

CANADA'S PLACE IN IMPERIAL AFFAIRS

Canadian Pacific Railway and Settlers—Ocean Traffic and St. Lawrence Route—Manufacturers on Transportation, Paper Industry, Etc.

At the Montreal sittings of the Dominions Royal Commission, Mr. J. S. Dennis, assistant to the president of the Canadian Pacific Railway, and head of that railway's department of natural resources, stated that the flow of United States settlers into western Canadian points since the beginning of the war has been constant and is increasing.

Commissioner R. Sinclair, of New Zealand, enquired if the United States settlers in western Canada became Canadian citizens in the technical sense of the term, and Mr. Dennis replied that a large number of them became citizens of Canada to this extent, that they became naturalized Canadians and took an interest in provincial and municipal politics, but they were not concerned as other Canadians were in the great struggle the empire was making to-day.

Mr. Dennis said the total land grants to the company were 27,787,921 acres, all situated in Manitoba, Saskatchewan and British Columbia. There has been sold to date 21,276,527 acres, leaving a balance available for sale of 6,511,394 acres. The sale of the 21,000,000 acres approximately realized \$100,396,817. Some of the land sold had come back to the company through the failure of the purchasers to pay their instalments, about 7,000,000 acres.

Campaigns in Europe and United States.

Mr. Bosworth, vice-president of the Canadian Pacific Railway, gave an outline of what his company had done to encourage immigration to the Canadian north-west, referring particularly to its advertising campaigns in Europe and the United States, and explained the company's system of promoting trade.

Mr. Dennis said the Canadian Pacific Railway was anxious to obtain as large a number of colonists as possible from Great Britain, and established an organization in Great Britain covering 150 agencies in an endeavor to induce people to come to western Canada. It prepared 100 "ready-made farms" to start with. They comprised an area of 160 acres each, and were restricted entirely to British colonization. The company secured 100 families from Great Britain to take up these farms, but it did not have very much success, because it was unfortunate in its selection.

Via St. Lawrence Route.

Messrs. W. H. Harling, of Messrs. Thos. Harling and Son, steamship agents, and R. J. Dale, president of R. J. Dale Company, Limited, marine insurance agents, gave evidence relating to ocean traffic.

On being questioned by Sir Alfred Bateman and the other members of the commission, Mr. Harling said that the most serious handicaps suffered by the grain trade on the St. Lawrence route at the present time in the matter of ocean insurance are:—

1.—The exaction by the underwriters of an additional premium of one guinea per cent. or more, according to the season of the year, over and above the annual premium on hulls of tramp steamers for one or more voyages to the St. Lawrence, and

2.—The yearly date at which the advance in the rate takes place—viz., 1st October.

As the regular line vessels have not sufficient tonnage to handle all the grain offering from the port of Montreal, shippers are compelled to charter tramp steamers for a considerable portion of the grain freight offering, and, while the difference between the insurance rates on cargoes in tramp vessels from Montreal as compared with the United States Atlantic ports is comparatively immaterial, amounting to from decimal 15 (3-20 of 1 cent) to decimal 20 cents (1-5 of 1 cent) per bushel, the extra insurance on the hulls of such vessels constitutes a very serious handicap.

For instance, assuming that the average value of a tramp vessel is \$200,000, the additional insurance charged for one or more voyages would amount to \$2,000 up to October 1st, or equal to about $\frac{1}{4}$ cent per bushel.

Explaining the above, Mr. Harling said that a difference of a fraction of a cent in freight charges or otherwise was sufficient to divert some of the trade to the United States, more particularly the port of Buffalo. He was of opinion that if the government would undertake to pay the extra premium demanded after October 1st, the extra business obtain-

ed would surely compensate the extra expenditure. He was also under the impression that an international commission, similar in its purpose to the railway commission, would be a good thing, although, as Mr. Sinclair, one of the commissioners, interposed, the ocean route being the property of the whole world, presented many difficulties in the accomplishment of the idea.

Mr. R. J. Dale, speaking as a marine insurer, said that the insurance companies have to charge an extra premium after October 1st, for shipments by way of the St. Lawrence. He believed that if the government would take upon its own shoulder the extra premium charged the shippers, the insurance companies would not object to the change, but as he was sceptical as to the willingness of the federal authorities to entertain such a proposal.

Removal of Handicaps.

Speaking in the name of the Corn Exchange Association, of which he was a delegate, Mr. Harling offered the following suggestions as to the removal of the above-mentioned handicaps: That the underwriters be requested to remove the clause in their marine insurance policies on the hulls and machinery of steamers, known as the B.N.A. clause under which steamers (not regular liners) are debarred from trading to Canada during the open season of navigation unless at an additional premium—and to resume the original form of policy in existence prior to 1900—limiting the period under which additional premiums be charged.

Secondly, that no extra insurance should be charged either on steamers or cargoes to or from Canadian ports except later than October 15th in the St. Lawrence—and that maritime province rates be reduced to the basis of United States ports.

Some Manufacturers' Ideas.

Mr. G. A. Murray, secretary of the Canadian Manufacturers' Association, was questioned on a paper of ideas which he had formulated and filed with the commission.

The question of a uniform empire system of weights and measures and form of currency was first taken up by the commission. Mr. Murray declared that while he did not wish it to be understood that he advocated anything, he expressed himself in favor of the decimal system in currency. He stated that the United Kingdom and the United States by adhering to the present system and methods in business matters were gradually getting into isolation with the rest of the world. France, Belgium, Serbia, Rumania, Russia—all the allies—employed the metric system, and if the English were to compete with foreign countries, and especially Germany after the war, who used the metric system also, England would be at a disadvantage.

It was pointed out that there would be great opposition in England to a change. Mr. Murray then stated that if it was decided to change and to make this system compulsory, a period of not less than five years should be allowed in which to give business men time to change their systems.

The question of a uniform statistical year within the empire was another subject discussed. It was pointed out that great advantages would result if upon government reports an extra column was provided for the calendar year in addition to the individual fiscal year and would do away with all objections to difference. The uniform classification of exports and imports was also dealt with.

Mr. J. E. Walsh, manager of the transportation department of the Canadian Manufacturers' Association, declared that under normal conditions the freight rates eastbound were favorable to the importer, while westbound they were against him.

He advocated an international commission to take up the questions of uniform freight rates. He stated that the idea of his association was to supervise conditions, regulate service and get a continuity of rates.

Sir Alfred Bateman asked him if he realized the enormous difficulties there would be in the way of getting all marine nations together for a conference on freight rates, and also asked if he did not intend an inter-imperial conference.

In the matter of a service via the Panama Canal, Mr. Walsh stated that in his personal view, there should be some sort of triangular service established between Great Britain and the Pacific coast, via the Panama Canal, touching the West Indies and the Atlantic.

The question of the establishment of a Canadian mercantile marine was also mentioned by Mr. Walsh, but no discussion ensued as he declared it was more of a domestic problem, and he thought the time had come when Canada