

That the price of breadstuffs throughout the world, are at present depressed, is a condition of things for which no one in Minnesota is responsible. The telegraph has made the prices of grain quite uniform, less the cost of transportation and handling. The complaints which greet us, are not as to prices, but as to the irregular and capricious classifications, and an embargo upon free shipping privileges, laid by the railways which we will not discuss.

THE SHIPPING OF GRAIN.

We firmly believe that a system which will maintain the largest competitive buying, and most untrammeled freedom in shipping, will cure many of the grievances of which complaint is made. Strangely enough, our railways have assumed the grave responsibility of fathering an elevator system, which, is in itself the very essence of a monopoly. They assume to do this upon the theory that the elevators, as they constitute them, are a necessity to both tha producer and the road. Otherwise, as they allege, the vast bodies of grain could not be stored and moved with sufficient rapidity to accommodate business, and enable them to perform their general duties to the public. For these reasons they have assumed to make special contracts with persons erecting elevators on the right of way, and to clothe them with special and exceptional privileges, so that to use their own language, the party building shall have ample "protection for his money invested." We have thus stated broadly the claim of the railways in this assumption of granting special favors to a chosen class. In our last report we discussed this question, (report 1882, pages 35 and 54) fully presenting a given case, and the manager's defense thereto of the railway position. We have uow the results of a year's rugged experience, which show conclusively that the public are intensely dissatisfied with the arrangement, and continually rebel against the cast-iron rule which was promulgated.

At the time of the proposed issuance of the rule, this office protested against it, and in the light of experience, still more strongly declares its opposition to this regulation, as being unlawful, unequal in its operation and against public policy. The rule is practically this: "Parties, whether producers or purchasers, desiring to ship grain, where there is an elevator, must ship through it, or construct an elevator of at least 30,000 bushels capacity, or cars will not be furnished." In our last report, with the approval of the attorney general, we pointed out the illegality of the rule. The railway in question, however, promulgated the order, in defiance of the commissioner and of the law, and this regulation is now practically enforced by all the lines in the state.

If it be said that the recent legislature took no action in this very matter brought before them by the commissioner, he has only to say with the mercy of charity that he will not discuss the causes of the suppression of such legislation. Real, earnest and intelligent complaints have been filed in this office, by reason of this rule, by merchants, flat-warehousemen, farmers, committees, and boards of trade. By this rule the merchant, the flat-warehouseman and the farmer are cut off from their rights as shippers over a highway where all rights should be, and are under the law, equal. But not only do the parties owning elevators have these special shipping privileges, but it is claimed they also receive concessions or drawbacks that are not allowed to others.

As a matter of public policy, no intimate relation should subsist between the elevators and the railways. The one is a structure for storing and handling grain, the other a common carrier for hauling grain to market. For the latter to exercise any control whatever over the former, necessarily subjects shippers to control by the railways in such a manner as to destroy their independence. The railways cannot have a choice of customers. In a business point of view it is very desirable that elevators should be erected for the better accommodation of the publicr But this consideration of seeming good cannot take away, or in any manner impair, the legal rights of other parties. Railways, like innkeepers, must take all that come until the quarters are full. If it is an inconvenience to furnish cars to flat-houses or merchants, the answer is, that is just what the railways are paid for; to serve the public generally is their proper function, for which they are chartered, duly compensated, and endowed with extraordinary privileges.

You cannot go so far back in history but that the common carrier was subject to the control of the state. In the matter here in question, Minnesota and Dakota furnish a most notable exception of this ancient rule of law. In the shipping of grain, our railways are a law unto themselves, exercising imperial authority. By such assertions of power the railways foment popular distrust. There is even now a rumbling of discontent and menace in the air, which should admonish railway officials that they may evoke more legislation than is desirable. Railway corporations should do business so as to retain the good will of the people. Their interests and the interests of the people are identical. In refusing open shipping privileges to all classes, they have antagonized their best customers.

They have no right to compel the farmer or merchant to ship through the elevator, if he does not so desire. The exclusive elevator system sets up a toll gate at the farmer's door, which the rule compels him to use at a preliminary cost of two and a half cents per bushel, when he could otherwise ship from flat warehouses, or by himself, at a cost of but three-fourths of a cent. The right and privelege of the farmer or the merchant to load cars on the track from a wagon, may not be one he choose often to exercise, but it is a most wholesome right to have in reserve, and one which is indispensable to their safety. Without this right, they are helpless in the hands of the elevator man, and must submit to the terms he may dictate.

