

invite the traffic managers of the Grand Trunk and Canadian Pacific Railways, also the local freight agents of these roads to a conference, which was held in this building on March 15th. At this conference, the various questions raised in the previous report of the Railway and Transportation Committee were discussed.

Since the conference was held, the Canadian Pacific Railway have re-adjusted on a more favorable basis to this city the rates to points on the Transcontinental line in New Ontario, including points west of North Bay. The committee feel that mileage considered, Toronto is still on an unfavorable basis as compared with Montreal. The tariffs also were put on a more favorable basis for the territory, the trade of which is naturally tributary to this city, north-east of Toronto and throughout the Midland district, and in the commodity tariffs, the rates between Toronto and Montreal were equalized, or in other words, the rates in both directions were the same; previously they had been more favorable to Montreal.

In the radical readjustment of freight tariffs which has come about recently, a discrimination is again in effect against this city. The first class rate of freight from Montreal to Toronto is 44c., while from Toronto to Montreal it is 50c. per hundred pounds. This kind of discrimination is most unjustifiable, and is absolutely incapable of any reasonable defence. The fact of its existence, as set forth in the Official Published Tariffs of the railways, was an argument used with almost serious results, against this city as a favorable distributing centre, while negotiations were progressing for the location here of one of the most important industries which have been secured during the past year. It was necessary to make assurances that the rates from Toronto to Montreal on the products of this industry, would be the same as if they were located in Montreal and desired to ship to Toronto.

Class rates are the highest grade of rates used for local shipments out of this city; they have always been comparatively on a high basis, and a very considerable volume of staple merchandise for some years past has not come under these class rates, but in order to relieve the situation, there has been in effect commodity rates considerably lower; they have been re-arranged from time to time, as representation has been made to the railways of the necessity of making concessions. Recently and without notice these commodity tariffs have been cancelled and the class rates put into effect.

Without dwelling at any particular length with regard to the hardship to shippers of this hasty change, perhaps the best way to illustrate the situation is by making a few comparisons:—

On certain iron products, the commodity rate from Toronto to Lucan, Ont., a distance of 114 miles, was 16c. per hundred pounds, and on other commodities 20c. per hundred pounds. The rate on the same classes of merchandise, under the only tariff now existing, mostly take a rate of 26c. per hundred pounds.

There are certain points in the United States which are competing, especially in Western Ontario, for business on the same class of commodities; Pittsburgh, Pa., for instance, is 460 miles from Lucan, Ont.; the present rate of freight on certain classes of competitive merchandise would be 21c. per hundred pounds, or 5c. per hundred pounds less than from Toronto. Unfavorable comparisons exist to other parts as well.

Turning to the comparison of local rates of freight out of Toronto, as compared with cities in the United States similarly situated, the following will suffice:—From Toronto to Paris the distance is 67 miles; on certain iron products, the commodity rate was 13c. per hundred lbs.; it is now advanced to 20c. under the class rate. On the same products, and for the same distance out of Buffalo, Detroit or Cleveland, the rate would be 10c. per hundred lbs. The distance from Toronto to Guelph is 48 miles;