

October, without consultation with the interests affected, and much to their surprise, an Order in Council was passed announcing that the Coasting Laws had been suspended for the balance of the season of 1899, and that United States vessels were to be admitted to trade both east and west between Canadian ports.

The Marine Section and the Board, acting not only on behalf of the local interests but also for the whole lake carrying interests of the country, instituted an active presentation of the evils of such a course. In this they were joined by the Boards of Trade and the ship building interests of all the principal lake ports on the inland lakes. An important deputation was received at Ottawa by the Ministers of the Dominion. The full details cannot well be stated in a short report; suffice to say, that it was pointed out that the information upon which this Order in Council was founded was erroneous; that the Canadian marine were quite capable of carrying all grain that might be presented at the Upper Lake ports for forwarding to Canadian ports; that in fact they were carrying all that Canadian grain that was offered and were obliged to seek cargoes, in United States ports for their surplus tonnage; that it had already stopped ship building, which had been intended to be continued, and would be a permanent bar to further investment in Canadian vessels, and therefore close up the ship building yards of the country. As a result the Premier informed the deputation *that the suspension would be for this season only and that no such suspension would again occur without Legislative action.*

The Section would point out the great advantage to the general trade interests of the country which has been promoted by this action of the Board of Trade of Toronto in which it has acted, not solely for its own local neighborhood, but also for the larger interests involved, and therefore merits the cordial assistance of all localities. The Section would gratefully acknowledge the active support which it has received from the Council, and from the Board of Trade, and would point out that the water carrying system, as being the measure of freight rates and the cheapest method of interchange of commodities, is one that affects not only those who have their capital invested in vessels, but also the farming, manufacturing and merchant interests, whose profits are affected by rates of freight and interchange of commodities.

EDGAR A. WILLS,
Secretary-Treasurer.

BARLOW CUMBERLAND,
Chairman.

ANNUAL REPORT, WHOLESALE DRY GOODS SECTION OF THE BOARD OF TRADE OF THE CITY OF TORONTO.

I am pleased to state that the increase of business in the dry goods trade for the past year has been most gratifying and satisfactory. The volume has been more extensive and a greater demand for a better class of goods has increased considerably the amount of sales. The causes of this effect are principally greater activity in the industries of our country, extension in manufacturing and a greater demand for our products both home and abroad as well as a decrease in the imports of our retail merchants from foreign jobbers, the retail merchants realizing that unless they can buy from the manufacturer that it is more profitable for them to buy from the home wholesaler than from the wholesaler abroad.

The question of passing goods through our Customs has been considerably discussed during the past year, and I am sure that every wholesale merchant here will uphold and support our Government in every possible way to maintain and support the legitimate entering of all goods through our Custom House.