Of course the public must be reasonable, and independent shippers must be required to load in a reasonable time. Let cars be furnished, and if there be unnecessary delay, let the party be charged demurrage. But when full car-loads are offered, they may not be lawfully refused. And the farmer and the merchant should get the same rate, provided they load substantially in the same time. If this privilege were granted, very few indeed would care to exercise it, the very fact that the right existed would practically preclude its usage. Whatever privileges are offered should be open to all shippers, offering freight of the same kind, in the same line of business.

If it be said that the elevators are open and free to all who desire to ship grain, that they are, in fact, public elevators, the reply is, first, that where the parties owning and running them are themselves engaged in the purchase and shipping of grain, they are substantially private grain houses to all intents and purposes. Of this class are the elevators belonging to the Millers' association. They are run exclusively in their own interests. And, secondly, to the claim that anyone may ship grain who so desires, many letters to this office, corroborated by the commissioner's examination at several stations, gives this result, and we quote from a correspondent who has ascertained by experience:

"There is also an indisputable attempt on the part of the Miller's association through collusion with elevator and railway companies to prevent competition in the buying of wheat, and thus dictate prices at every point in the state. It is done in this way: If I, as an outside party, think wheat worth two or three cents more than association prices at this point, and proceed to buy at these advanced prices, no obstruction is offered. Then I conclude I will realize by shipping. The elevator company coolly informs me that I cannot have my wheat until they have shipped out what they need first, and further assert that there is a scarcity of cars, etc. I next turn to the railway company for relief and request them to furnish cars for my wheat. I am told by them that they can furnisd no cars to outsiders for wheat, that they only furnish to the elevator companies as they may order. I am then compelled to wait until the elevator company see fit to ship my wheat. This method discourages the outside buyer most effectually. He withdraws from the market, and the elevator companies get their own prices and enjoy the monopoly."

That, as a rule, the elevators are exclusive in their methods, there can be no doubt. There is no flexibility or freedom to them. Any contracts which have been made between the railway companies and the elevator men, which, in any manner, promises them exclusive privileges in the shipping of grain, are unquestionably null and void, being both against law and public policy.

Our law should more specifically declare that elevators shall be public, and prescribe severe penalties for any evasion of their duties to the public as such. The Illinois statute furnishes an example worthy of imitation on this point.

When the roads assume, on whatever preense, to confer special shipping favors upon a few, they have at once established a monopoly, which in its attendant evils overbalances all the good which arises from the elevator system. They must put their money into the business, subject to competition, as other men do in other pursuits. The true reformatory measure is to throw the whole business open to free competition and let it regulate itself, like other business, on the basis of free trade. Instead of building up a few favored men, who at present control the whole business of shipping grain, let the entire community enjoy an equal opportunity of buying and shipping, if they may so choose. By this policy the railways, instead of making a few men wealthy, will add to the wealth of men generally, and so stimulate business for themselves and for the people. The wealth of the raily is the wealth of all its customers. Every man cannot build an elevator which costs fron six to ten thousand dollars; he must not, therefore, be prohibited from the shipping of grain in his own way because he is poor. We deny that the elevators, as run, are free to all. The present system exposes the roads to the charge of collusion with the elevator men, and the methods prevailing justify the charge. Every consideration, therefore, of public policy would open the widest privilege to those desiring to ship grain. These are some of the strong practical points which go with the legal ones presented in the last report.

The particular thing we claim is, that the methods now maintained between the railways and the elevators, cut off competition in buying; and where there is no competition, there is uniformly a complaint as to grades and prices. The small, independent buyer is in truth the factors whose presence regulates the local price of wheat, and his presence should be encouraged as a matter of public policy. The complaints daily received at the office go to prove this point. There is no mistaking the situation. The present system "freezes out" the small buyer, because he cannot ship on equal terms, and the monopoly remains intact. The merchant who would gladly buy wheat at the highest possible price of his customers, complains that his hands are tied and business depressed, because he cannot have cars in which to ship.

