

BOARDS OF TRADE.

Opening Session of the Maritime Association.

The Address of Mayor Robertson to the Delegates Assembled.

The Work of the Board During the Past Year - The Officers Elected.

The second annual meeting of the board of trade of the maritime provinces opened in the rooms of the St. John board on September 29th. The attendance was large and representative, his worthy mayor, Robertson, the president of the body, was in the chair and the following delegates were present:

Halifax board—James Morrow, C. M. Creed.

Truro board—C. E. Bentley, Hiram Hyde, G. A. Hall, John Standfield, Dr. D. H. Muir.

Charlottetown board—P. Blake, H. Hazard.

Amherst board—J. A. Davis.

St. Martins—M. Kelly, W. H. Moran.

Kentville—M. G. DeWolfe, W. E. Porter.

St. Andrews—M. N. Cockburn, Dr. N. G. D. Parker.

Woodstock—W. P. Jones, Samuel Watts.

St. John board—W. S. Fisher, Robt. Crulshank, T. S. Simms, S. Schofield, W. M. Jarvis, W. F. Hatheway, P. S. MacNutt.

A number of the members of the St. John board were also in attendance including Mr. B. Emerson, H. H. Harvey, T. H. Somerville, E. L. Rising, John Montgomery and F. A. Dykeman.

Wm. Lamont, the president of the Fredericton board of trade, which has not yet affiliated, was present and was welcomed to the meeting.

After roll call and the reading of the minutes the secretary and treasurer, Ira Cornwall, read his report.

President Robertson then addressed the board as follows:

To the Members of the Maritime Board of Trade:

Gentlemen—Before proceeding to the subject of my address please permit me in my official capacity as mayor to welcome you at this, the first annual meeting of the board, to the city of St. John. The late president of the St. John board of trade was largely instrumental in inaugurating the movement towards the foundation of a maritime board. Invitations were sent from the St. John board to the different boards throughout the maritime provinces, and a large and very representative gathering was held in this city under the auspices of the St. John board, at which the formation of a maritime board was decided upon. The organization of the board was completed in August last in the city of Halifax under the auspices of the Halifax board of trade, whose kindness to the delegates there assembled will not soon be forgotten. I had the great honor conferred upon me, being elected the first president of the board, and how leave to express my deep regret that my somewhat arduous duties pertaining to the office of mayor has not permitted me to give that thought and attention and effort to the many important matters relating to the maritime board that their importance demands. I am, however, deeply indebted to the secretary, Ira Cornwall, whose executive ability, great experience in organization and untiring application has resulted in the formation of a board of fourteen boards of trade representative of the different maritime provinces with this board. You will notice in the secretary's report that a large amount of work has been done. An impetus has been given to the formation of boards of trade in the different towns throughout the maritime provinces. At the first meeting the following important subjects were discussed by the board:

1st. Extending boards of trade throughout the maritime provinces and affiliation of associations representing the different industries in the maritime provinces with the board.

2nd. Transportation, cold storage, imports, exports, mail subsidies, freight rates.

3rd. Fast Atlantic service, exportation of the products of Canada through Canadian and not through United States ports.

4th. Telegraphic communication with Prince Edward Island and cable communication with the West Indies.

5th. Tariff question, duty on cornmeal, shall it be reduced?

6th. Modes of assessment and taxation.

7th. Inspection of fish and fish oil, should it be compulsory?

8th. Immigration into the maritime provinces.

9th. Reduction of fire insurance rates.

10th. Maritime agricultural and horticultural college.

All of these subjects were very fully discussed, and the board was requested to memorialize the Dominion government to co-operate with the Imperial government with the object of having the Bermuda cable extended to British Guiana, Jamaica and the other islands of the East Indies. This has been done. The memorial was sent forward by the board. It was also resolved that the board memorialize the Dominion government to endeavor to give an additional subsidy or otherwise to effect an arrangement with the telegraph company which owns the cable between Prince Edward Island and the mainland with its connecting lines on the island and mainland, to grant such rates of messages and such open hours of business as would place the island on equal footing with the rest of Canada. After a very full and most interesting discussion on the fast Atlantic service, and the exportation of the products of Canada through Canadian (and not through United States) ports, it was resolved that the maritime board memorialize the Dominion government urging that in future subsidies be granted to steamers sailing between port or ports in the United

Kingdom and port or ports in Canada only, and also resolved that all affiliated boards of trade be requested to urge upon their representatives at Ottawa that they unite with other maritime provinces members in seeking to secure such subsidies as will result in the through passenger, mail and freight business being done through Canadian ports. The memorial was forwarded to the Dominion government, and I am pleased to say was acted upon by an order-in-council complying with the resolution of the maritime board.

