

President J. B. Thomson's Review of the Trip

Note: In preparing Mr. Thomson's address for publication we are responsible for sub-headings inserted.—Ed. B.C.M.

Vancouver Board of Trade entertained the returned delegation to dinner in the Hotel Vancouver, under the chairmanship of Vice-President McRae, who briefly but fittingly welcomed back the members.

After acknowledging the welcome, President J. B. Thomson thanked the Vice-President and Past President Houlgate for the able manner in which they had kept up the current work of the Board during the absence of the President and Secretary. He then paid compliments to the members who took part in the delegation, especially the ladies. Notwithstanding the strain which was placed upon the whole delegation with the little time that was left for rest, there was no discontent, and everyone worked earnestly in unity to further the mission which they had undertaken. A great deal of credit was due to the ladies, because while the trip had been of the most enjoyable character and the hospitality extended to the delegation was such that no one could imagine anything of a more warm nature, yet the big number of meetings often involving late hours was unavoidably trying and tiring.

President Thomson also thought it right to record that the members of the board were deeply indebted to Mr. F. C. Wade, the Agent General for British Columbia in London, and to the Chamber of Commerce of London, of which Sir. Geo. McL. Brown is president, and to the latter's secretary, Mr. Ward, for their untiring efforts in preparing an itinerary such as they were able to enjoy. Copies of that itinerary were available and he thought they would appreciate what it meant if they scanned a copy. In every public function in which the delegation appeared, a copy of this itinerary was left with the guests.

MR. F. C. WADE'S VALUABLE WORK.

Mr. Wade, in Mr. Thomson's opinion, occupies one of the most important offices in the interests of British Columbia

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that it is possible to fill, and he believed his co-delegates would agree with him, that they knew of no one better qualified to fit into that particular and responsible niche. President Thomson considered that the importance of that office to the Province of British Columbia was not fully appreciated, even by the Government, and he did not think that sufficient co-operation was shown with the industrial and agricultural life of the Province to take full advantage of the office which Mr. Wade fills.

Perhaps a few remarks were timely with reference to what other Overseas Dominions are doing. They would find that South Africa House, Australia House, New Zealand and other overseas dominions have very large and capable staffs to take care of what is required of them in the financial centre of the British Empire. There was no information which they have not got at hand, and their expert staffs were thoroughly familiar with local conditions.

WHAT ABOUT "SAMPLES"?—"TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN"

British Columbia on the other hand, was handicapped in this way in our High Commissioner's office. They had not the same exhibits as the other overseas dominions had, and had not the opportunity of putting before the British public, or other visitors to London, the opportunities which exist or the resources of our Country. South Africa House, Australia and New Zealand House had wonderful exhibits of their fruit and other products in their windows. That fruit was supplied to them regularly, direct (he understood) by the Government, and was kept in wonderfully fresh and appetizing conditions. Mr. Wade's office as far as he could see, was the only one which had space at present to exhibit anything of that character and was the only one that made any attempt to show fruit. Their location was admirable—No. 1 Regent Street—and they had show windows, but what kind of co-operation or assistance did they give Mr. Wade in getting exhibits? Amongst his other duties, Mr. Wade had to go out and chase through the markets from time to time to see if he could personally purchase some British Columbia fruit to put in the windows!

Then he had asked Mr. Wade why he did not exhibit timber products such as railroad ties, etc., and he showed him why. The only things he had were ties which were so badly split that they were not a credit for any country to show. Now, surely our manufacturers and agriculturalists could get behind Mr. Wade and see that he is assisted by having a constant supply of our resources put "on tap" to keep his windows dressed in keeping with those of competitors from other overseas Dominions.

WHOSE FAULT?—GOVERNMENT OR INDIVIDUALS?

They might ask the question, What success are those other overseas Dominions making of their exhibits? It would be hard for them to trace anything beyond what they gained from personal observation and what they read from the press. No doubt they would hear further from one of the delegates about the docking and storage warehouses they visited on the trip. When they saw warehouse after warehouse with the products of New Zealand in fruits, meats, etc., going out for consumption to the British public, and found practically nothing from their own Province, they could see there was something lacking, whether it was the fault of our Government service or of individual inactivity.

Here it was pertinent to point out that at every location visited the Delegation found that the desire of the members of the various Chambers of Commerce was to further the purchase of goods from British Columbia if they entered their markets, and to show a preference—at least from kinsmanship, if they could not from that of Customs tariffs; but he