Through a period of ten years, Hastings has paid the highest average price for grain, of any local market in this state; and it is really about the only place in the state which has enjoyed the benefit of continuous, absolute free trade in the buying and shipping of grain, and from that city no complaints have ever reached this office. It is a proof of the benefits of commercial freedom and blows the theory of the railways to atoms.

There is still another way of relieving the situation, and we wonder it has not occurred to the railways themselves. That is the high rate of freight as compared with the ruling value of wheat. The railways are able to be generous in view of the depressed condition of the market. The old maxim of the managers comes into play, which is, the tariff must be what the commodity will bear. The commodity this season will not bear the present tariff. The commissioner of statistics gives the whole number of bushels of wheat for the year, as 36,000,000. Deducting for bread and seed 12,000,000, would leave 24,000,000 of bushels as the approximate amount for sale. He further gives this office, as about the average price the state over, for this crop, 70 cents per bushel.

This would make the farmer's gross income $16,800,000 for this product. Had the charges of elevators and transportation been reasonable, and in accordance with the present depressed prices, he would have received much more. If it costs 12 cents on an average, as it is figured, to get it to market, he has paid $2,880,000 for freight, or an amount equal to more than one sixth of the entire crop. If we add to this 2½ cents for elevator charges which will make 14½ cents, it will be $3,480,000 for freight, or a sum equal to one fifth of his whole crop. This is simply enormous. The situation clearly admits of an act of generosity on the part of the railways, for freight rates prevailing now and for the past year are clearly out of proportion to the present values of wheat.

At this very time, in India, a country destined to be a great competitor of the Northwest in the growing of wheat, the British government are fully alive to the exigencies of the situation. Instead of leaving the railway corporations the power to mulch the farmer out of an enormous slice of his profits by excessive freights, the policy of the British government is to cheapen transportation by railroad. Within the present year, the government has reduced the rates fifty cents per eight bushels, and even further reductions are promised. The purpose of this is to aid the farmers of India to compete with the American wheat grower. They are even carrying plows and other implements of agriculture at merely nominaly rates, to still further aid the Indian farmer in this contest. A like policy of reducing rates, should govern with us; and if not by the voluntary action of the corporations, then by the power of the state. Our grain-carrying roads should reform the basis of their action, and "temper the wind to the shorn lamb."

In summing the whole situation, with the best light obtainable as to grievances and remedies, it appears to us as if an honest and fair system of state inspection were adopted based and modeled on the Illinois law; if all the elevators and grain warehouses were made strictly public warehouses, and their business divorced from that of buying grain; and finally, if the shipping of grain was made open and free to all persons whomsoever, as by law and justice, it ought to be, then by the operation of these agencies, the injuries now complained of would gradually cease, and this business, like other pursuits, resolve itself by the laws and forces which govern unlettered trade.

OTHER MATTERS.

The report considers at length the pay and condition of conductors and brakemen on the railroads, and after referring to various matters of railroad detail, gives a very valuable and elaborate history of the inception, progress and completion of the Northern Pacific enterprise. It is the most complete and valuable report of the kind ever issued in the state.

Cares of Life.

As we come to them they are received, borne with and passed over with no more than a thought, if we are in the enjoyment of health, but if suffering with piles or skin diseases of any kind they magnify a hundred fold. A. R. Wilkes, B. & E. Zimmerman, and E. Stierle, the druggists, have Dr. Bosanko's Pile Remedy, an absolute cure. Sold at 50 cents.

A Big Haul.

NEW YORK, Feb. 11.—A black valise containing $25,000 was stolen from the New York Transfer company to-night, while being taken to Debrosses street ferry from the Grand Central depot.

NO ONE TO BLAME.

The Inquest Over the Remains of Olsen Killed by a Falling Wall in the Drake Building.

An inquest was held by Coroner Quinn yesterday, on the remains of Sinen Olson, the young man whose death resulted from the caving in of a wall at the Drake building last Friday.

The jury consisted of the following citizens: Geoege Hagerty, Thomas Rilly, E. A. Whitaker, A. Launess, A. C. Steen, and A. G. Long.

There were present quite a number of interested parties, including the brother of the deceased.

