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British Columbia Trade and Eastern Manufacturer

Denial of Bonding Privilege at New York Prevents British Columbia from Using Eastern Canadian Manufactures In Competition With United States Articles.

The masterly and comprehensive statement of Mr. C. P. W. Schwengers, a member of the Victoria Board of Trade, presented to Sir George E. Foster, Minister of Trade and Commerce, on the occasion of his recent visit to that city, on the subject of establishing a Customs officer at

New York, deserves the heartiest commendation of the business interests of British Columbia. It is difficult to see how the Dominion Government can long withhold this privilege and right from the people of British Columbia and the Eastern Canadian manufacturer. The statement follows:—

It is now some three years since the agitation was commenced for the establishment of a Canadian customs officer at the port of New York for the purpose of giving Canadian manufacturers the privilege of shipping their goods to the sea coast of British Columbia by the cheapest available water route, which had then been opened up. The present occasion, however, is the first opportunity that this Board of Trade has had of discussing with a member of the Dominion Cabinet the details in connection with this matter. We feel it to be a special privilege to have our Minister of Trade and Commerce with us to talk the subject over. The sincerest interest which we all know you take in anything pertaining to the commercial welfare of Canada is to us a guarantee that if we can convince you of the justice of our contentions, as we are sure we can, we shall receive a speedy affirmative answer for which we

have been waiting so long. In introducing this matter for discussion we propose to deal with the practical side only, because it is this phase with which we have come more in contact and the one that will probably appeal more strongly to you. We believe that our Vancouver friends, who have given deep study to this matter, will probably touch on the theoretical view of water vs. railway competition when they address you on this subject in a few days. We would like to point out, however, that it has become an established fact the world over that where a new water route enters into competition with rail haulage between two given points or two separate communities, that in so far from this water competition decreasing the railway traffic, it actually develops it by building up a greater commercial community

in each case, and thereby develops a vastly increased local freight and passenger traffic on the railways serving these points. At all the points affected the railways always benefit thereby almost immediately.

This proved to be the case in the earlier days of San Francisco when water traffic was established between the Atlantic seaboard and that point. Later on, when water commerce was opened between New York and Seattle, the commercial prosperity of Seattle vastly increased, to the

benefit of the Eastern shipping ports and to the actual benefit of the continental railways running into Seattle. We have a case in point on our own Island, where the Esquimalt & Nanaimo Railway runs from Victoria to Comox, a distance of some 140 miles, traversing the water's edge along the greater portion of the distance. There has always been water competition between the chief points touched by this line, but nevertheless the rail earnings have increased with the development of the tributary country. The traffic on this railway showed rapid increase during many years to a far greater extent than did the competitive steamship service. We feel sure that this same result will ensue concerning our own transcontinental railways, and that the benefit that would be derived immediately therefrom would favorably affect not only this Province, but the Eastern manufacturers and railways as well.

We propose, however, as stated, to deal only in detail with the actual results which have taken place in connection with this water transportation. In doing this, it will probably be better to give you a short resume of the developments from the first and

then deal further with the different points which require to be dwelt upon at greater length.

In the first place the jobbers have considered, and rightly so, that one of their most important functions was the distribution of goods made by the manufacturers of this Dominion in particular. Entirely apart from the sense of loyalty which has always actuated us, we have been governed by the principal of expediency, believing that what was of commercial benefit to the East would also reflect favorably on the West, and we would like to submit also that what is of advantage to the West, should prove to an even greater extent beneficial to our Eastern friends. In considering our request, we would like you to bear particularly in mind, that if this concession asked for will be of any

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