

in competition those of the U.S. have now the advantage to the extent of the tax. Within the last few years the Canadian Government in addition to taxing Canadian steamers imposed the same tax on U.S. steamers trading to Canadian ports, but the U.S. Government immediately retaliated by putting the same tax on Canadian steamers trading to U.S. ports as Canada had placed on theirs, and the consequence is that Canadian steamers calling at U.S. ports have to pay a double tax; and all because they are unfairly taxed in their own country. It is high time that there should be no tax for steamboat inspection in Canada, as there is none in the U.S., and also that there should be reciprocity in steamboat inspection between the two countries, to save double inspection of the steamers of each." B. W. Folger seconded the motion, which was unanimously adopted after Mr. Gildersleeve had stated that the cost of the inspection was about 8 cents a gross ton. It cost the R. & O. N. Co. about \$2,800 a year. Up to the time the Government started to tax U.S. vessels the fees did not pay, but since then the fees have about paid the expense of the service.

CUSTOMS OFFICERS' FEES.

E. W. Rathbun moved that the assessment of steamship, railway and ferry companies, and other public carriers, for the overtime fees of the officials of the Customs Department of the Dominion, is wrong and unjust in principle, unfair to the carriers, and cannot be justified by any method of argument, and that the services of these officials ought to be provided at the public expense, at all hours of both day and night, as well as upon all holidays, for the following among other reasons: That if it is right and proper for the public to bear the expense of these officials from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. on all juridical days, the assessment of transportation companies instead of the public, for services performed by the officials outside these hours, can lead to no other conclusion than that the public interest would be just as well served if all traffic at ports should cease at 6 p.m. every day, and remain tied up until 8 a.m. on the day following, as well as upon all legal holidays; a conclusion which is manifestly absurd, as the public interests demand free and uninterrupted traffic at all times. That by requiring transportation companies to pay the officials the present system places the officials under obligations to those over whom they are expected to exercise surveillance—a state of affairs which cannot be too strongly condemned. That because the Government of the U.S. has taken a fair and proper view of the matter, Customs officers are provided at all U.S. ports at all times without any charge being made, and that, because of this, Canadian interests suffer a serious handicap in having to pay fees which do not fall upon competitors trading to ports in the U.S. That it is for the public benefit that the service should be maintained in an efficient state at all hours and traffic facilitated in every possible way, and that, therefore, the expense should be borne by the public rather than by any individual, company or class. That in these days of keen competition, and while the U.S. is developing such tremendous marine interests upon the Great Lakes, Canadian industries which feel the burden of these fees should be relieved, and protected and encouraged by the adoption of the legitimate principle that the public should pay for all that is for the public benefit.

In supporting the resolution Mr. Rathbun said: "I think every one interested in lake or ocean tonnage understands how these little charges and annoyances aggregate to a considerable amount every year. These charges are one of those which tend to handicap the marine interests of the part of the country

from which I come. For many years I have been persuaded that this and every charge and tax of the same kind, such as the tonnage tax referred to by Mr. Gildersleeve, should all be removed, as well as those referred to in the resolutions which are to follow. I am sure we cannot do better than take a leaf from our U.S. cousins, who are making wonderful strides in the growth of their tonnage, if we give the Government the support they are entitled to in their efforts to improve our water highways and make it attractive for the people.

In supporting the resolution, Capt. Gaskin said that prior to 1893 there was a Canadian Marine Association, which, as the result of interviews with the Government yearly for a period of nine or ten years, obtained reductions in the canal tolls from 20c. a ton to 2c. In looking over the history of the matter he found that from 1860 to 1862 there were no tolls on the canals. Subsequently the Government went back to the old system, the tolls on the Welland canal being 20c. a ton, and this went on until 1884. In 1882 the U.S. Government threw off the tolls on the Erie canal, with the result that the Canadian trade