The foregoing is a brief report of the work done at the first meeting. Permit me to take a brief survey of the development of the material resources of the maritime provinces during the board's closing year. Giving the first position to agriculture, Providence has blessed not only the maritime provinces but the whole Dominion with bountiful harvests. The fruit crop of Nova Scotia especially is an unprecedentedly large one, and must add greatly to the income of the fruit growers in that province this year. I may specially mention the rapid development that is taking place in the dairying interests. The production of cheese has passed the consumptive demands of our home market, and has already begun to figure in our exports, and doubtless in a very few years will become a most important source of revenue to the maritime provinces. Our other great resources—the fisheries, lumber, mines and minerals—have also shown a fair degree of prosperity, and from the best information that I can obtain the manufacturing industries are making steady if not rapid progress. This brings us to the consideration of an industry that at one time surpassed all others in importance in the maritime provinces, namely, shipping and shipbuilding. There was a time when every seaport and indeed river leading to the sea in the maritime provinces was a seat of shipbuilding industries. At one time in the early history of the industry we built vessels largely for sale in the English markets, but subsequently as our people increased in wealth we became the owners of our own built ships, and were the founders of the carrying trade in all parts of the world. Those were the palmy days in the history of our maritime provinces. The industry gave home markets to the farmers, profitable employment to large numbers of our people, and kept the young men in our own country, and our seamen and captains were not exiled in the marts of any country, but the introduction of iron and steam has given well nigh a death blow to the wooden shipping of the maritime provinces. We cannot by any possibility hope for its resuscitation. While it is true that manufacturing and other industries have to a considerable extent taken the place of shipbuilding, yet we cannot overlook the fact, and it seems to me it is the duty of this board, to take into consideration whether anything can be done to check the exodus that has continued for a number of years past from the maritime provinces. The last census returns show that the increase of population in the maritime provinces between 1881 and 1891 was very little over 1 per cent. Making due allowance for the different basis of enumeration, there is still not the increase of population that there ought to be.

I notice that one of the subjects sent in by the St. John board of trade for discussion at this board is immigration into the maritime provinces. While I would not for a moment underrate the importance of encouraging a desirable class of immigrants into the maritime provinces, I must admit that it is much more important for us to retain if possible our own sons and daughters to help build up and develop the land of their birth, as bright and fair a land, as capable of giving health, prosperity and happiness to its people as any land on earth. It seems to me the time is ripe for this board to take up the question of iron shipbuilding. The maritime provinces possess such large deposits of iron, coal, gas, and ship harbors that capital and skill should find a splendid opening for successful enterprise. The industry is in the line of our whole past history, and in the line of the general development of our maritime people. We have only to look at what has been accomplished in Great Britain and Ireland, and see that it is quite possible for us to succeed. Take for instance the city of Belfast, one of the greatest iron and shipbuilding ports in the world, importing as they do coal and iron, they are yet successfully competing with the other great shipbuilding ports in Great Britain, and we have the products of their yards exported to the greatest ports between Great Britain and Canada. I repeat we have the iron and the coal and flux at our doors, and a superabundance of capital lying comparatively idle in our banks ready for investment. It only wants a beginning. We need not at first expect to build magnificent ocean grey hounds, but could commence with moderate size freight boats, and I venture to predict that before many years the maritime provinces would become as noted for their iron shipbuilding as they had been for their wooden shipbuilding in the past. It would give employment to vast numbers of our young men who are leaving our country, and would create a large field for the employment of a higher order of skilled mechanics than we have at present. I would here briefly refer to the educational system in the public schools of the maritime provinces. Without wishing to detract one iota from the excellent record of those schools and the good work being done, it is yet a question to my mind as to whether they are turning out young men fully equipped to take part in what may be called the scientific and mechanical development of the present day. We note that the foremost nations on the continent and our own mother country are giving greater attention to technical education, feeling it to be a necessity to enable them to hold their own in the manufacturing struggle that has taken place all over the world. The United States have already made great strides in the same direction, and I am pleased to note

that in the great city of Montreal, an institution of that class, thoroughly equipped, has been founded, and it is, I am sure, but soon make its mark in the manufacturing, mechanical and economic industries of the metropolis of the Dominion, and I would suggest that the time had also arrived for the provincial government to take this question up in earnest and make technical education a part of the public school system, for I do not fear if our young men receive the same facilities that they will fall to hold their own against the mechanics and artisans of any other country.

