

Winnipeg Board of Trade.

A meeting of the council of the board was held on Monday, March 4th, to consider the report of the committee appointed to draft instructions to delegates who are to represent the board at the congress of the boards of trade and chambers of commerce of the British Empire which is to meet in London, England, on the 29th June next. The report was adopted, with some few amendments as to phraseology, making it read as follows:—

To the Council of the Winnipeg Board of Trade:

GENTLEMEN,—The committee appointed by you to define and express as fully and as clearly as possible the instructions which should guide the actions of your delegates to the Congress of Boards of Trade and Chambers of Commerce of the British Empire, to meet in June next in London, England, here append their report, and in so doing they desire to state, that in their considerations and decisions, they have not for a moment lost sight of the importance and magnitude of the different questions, upon which they are compelled to advance opinions in this report, and that in advancing such opinions, they have as far as possible divested themselves of every prejudice, political and otherwise, and made their principal aim the welfare of the city, province and Dominion of which we are all alike residents, and in which we have all a direct common interest, while at the same time they have endeavored to zealously watch the interests at large of the great empire of which our country forms an important part.

In considering and advising upon the different questions to be laid before the Congress by the London Chamber of Commerce, your committee have decided to withhold any opinions upon subjects numbered in the list respectively 2, 3, 5 and 6 for the following reasons.

Subject No. 2 referring to Boards of Conciliation for labor disputes is one which as yet is of no material interest in our new and only partially organized province, and any opinions advanced would require to be of a prophetic character to suit any disputes which may arise in the future, and the sphere of prophesy your committee have decided not to enter.

Subject No. 3 covering the Codification of the Commercial Law of the Empire, your committee consider should be left for the discussion of representatives of older centres of trade, as it is a matter impossible to see how the carrying out of such a proposal might affect the trade interests of this city and the new country of which it is the commercial centre.

On subject No. 5 your committee refrain in the meantime from expressing an opinion, seeing another committee of our Board is already at work on a question identical in many respects, and the report from that source if adopted by the Board must practically fix the opinions of your delegates, and it certainly should be better calculated to do so than any expression of opinion from this committee which can only handle the subject as one of the items of detail, whereas the other committee will consider it as a subject complete and alone.

Subject No. 6 which refers to Factory Legislation throughout the Empire, like subject No. 2 is one which your committee believe it would be premature for this Board to advance, or rather obtrude opinions upon the Congress,

the question raised being one of our future difficulties, if it ever becomes one at all.

Your committee, however, wish it clearly understood, that while they advise no course of direct aggression or obstruction upon three of the subjects above referred to, they would consider it the duty of our Boards' delegates to carefully watch their discussion, and be ready to oppose any proposed action in the Congress likely to menace Northwestern trade interests, or heartily support any movement likely to further those interests.

TRADE WITHIN THE EMPIRE.

On question No. 1, which refers to the 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, your committee felt they were treading upon delicate ground; but they have without fear grappled with the question, and in so doing they have endeavored to throw aside every prejudice, and although embracing a wide range of political opinions within their number, the decisions they have arrived at and the opinions they now express have been reached in unanimity, and with a view to furthering the best interests of our own country.

Your committee begin the question at the foundation, and assert that no tariff laws, which can be framed and made law in Canada under existing circumstances are likely to confer any substantial or permanent advantage on this new country, while they can scarcely fail to be in many respects a great burden upon our progress and development. To get down to facts upon this point your committee, while admitting that a very small percentage of the force of our present tariff may place temporary advantages within the reach of our people, the great weight of it is unquestionably calculated to benefit the older portions of the Dominion only, while it has in the past placed upon the west an unfair proportion of the Dominion taxation.

Starting from these conclusions as axioms your committee are confidently of opinion, that it would be to the best interests of our Northwestern country, that trade between Great Britain and her colonies should be stimulated and extended and increased greatly, even if it has to be done by a system of tariff discrimination in favor of the colonies by the Mother Country, and a discrimination on the part of the colonies in favor of the Mother Country. This opinion your committee advance, not upon sentimental, but upon self-protective grounds. To secure a tariff on breadstuffs, in Great Britain, which would discriminate against foreign nations and in favor of the colonies would be one of the greatest advantages Manitoba and the Northwest Territories could gain, as to the British Isles we must look as our principal outside market for grain and other food products of our soil for many years to come, and to-day the price of three-fourths of what our agriculturalists produce is ruled here by the quotations of British markets.

Looking at this matter of discrimination from the opposite view point, the advantages to be gained are decidedly in favor of the Northwest. Discrimination in British tariff would naturally bring a *quid pro quo* in Canadian tariff. The direction in which that *quid pro quo* would tend would be unmistakable.

The tariff wall of our Dominion would have to be lowered more or less to the British exporter, if it did maintain its present height to all the rest of the world, and even that would be more or less of an advantage to our pioneer population. Of goods such as are likely to be imported from a country like Great Britain, we in the Northwest are all consumers, and scarcely any of us producers. And it must be remembered that a ten per cent reduction in tariff on British imports, when the profit of middlemen on that is added, means pretty close upon 15 per cent less in the price paid by the consumer.

Your committee therefore see in a system of mutual, favorable discrimination between Great Britain and her colonies decided advantages to the people of the Northwest in connection with both exports and imports. They are guided, as already intimated by purely business considerations in reaching this decision, and when the appeals to national selfishness and cupidity, which have been successfully made to the people of the United States by their legislators during late years, are taken into consideration, Canadians cannot be accused of even a desire for retaliation if they become selfish also.

As to the clause of this subject referring to the renewal of European treaties, your committee cannot see how it is practicable for the British colonies at large to share in every advantage, and shoulder their proportions of the burdens entailed by treaties between the Mother Country and other nations of Europe, and they believe the only true solution of this matter is for each individual colony to have the option of sharing those advantages and burdens or not, as its people may deem best for their interests.

IMPERIAL FEDERATION.

Your committee wish it clearly understood, that while advocating closer and more intimate relations between the Mother Country and her colonies, they are not prepared to advocate or speak with favor or disfavor of any closer political relations between them than now exist, and the scheme of Imperial Federation, as advocated by some politicians and even statesmen, they consider outside of the range of subjects, which should occupy the attention of either your committee or the board at large. That there is a wide field for extending and increasing trade relations between Great Britain and her colonies and dependencies is beyond a shadow of a doubt, when it is taken into consideration, that the trade of the Mother Country with Canada amounts to only 23 per cent of her whole export trade; that of all her Colonies and dependencies to only 23½ per cent of the whole, while 74½ per cent of the whole is with foreign countries. The trade of the Colonies with Great Britain shows totals which are but little better, and certainly do not indicate very cordial trade relations between what are considered members of the same great Imperial family. With all the legislative power and machinery at the disposal of each Government Home and Colonial surely these figures can be materially changed, and at the same time the best interests of all directly concerned advanced and promoted.

TRADE MARKS.

On subject No. 4, which refers to the Imperial Registration of Trade Marks. Your committee, while not prepared without fur-