J. D. NEVIN.

J. D. Nevin, foreman of the work was first sworn. Witness was in the employ of Mr. Drake; was engaged in putting in vaults and tearing down walls; was present when the accident happened last Friday; the wall which fell was a piece of the old wall about twenty-five feet long; the men were engaged in undermining it; it was a twelve inch brick wall, and it was tied up; had first tried to push it over; the part that was'nt tied was plastered, and they could not see the joints; the part that fell was about twelve feet long and fifteen feet high; when the wall fell four men were at work; the deceased was about thirty-five feet from the end of the wall; witness saw it fall; he was about forty feet from the end when it fell in; the wall was not considered dangerous; the men had not been warned that it was shakey; ihe wall fell endways as soon as the last bricks were cut; it was customary to tie joints as the building progressed; witness did not suppose there was a joint at the place where the wall gave way; had he known of the joint he would have had the wall tied all the way up; one of the men whose leg had been broken was at least fifty feet away; the wall had been undermined all the way along and then seaffolding put up; they expected to take it down from the top, as they could not push it over with heavy timbers; if it had been tied to the other wall at the joint it would not have fallen in. This witness drew a diagram, showing the relative position of the walls when the accident took place. The witness was employed by Mr. Drake by the day; had had experience in building walls; he considered the wall sound; the plans of the building had been changed, so they took it down.

DR. MURPHY.

Dr. Murphy was sworn and testified to having attended the deceased; one of his legs had been crushed to the knee; the bones were sticking out and amputation was necessary; the elbow joint was crushed; witness thought he was injured internally.

E. F. DRAKE.

Mr. E. F. Drake, owner of the building, was the next witness. Witness was in the building when the accident took place; witness had gone up on the scaffold and asked the men if they felt perfectly safe; he had warned them to be careful; witness then went to the second floor when he heard a noise caused by the falling wall; he had been where the deceased was at work a few minutes before the accident; witness described the appearance of the walls; in looking at the wall the eye could not detect any want of tying; the first twelve feet from the cellar was stone, above that it was brick and all plastered; witness thought the men were further away when the wall fell than estimated by Mr. Nevins; no one present knew of the covered joint; witness took the diagram and explained the construction of the walls; witness had told Nevins he thought the safest way would be to remove the wall brick by brick.

In addition to the above quite a number of witnesses were sworn, including one or two experts, among whom was Thomas Grace. Testimony was submitted by Thomas Blake, S. G. Fritz, F. G. Springer, Charles Lyon, Martin Hester and John Cook.

The testimony of some of the last named witnesses was very conflicting, although the majority of witnesses testified to substantially the same facts as above given.

THE VERDICT.

The jury returned the following verdict:

That Sinan Olsen died from injuries received by a fallen wall in the Drake building on Friday, Feb. 8; that further, from the evidence produced, we do not attach any blame to any person, as the result of negligence or carelessness.

It is understood that the brother of the deceased will commence a suit for damages.

A DULL DAY.

Nothing of Interest to Relieve the Monotony of the Police Court.

It was a decidedly dull day in the police court, and the bull pen looked as if it had been struck by a blizzard. In short, everybody looked blue. Gen. Shields, conductor of the black maria, paced anxiously up and down the court room. It was evident from his downcast looks that there were to be no passengers out that morning. The bull pen didn't contain even a hungry nag or limber drunk, and as one spectator remarked, "the town must be getting mighty shaky when it can't even afford a limber." However true the remark, such was the case, there not being a single arrest brought over trom city hall, and had it not been for a couple of warrant cases the court might have gone on a picnic.

James Hanzi was up for smacking Jona Novatuly, his brother-in-law. The men were having a social game of seven-up, when Hanzi thought that his relative was turning a trick too many for the deck. and he smacked him. The accused was fined $5 and both men gave bonds to keep the peace.

Peter Bastine was charged with nuisance, and sentence was suspended, while the case of M. Milan, charged with selling liquor without a license, was continued until today.

Real Estate and Building.

Thirteen transfers of real estate were filed for record with the register of deeds yesterday, the aggregate considerations amounted to $22,170. Following are the transfers:

John Graff te Wm. Schwantes, lot 17, block 6, Rugg's addition, $325.

John L. Merriam to W. W. Bartlett, lot 4, and part of lot 3, block 2, Merriam park, $2,875.

Louise Weide to John G. Yardun, lot 5, block 35, Arlington Hills addition, $400.