Another question of importance that I may mention briefly is the conservation of the timber lands of the maritime provinces. This has already received the consideration of the provincial governments, but I would suggest that further steps might be taken in that direction. The enormous export of unmanufactured lumber year after year from these provinces must eventually lessen the supply, and every encouragement should be given and effort made towards manufacturing lumber into a more valuable class of exports than deals and timbers. The production of pulp wood is becoming an important industry, and capable of great development. We should be able to easily compete with the world in this industry. The present position of the British lumber markets is a good one, and the results are already felt throughout the Dominion.

Time will not permit me to dwell on the many possibilities for further development along the lines of all our natural resources. It requires but faith in our own country, and our own people, application and untiring energy to bring out good results. I would urge the broad field of Dominion commerce, we are brought face to face with the relation that we bear to our internal trade, and also with respect to the export and import trade of Canada through out maritime ports. This question has been a burning one for our boards of trade since Confederation, and even at this late date it is perhaps the most important one that we shall have to deal with at this meeting of the board from the broad standpoint of the interests of the Dominion of Canada. I shall not venture an opinion at this stage, as I note some bodies of the board for discussion.

Before closing my address, I would briefly refer to the importance of the maritime board extending an invitation to the boards of trade in other parts of the Dominion to take up the question of the desirability of forming a Dominion Board of Commerce, a central commercial parliament, so to speak, for the whole Dominion. While boards of trade have no legislative powers, they can yet greatly assist in helping to form a sound public opinion on the commercial matters, but can materially assist in framing legislation in the interests of the whole country. I regret that our board was unable to send a delegate to take part in the great Congress of Chambers of Commerce held in London in June last. One of the great questions discussed at that congress was preferential trade relations between Great Britain and her colonies.

After a lengthy discussion as to the order in which the various subjects submitted for discussion should be taken up, a committee consisting of Messrs. Morrow of Halifax; Jarvis of St. John; Hazard of Charlottetown; Bentley of Truro, and Cockburn of St. Andrews was appointed to determine upon the order of business.

The committee retired and after an absence of a few moments returned with a report, which was adopted, fixing the order for the discussion of the subjects as follows:

1—Cold storage.

2—Immigration into the maritime provinces.

3—Excessive freight rates charged by the exaction of three short haul railway and steamer rates, one by P. E. Island railway, one by St. John Navigation Co., and one by Intercolonial railway from all points on P. E. Island railway to all points on the Intercolonial railway excepting two.

4—The question of I. C. R. coal and wood freight charges.

5—Reduction of present tariff rate on bar iron, etc.

6—Export and import trade via the ports of Halifax and St. John and the relative position of said ports to war and each other.

7—Fast Atlantic service, exportation of the products of Canada through Canadian and not through United States ports.

8—Telegraphic communication between P. E. Island and the mainland.

9—The formation of a Dominion board of trade.

10—The tariff question; the duty on cornmeal. Shall it be reduced?

11—Capt. Eastaway's proposal for communication with ships at sea during hours of darkness.

12—Resolutions from Winnipeg board of trade relative to government appointing agents in countries of Northern Europe for the purpose of encouraging immigration to Canada and for advertising the resources of the Dominion.

13—Resolution from same board relative to reduction of postage to two cents on letters mailed in Canada for Canada, United States and Newfoundland.

Letters were read from George E. Boak and J. A. Chipman of Halifax regretting their inability to attend the meeting of the board.

The first question, that of cold storage, was then taken up. President Morrow of the Halifax board making a few remarks in connection with it.

Mayor Robertson spoke next, referring to the grant given by the local governments of Nova Scotia and New Brunswick to assist in the provision of cold storage warehouses. In St. John two or three companies had been formed to go into the business. The intention of our government was, he understood, to establish a chain of cold storage stations. The Dominion government, too, were evidently favorable to the idea. In order to prepare a reply to it.

This question was seconded by C. E. Bentley of Truro and passed. The following committee was named: W. S. Fisher of this city, P. Blake of Charlottetown, and G. A. Hall of Truro.

