

companies, who have a great deal of capital invested in fishing plant, naturally resent any restrictions which would seriously interfere with their industry. They would of course prefer that any restrictions upon fishing in the lake should be made to apply so as not to interfere with their fishing season. Some have even advocated the prohibition of winter fishing entirely, rather than restrict summer fishing.

The small local fishermen and settlers of course take quite the opposite view of the matter. Any restrictions upon fishing, they contend, should be in the direction of curtailing the operations of the large companies. They claim, that as settlers of the lake region, they should receive the most favorable treatment in every respect. Some of the latter claim that the lake will not stand fishing on as large a scale as has been carried on of late, and they demand that the summer fishing operations of the large companies should be greatly curtailed.

Thus the question is viewed from the various standpoints, according to the desires of the conflicting interests. There is one point, however, upon which all agree, namely: in condemning the report of Samuel Wilmot upon the Manitoba fisheries. This celebrated report is characterized by large and small, and winter and summer fishermen, as false and misleading in almost every particular. Mr. Wilmot made an exceedingly superficial investigation of the Manitoba fisheries. In fact he made no investigation at all, but simply reported what were his own opinions, or the opinions of some person or persons whom he accepted as his advisors, without taking the pains to make anything approaching an investigation into the actual facts of the case. This seems to be the style of the man. He did the same thing in British Columbia, and now that the government has been forced by the popular demand, to make a further investigation into the condition of the fisheries in British Columbia, Mr. Wilmot has been acting the part of an obstructionist in refusing to take evidence not favorable to his views. Advices from British Columbia show that some exciting times have been experienced in connection with the sittings of the fishery commission there, and Wilmot has been severely roasted for his endeavors to obstruct the investigation and twist the evidence to suit himself, in order to bear out his former hap-hazard report upon the fisheries of the province.

### THE LONDON CONGRESS.

Elsewhere in this number of THE COMMERCIAL, under the heading of the "Winnipeg Board of Trade," will be found some reading matter of more than usual interest. This is the report of the committee appointed to draft instructions for the guidance of the delegates who will represent the Winnipeg board at the coming meeting in London, England, of the congress of boards of trade and chambers of commerce of the British Empire. It is hardly necessary to add anything to point out the importance of this congress. All the great centres of commerce, through their boards of trade or other commercial bodies, will be represented.

Winnipeg will be represented by two important organizations, namely; the board of trade and the grain and produce exchange. In these days, when the question of the future relationship of the different members of the empire is a matter of such frequent discussion, the holding of a great congress of this nature is of double importance. Statesmen may plan as they will to shape the future of the empire, and politicians and theorists may produce ever so many schemes to the same end, but unless the business men are with it, little will be accomplished. A solid commercial basis is the only sure foundation upon which a united empire can be built up. If the different members of the empire are to be drawn more closely together, with the hope of ultimately forming a compact state, the foundation must be laid on sound commercial principles, and the superstructure must be built up to the mutual advantage of all, from the trade point of view. The coming congress at London is therefore of vast importance, because it will be a gathering together of the commercial interests of the empire.

The matters to be discussed will be such as affect the trade interests of portions of, or the empire as a whole. The questions to come up are many and important in their nature. The preliminary programme which has been distributed comprises eleven subjects. The first on the list will be considered the most important—namely, "Commercial relations of the mother country with her colonies and possessions, with special regard to the renewal of European treaties and recent commercial legislation in the United States." The other subjects are:—"Boards of conciliation for labor disputes," "The codification of the commercial law of the empire," "Imperial registration of trade marks, and the adoption throughout the empire of the Merchandise Marks Act," "Bills of lading reform," "Factory legislation throughout the empire," "Commercial education, including the scheme initiated by the London Chamber of Commerce," "Emigration and colonization," "The necessity of an imperial system of decimal currency, weights and measures," "A system of imperial penny postage," and "Direct telegraphic communication throughout the empire." This is the programme of questions for discussion, as prepared by the London Chamber of Commerce, which body has taken the initiative in calling the congress. Many other questions, however, will undoubtedly be discussed, as all other commercial bodies are at liberty to propose additional subjects to be added to the programme. The Winnipeg board, as will be seen by reference to the report of the meeting of the council held last Monday, proposes to add a very important subject for discussion at the congress.

Much good may be expected to come from the assembling of this congress. There are many commercial questions of interest to the empire at large, upon which united action can be taken to the advantage of all. If commercial custom and procedure could be systematized and made similar throughout the empire, it would tend very greatly to the extension of trade within the empire. First establish an active current of trade within and extending to all parts of the empire, and blend the varying

commercial customs of the empire into one harmonious system, and the closest form of political union would be comparatively easy of accomplishment. Every step in the direction of harmonizing commercial custom, and extending inter British trade, is a step in the direction of the consolidation of the empire, and until these commercial interests can be built up and harmonized, there is little use of wasting time in discussing Imperial Federation for the Empire. If the federation of the empire is ever brought about, it will be in the way we have started. In the meantime, it is sufficient to consider the question from the trade point of view. In the list of subjects given above for discussion at the congress, nearly all are of interest to the empire at large, and action could be taken upon them to the general benefit of the commerce of the empire, leaving entirely out of sight any considerations of closer political relationship. Uniformity throughout the empire in the postal system, in money, weights, measures, trade marks, copyright, commercial law, etc., would be a great incentive to the extension of trade within the empire, and would at the same time tend to improve social and political relationship.

Little need be said as to the position the Winnipeg board of trade has taken in the matter of the London conference. The report regarding the congress, which has been adopted by the council of the local board, speaks for itself, and is worthy of a careful perusal. The Winnipeg board, it will be observed, sympathizes heartily with this effort to further the commercial interests of the empire at large, and the same is true of all other boards of trade, or other commercial bodies of western Canada. The people of the west are particularly interested in the extension of trade with the United Kingdom. We want the aid of British capital and British people to develop our resources, while we must look to the British consumer to take the bulk of our exportable products. Upon the trade question, the report adopted by the council of the Winnipeg board speaks with no uncertain sound.

The question of the bread supply of the United Kingdom, which is brought up in the report adopted by the council of the Winnipeg board of trade, and which has been placed in the form of a resolution for discussion at the London congress, is certainly one of the most important matters which will come before the congress. In presenting this resolution the Winnipeg board has furnished a subject which should lead to one of the most interesting and valuable discussions likely to be engaged in at the congress.

D. Gordon Marshall, solicitor, brother of the customs officer, Rist Portage, Man., and recently of Hamilton, Ont., where he is very well known, has established himself in Vancouver. He is making a specialty of commercial law and collections.

The March number of that elegant publication the *Northwest Magazine*, of St. Paul, Minnesota, is fully up to its usual excellence. Among many other interesting subjects, it has an article on the Kootenay district of British Columbia, with map and other illustrations; also a splendid illustrated article upon farming in the Red river valley. Winnipeg is represented by a view of the Manitoba hotel.