Carl Asch to Christ Meyar, lot 17, block 112, Lyman Dayton's addition, $1,100.

D. D. Merrill to St. Paul Barrel company, lot 5, block 162, Robertson's addition West St. Paul, $1,000.

A. G. Stuart to F. S. Barrs, lot 15, block 68, Brown & Jackson's addition West St. Paul, $200.

Louise Weide to Peter Luxien, lot 15, block 10, Arlington Hills addition, $300.

Mary R. Miller to Wm. Buxton, lot 2, block 4, A. G. Fuller's addition, $2,500.

C. E. Dickerman to John Marty, lot 4, block 35, Kittson's addition, $11,250.

W. H. Lightner to George H. Blanchard, lot 14, block 22, Marshall's addition, $225.

John F. Eisenmenger to John Helger, lot 10, block 2, J. F. Eisenmenger's addition, $570.

August Kempien to James E. Dove, lot 10, block 7, Terry's addition, $1,550.

Robert P. Lewis to Frank Horn, lot 13, block 2, of Chamber's addition, $1,000.

BUILDING PERMITS.

The following building permits have been issued by Building Inspector Johnson:

St. Paul Furniture compady, repairs to frame factory, south side of West Fifth street, between Franklin and Exchange, $1,200.

Joseph Lee, one story frame dwelling south side of Cook street, between Greenbriar and Pine avenue, $300.

Matt Leithanser, two story wood and brick veneer dwelling, north side of Fremont street, between Mendota and Forest, $1,000.

Must Make Fire Proof Repairs.

Application was made to Building Inspector Johnson, yesterday, by the St. Paul Furniture company for a permit to rebuild that portion af their ractory on West Fifth street recently destroyed by fire, but on inspection he found that the kind of repairs the purposed making were not such as demanded by the building and fire ordinances, and he at once prepared specifications for the repairs, which will increase the cost from $300 to $1,200, but by the arrangement of the engine and boiler rooms and the covering of exposed wooden walls with corrugated iron makes the structure much safer. The owners of the building were disposed to object to this increased expense on the ground that their factory, having been put up before the extension of the fire limits and the enactment of the building ordinance, they were entitled to rebuild it in the same style as before, but Inspector Johnson thought that the interests of adjoining property holders, as well as the intention of the ordinance, required that the repairs be made so as to render the building more nearly fireproof.

BUFFINGTON'S BARN.

The State Capitol Becoming Untenable on Account of Defective Construction.

One defect after another has been cropping out in the construction of the state capitol as month has followed month since its building until it would seem that there was hardly room for any more unless the walls snould callapse and tumble in upon its occupants. With powerful furnaces in its boiler house and the rushing of coal into them night and day it has neen hard in the best weather-protected rooms to get the steam heat in the main structure above 70 degrees, while during the cold snaps several of the departments were thoroughly untenable and in some cases were deserted until the weather moderated. In the attempt to remedy this, storm windows were put up in those portions of the building with a northern exposure, but without much perceptible effect. During the month of January to keep up even the medium degree of heat attained, eighty-six tons of coal were consumed at a cost of $800, almost three tons per day. Added to this defectiveness in steam heating apparatus and piping, during the past few weeks the fine carpet in the main room of the state auditor's department has been thoroughly disclosed and ruined by the stoppage in the pipes carring back the condensed steam to the boilers, and by a consequent escape of hot water upon it.

These pipes have proved entirely too small for the purpose designed and consequently sediment and iron rust have collected where they run horizontally, which, damming up of the water has forced it back into and out of the radiators. Yesterday the carpet in the sitting room of the Historical society was discovered to have been spoiled from the same cause, and the condensed steam escape in the radiators had to be plugged up to temporarily remedy the evil. At this rate all the elegant earpets in the structure seem in time to be doomed to disfiguration at the cost of the taxpayer, while the drain upon the treasury to throw inefficient warmth into the building for one winter would make a $5,000 bank deposit drop its three ciphers. Of Buffington's contract structure it looks as though in a very short period of time there would be nothing left but the hollow form of a goddess of justice presiding over a scene of ruin, having for its epitaph "Minnesota's folly."

THE COURTS.

District Court.

JURY CASES.

[Before Judge Wilkin.]