The following telegram was read

from W. Purvis, the president of the North Sydney, C. B. board: "Cape Breton board of trade sends greetings, and regrets being deprived of the pleasure of participating in your deliberations. Please accept as a sentiment from us: 'Our maritime ports for Canadian trade, rapid transit between London and Vancouver for Canada and the empire; North Sydney the front door of North America with its storehouse of coal for stimulating commerce.'"

The North Sydney board invited the maritime board to meet there next year.

The act of incorporation and by-laws prepared by a committee, were discussed for a time and referred back. W. M. Jarvis and M. N. Cockburn being added to the committee.

The election of officers was then referred to, Mr. Robertson stating that he would be unable to take the position again.

Geo. J. Troop of Halifax was nominated for the office of president by W. S. Fisher, who said Mr. Troop was highly esteemed by all who knew him. No other nomination having been made, Mr. Troop was declared duly elected to the position. He will be here today.

M. N. Cockburn nominated Wm. M. Jarvis for vice-president for New Brunswick, and he was elected without opposition.

James Morrow of Halifax nominated P. Blake of Charlottetown, for vice-president for P. E. Island, and he was elected without opposition.

C. E. Bentley of Truro nominated C. M. Creed of Halifax for the office of secretary-treasurer, and he was chosen to fill the office.

A vote of thanks was moved by G. A. Hall of Truro to Mr. Cornwall, the retiring secretary-treasurer.

Several members suggested something more substantial. The motion passed.

The president tendered the thanks of the board to Mr. Cornwall.

S. Watts of Woodstock moved that the matter of the practical recognition of the services rendered by Mr. Cornwall be referred to the following committee: Mayor Robertson, W. M. Jarvis and Dr. Muir—Carried.

Mr. Creed thanked the board for the honor done him. He had been secretary of the Halifax chamber of commerce and board of trade for 36 years.

After some routine business had been done the board adjourned till 10.30 this morning.

The second session of the board of trade of the maritime provinces opened in the St. John board's rooms at 10.30 on September 30th. Mayor Robertson took the chair. There were a number of gentlemen present in addition to those who attended the opening session, among them: A. I. Reed, Mayor P. M. Murchie and E. P. Vroom of the St. Stephen board; Geo. S. Campbell, J. E. DeWolfe, P. F. Edgar and W. A. Black, M. P. P. of Halifax; Jas. Rourke of St. Martins.

W. M. Jarvis said the committee appointed to look into the by-laws had decided to do nothing until the newly elected president, Mr. Troop of Halifax, arrived.

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pany who were talking of building a warehouse here, but he was not in a position to make any extended remarks on the question.

John Sealy said all felt that it would be advantageous to have cold storage accommodation, but most people were in the dark regarding the matter.

W. A. Black, M. P. P. of Halifax, said the late federal government favored the establishment of the warehouses, as did their successors now. Cold storage must be provided on the land before the steamers would adopt it. But when it was provided the question would be how much would it be used. It would add considerably to the cost of transportation. Could enough produce be secured to fill the storage space? It was claimed that cold storage was necessary for the transportation of apples, cheese, butter and dead meat. While dead meat went from the United States to Great Britain in large quantities very little went from Canada. No cheese or apples had been sent from Canada in cold storage. It would be a difficult matter to say how great the demand would be for the space. With cold storage Canada butter would go to England and complete with continental butter. He could not see the need of cold storage for apples as they could be kept in the orchards till the first frost. After that of course the cellars were the place for them. If his advice were asked he would say go slow in this direction. There was a better opening for cold storage in the West India trade, as the produce there went from a cold to a warm climate. More difficulty was of course experienced under these conditions. Still the steamers trading between New York and the West Indies did not have cold storage accommodation. Butter went from Denmark to the West Indies in tins. There were some ice houses in the West Indies.

S. Schofield inquired if there was any one present who could name the products of the maritime provinces for which cold storage was required. If there were products which required the system the steamships would adopt it as soon as it was provided on land. It would be an expensive thing and the producers must consider whether they could afford to pay the additional cost of transportation which would follow its provision. As for apples they were now shipped in the fall and winter and cold storage was not needed. But apple growers said that if they had cold storage stations they could hold their apples over the winter and ship them the next spring or summer and get better prices for them.

M. F. Edgar of St. John said the beauty of cold storage was that an even temperature could be maintained. The expense should not be so very great. Its provision ought to be a great boon to the raisers of all perishable products. Once the plan was in the cost of operation should not be large. Mr. Edgar mentioned several sources of revenue from cold storage. The people of the cities could store their furs, blankets, etc., in the warehouses during the summer