



A. M. NANTON
President Winnipeg Board of Trade

FREIGHT RATES.

One of the most important subjects before the board last year was the ever important one of freight rates. If Winnipeg is anything in particular, it is especially a wholesale centre, but it is not because of any favors hitherto shown it by the railway companies. It is a large distributing centre because of its geographical position and the energy of its business men. Through rates to points in our own immediate constituency have been against us, while the discrimination against Winnipeg to Kootenay points practically shuts us out of that market. Up to five years ago we had a large trade in West Kootenay, but during the periods named freight rates have been so badly against us we were compelled to withdraw almost altogether, sustaining a heavy loss to trade, one house alone being obliged to forego over one hundred thousand dollars worth of business per annum. The board has all along felt that we were entitled to fairer treatment. We never asked for favors, we simply asked to be placed on the same footing as our competitors in the matter of freight rates. If that right was granted us we never feared the result. I am happy to be able to report to you that the untiring efforts of the board have at last resulted in a recognition of this principle by the railway corporations. Through rates from the east to all points west of Winnipeg as far as Revelstoke and in the Kootenay country are now the same as the two rates combined from the east to Winnipeg and out again except that cartage and handling charges at Winnipeg amounting to from 4 to 8 cents per 100 lbs. for the first five classes are added to the latter. These charges are of course, still a handicap, but I am not prepared to say that they are unreasonable. I feel sure this simple act of justice will result in great good to the business interests of Winnipeg and in turn to the entire country tributary. The various steps in the negotiations cannot be mentioned here, suffice it to say that your committee and Mr. Ashdown, who was sent to represent the board in the east on this question, have had a large amount of work to perform, and deserve the best thanks of this board.

IMPROVEMENT OF ST. ANDREW'S RAPIDS.

True to the traditions of the board this subject was again before us. My predecessor addressing you a year ago expressed the hope that during the then approaching session of parliament an appropriation would be made for this work. This hope was justified by statements made by the honorable, the minister of public works after looking carefully over the ground and subsequently by the engineer of his department. I need hardly tell you that no appropriation was made and I regret to state the prospects are not as bright as a year ago. In years past the chief argument against this work was the cost. Officials of the government persisted in naming a figure far in excess of the figures estimated by local authorities. This conflict of opinion was an excuse, though not a substantial one—nevertheless an excuse for delay. When this point was settled and the city engineer was found to be correct, we naturally looked for the work to go on, but a new opposition developed.



D. W. BOILE
Past President Winnipeg Board of Trade.

We are now told the work would only be of local interest and of no value to the province at large. I am sorry this kind of opposition has been introduced. The province should not be set against itself and politicians who would set the city against the country and the country against the city are doing both an injustice by misrepresenting. I believe the true feelings of all and checking development which it should be the duty of all to promote. I have been a member of the council of this board for seven years and I think I am in a position to know the aspirations of its members. It is not that we should live and others should die, not that the city should prosper at the cost and sacrifice of all else, but the interests of the whole province have always inspired our best efforts. I believe the people outside the city in the province appreciate this fact and I refuse to believe that they are opposed to an interest charge of three-tenths of a cent per head per annum because, forsooth, this work would benefit Winnipeg only. But is the

statement correct that this work is only of local interest? Records of the department of the interior show that up to last year 23,834,838 feet of lumber, 11,827,300 shingles and 3,657,100 laths were cut and manufactured from lands surrounding the southern portion of Lake Winnipeg. This trade was chiefly in the early eighties along the Red river as far as the international boundary line and in spite of difficult navigation, but which was then much better than at present. There is still uncut in close proximity to the lake over 150,000,000 feet of good merchandisable timber notwithstanding that \$12,000,000 worth has been destroyed by fire during the past fifteen years. I am surely right when I say that if this timber was made accessible by the improvement of St. Andrew's Rapids the whole province would be benefited to say nothing of the development of an important industry within the borders of our own province. Large deposits of iron and other minerals which are known to exist in Lake Winnipeg region can never be developed unless better navigation be secured. The supply of fuel in the shape of cordwood along the lake and within easy distance is known to be practically inexhaustible. This is important to the city but it has a provincial bearing also. Let me quote from a non-official report on file in the office of the board from an official of the government well qualified to speak.

"To observing people the question of future cordwood supply for the city of Winnipeg the Red river valley, and parts of Central Manitoba, is becoming a serious one for contemplation, as, without a new source of supply opening up in a few years these places will be wholly dependent upon coal for fuel."

"Winnipeg has for many years drawn its supply of cordwood from the territory adjacent to the main line of the Canadian Pacific railway, east between East Selkirk and Keewatin."

"This territory has been pretty well run over for a distance of fifteen miles on either side of the track and cannot be depended upon much longer."

"Owing to the now limited quantity of cordwood to be got from the east, Winnipeg is drawing on the Pembina



C. N. BELL
For 10 Years Secretary, and still at his post