J. J. Palmer vs. Breen & Young; on trial.

Adjourned till 10 a. m. to-day.

COURT CASES.

[Before Judge Brill.]

Barrett & Groff vs. S. Cohen; judgment for defendant.

Adjourned to 10 a. m. to-day.

ORDERS AND DECISIONS FILED.

[By Judge Simons.]

In the matter of the assignment of Riddell & Clark; order dissolving attachment of Hemenway & Co.

Bridget Shanley vs. D. F. Wadsworth, order discharging order to show cause.

William O. Cornish vs. Julia A. Keyes, et al., suit to quit title; decision for plaintiff.

[By Judge Brill.]

Barnett Graff against Sarah Cohn.

Meyer Shapena, partners as Meyer & Shapena; decision giving Shapena judgment against plaintiff for costs and disbursements.

NEW PAPERS FILED.

Campbell & Burbank vs. Smith, Howard & George; judgment for $362 for goods furnished filed.

Ellen V. Walker vs. Edwin C. McCarny; suit for the recovery of $200 loaned.

Alice O. Cornish vs. Wm. Wilson, et al.; suit to quiet title.

McCarthy & Donnelly vs. M. A. Sargent; suit for $213 for services rendered and goods delivered.

Probate Court.

[Before Judge McGrorty.]

Guardianship of Ida Hoffman, minor; bond of guardian approved and filed. Letters issued.

Estate of Michael J. Hayes, deceased; Annie Walsh appointed administratrix.

Estate of James T. Heywood, deceased; petition for license to sell real estate. Hearing March 31, at 10 a. m.

Estate of E. Hauser, deceased; hearing objections to claim of Guthering & Rockstrol set for March 5, at 10 a. m.

Municipal Court.

[Before Judge Burr.]

Peter Bastine, nuisance; sentence suspended.

M. Milan, selling liquor without a license; continued until to-day,

James Honzi, assault; fine of $5 paid.

To Oppose the Increase in the Tariff.

PITTSBURG, Pa., Feb. 13.—A number of persons, representing the manufacturers and laboring men of this section, leave for Washington this evening, to appear before the ways and means committee, to oppose Morrison's tariff bill. Jno. Jarrett will represent the United Stated Tin Plate association, and president Weihe and Secretary Morton, the Amalgamated association of Iron and Steel Workers. The manufacturers of this city will be represented by a special committee. They will be joined by other committees from different parts of the state, and a vigorous fight will be made towards having the bill defeated. Should "Converse wool bill," asking the restoration of the duty of 1867, John Jarrett will have a bill presented, asking for a higher tariff on tin plate, cotton ties, wire rods, etc.

A Y. M. C. A. Building.

The Young Men's Christian association held a meeting at their hall on Tuesday evening to hear the report of a committee of its membership, previously appointed, to take into consideration the construction of a building of its own. The committee reported to the association that it had made a thorough examination of eligible sites for the structure proposed and obtained prices therefor. That a block 50 feet wide, by 125 feet in length, four stories and a basement, together with the best site would involve an outlay of $48,000. The association will hold a parlor conference within the next ten days to determine whether they will proceed with the work of securing the necessary capital, with a view to constructing their block the coming season.

A Farmer's Complaint.

To the Editor of the Globe.

SHIELDSVILLE, Minn. Feb. 11.—Owing to the defiant attitude of the wheat buyers of this section it becomes urgently necessary for the farmers to make some attempt at defeating the designs of those insatiable parasites. It is generally conceded that farmers more than any other class are at the mercy of avaricious rings and monopolies who cheat rob and despise them. How wheat can be worth fifteen cents more per bushel in St. Paul than in Faribault is what puzzles the brains of us farmers at present. It was thought a few years ago that a competing railroad was all that was wanted to establish a good market and honest prices among us but now that the rival road exists it is impossible to see where any benefit has been gained. It must be remembered however that it was a case in which scoundrels were competing with scoundrels. Would it not be a glorious thought to arouse that once powerful but now dormant fraternity the Grange; it would certainly be a powerful influence in establishing justice. Of one thing however I am certain it is this: There is a revolt brewing in this locality and I would say to the oppressors beware!

RICHARD BROWN.

Gilbert and Sullivan's "Princess Ida," at the Savoy Theatre is falling flat.