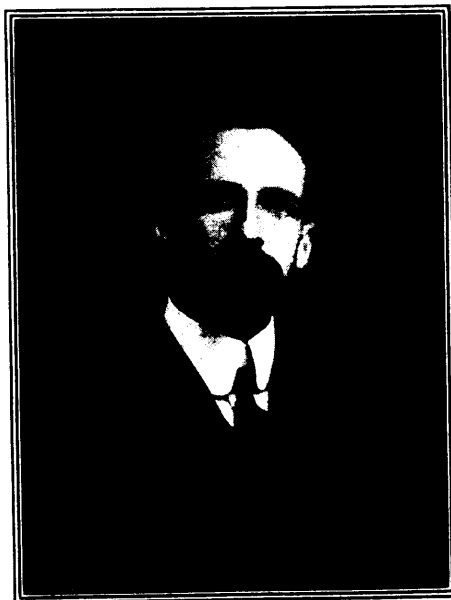
ping. England would not be worth a cent without its mercantile marine. Across the line is a country building up a vast merchant service; on the Great Lakes they are building 62 steamers for that trade, at a cost of \$13,500,000. They are doing all they can for the benefit of their mercantile marine; they are bringing their stuff to Buffalo and our stuff as well, so that we are losing trade. We have spent \$80,000,000 or \$100,000,000 on canals. You can go through the Welland canal, at times, from Port Colborne to Port Dalhousie, without meeting a boat, because we are so handicapped by the extra expense. About tonnage dues:—A man has a boat of 2,000 tons, and has to pay \$160 and the inspection fee besides. On the other side it is all free. There are only four steamers at present building in Canada, two at Collingwood and two in Toronto. The trade in Canada is carried in two ways, by rail and boat. It is unfair to the shipping interests to give their money to kill themselves and aid the railways. He sold out his shipping interests a year ago, after 44 years' experience, because he could invest his money to better advantage, but was ready to re-invest as soon as the Canadian Government dealt with the shipowners in the same way as the U.S. Government treated the ship-owners there.

The resolution passed by the Kingston Board of Trade was to the effect that the tolls on the St. Lawrence canals and the Welland canal be abolished, but the meeting desired to have the tolls on all of the canals abolished, and D. Murphy, M.L.A., moved, "that the resolution be amended so as to cover all Canadian canal tolls." He said the amount collected by way of tolls was not large, about \$236,000, while the expenditure amounted to \$647,000, so that the canals did not pay for their maintenance. The tolls collected on the different canals were: Welland canal, \$95,000; St. Lawrence canals, \$83,000; Chambly, \$23,000; Ottawa canals, including St. Anne's, \$24,000; Rideau canal, \$4,000; St. Peter's, \$3,000; Murray canal, \$1,000, and Trent Valley canal, \$1,000. The tolls could be abolished without any trouble to the Government. The company he represented paid over \$20,000 in tolls, nearly 10% of the whole tolls collected in the Dominion. Capt. Noonan seconded the motion.

De W. Carter, Port Colborne, asked if the abolition of tolls on the canals would include the charges made on the Lachine and Welland canals for vessels wintering there. The wintering of boats in the canals meant revenue to the ports in connection with the repairs, and the spending of money among the people of the neighborhood. He desired to see an amendment so as to include the abolition of charges, as provided by section 32 of the Canals Act.

The proposition to make all the canals free of toll was accepted, and Capt. Carter's suggestion was also adopted as applying to all canals.

Thos. Harling, Montreal, said: This is the first chance I have had of meeting the inland marine men of Canada. My business has been more associated with the ocean end of the business, and I may look at it from a broader standpoint than most men here on account of my business in the shipping trade in England. While Great Britain is more desirous to-day of obtaining her supplies from the colonies than ever before, it is for the colonies, especially for Canada, to endeavor to remove as far as possible any restriction to trade which may exist; so that a large transportation business could be developed to the great extent which we hope it will, and which we expect it to during the next ten years. I have been in Canada eight years and during that time the extent of transportation has increased materially. In the port of Montreal up to 1895 the size of the vessels



FRANCIS KING, M.A.,

Secretary Treasurer Dominion Marine Association.

was diverted to the U.S. canals and railways. As a result of an interview, the Government reduced the toll to 10c. a ton in 1884, and to 2c. a ton in the following year. From 1885 to 1892 the marine men waited on the Government with the result that each year the toll was fixed at 2c. a ton. In 1893 an order-in-council was passed making the toll 10c. a ton, at which rate it had since remained. In 1893 a Hamiltonian was elected President, but he had never called a meeting of the Association, and for this reason there had never been any reduction of the tolls. He had looked into the matter thoroughly, and had ascertained that with all the development that had taken place in the Northwest there was less grain going through Montreal than there was ten years ago. He had received a report from the Port Arthur Board of Trade, showing that in 1902 there were shipped from Fort William and Port Arthur 35,000,000 bush. of grain, of which 12,000,000 bush. went to Buffalo. Mr. Richardson, who was present, could tell them that in 1902 he shipped 800,000 bush. of wheat by Buffalo from Fort William, because it was 1-16 of a cent a bush. cheaper than by the Canadian route. The prosperity of the country depends largely upon its ship-