

MARKED UNION PROGRESS NOTED IN ADDRESS OF PRESIDENT COAKER TO SIXTH ANNUAL CONVENTION OF THE SUPREME COUNCIL OF THE F.P.U.

(Continued from page 2)

Since August 2nd we have had to retire the following notes and also append a memo of how they were settled for:-

Aug. 2	Note Retired	\$1380.30	Aug. 17	Cash	\$1380.30
" 8	" " "	1050.00	Sep. 15	Cheque	1227.00
" 13	" " "	2227.90	(Due) Sep. 16	Note	1000.00
" 23	" " "	1448.75	Sep. 25	Cash	1445.75
Sep. 5	" " "	1150.00	(Due) Oct. 8	Note	1150.00
" 9	" " "	1000.00	(Due) Oct. 12	Note	1000.00
" 16	" " "	1000.00	(Due) Sep. 16	Cheque	500.00
" 17	" " "	1000.00	(Due) Oct. 19	Note	500.00
			Sep. 17	Cheque	500.00
			(Due) Oct. 20	Note	500.00

As four of the notes coming due in October are renewals and the account is as large as we care to have it at present we told Mr. Thistle that we would be unable to renew any notes.

We think we can hardly be accused of embarrassing the Company under the circumstances.

Yours truly,
HARVEY & CO. LTD.
W. G. Gosling, Director.

Letter to Messrs. Harvey & Co. From Trading Co.
September 28th, 1914.

Messrs. Harvey & Co.
City.

Gentlemen.—In reply to yours of today we have to state that in our opinion your action was intended solely to embarrass the Company, as, had we not been in a position to pay the amount, you would have issued a writ of attachment against the Company. This opinion is strengthened by the action of your book-keeper in calling up our accountant immediately after dinner on Saturday, demanding payment.

We have no knowledge of your employees ever having used the phone to call us up re a demand for payment. Your own statements show that you had given us delivery notes on the 19th for 500 barrels. That for Westville was not really due until delivered at Westville as you take all risk, and the flour was not ours until delivered at destination, which as far as our knowledge goes, was on Sept. 26th. The car load of Neptune was not in our possession when you called on us for payment. It was carted from the station on the 26th. The car load of 250 barrels of Pillsbury's was carted to our store on the 24th and 25th. Therefore, in view of our having taken over four thousand barrels of flour during the last three weeks, and having paid cash for it, you were not justified in making such an impertinent demand on the 26th.

You apparently forgot that we paid you the sum of \$13,985.25 on the 18th and \$4861.25 on the 19th for flour alone. What other firm in town doing business with you could have done likewise? What firm on Water Street could have given you a cheque for \$5835.00 on demand, as we did on Saturday?

Your reference to notes falling due since Aug. 2nd is but another proof of how squarely we have met our obligations, for few firms on Water Street or in the country have such a record to their credit. All business men know that the hardest time in the year to meet obligations, under ordinary circumstances, is in July and August. How many firms in the trade have been able to pay off in August or September past 30 days' notes for Spring supplies, as we have done?

Your statements show that from Aug. 2nd to Sept. 12th 30 days' notes, amounting to \$10,000 fell due, and, according to your own statement, this Company took up nearly 60 per cent. of them.

How many other firms in the country can produce such a favorable record? The facts lead me to believe that you thought you had us in a hole and you were amazed when you discovered we were able to meet every cent due you, although our account this year to date is as large as for the whole of last year, which was \$75,000, the account for 1912 having been \$50,000.

Another fact which you should have remembered is, that in all our dealings with you we did not have to renew one note until the war situation brought trade to a standstill. As for your not feeling safe in having an account of Five or Six Thousand Dollars running with a Company with capital, reserve, and other funds amounting to \$150,000, and a cash business at that, is to us but a reflection upon your usual business foresight.

In view of these facts and of our general sound financial standing as proved by us on Saturday, we do accuse you of endeavoring to embarrass us, and not only that, but had we not been able to meet your demands on Saturday, we know full well what position you would have placed us in.

We further note that your Mr. Gosling dictated your reply to our Saturday's communication. If any further correspondence ensues, it will only be replied to if coming from Mr. Harvey as we have always regarded him as honorable and above little petty differences, and, above all, a lover of fair play.

Your action on Saturday in phoning our private business which might have been caught up by a dozen listeners on the line and might have created a general gossip and alarm which would have injured us if we were doing business as others do it, depending upon the goodwill of the commercial circle on Water Street. You cared little about what would happen to the 1700 fishermen who invested their earnings in the shares of the Company, and when your action is generally known, as it will be, you may imagine what indignation will be aroused.

The F.P.U. has a membership of 20,000, and if these men and their friends were to refuse to purchase flour which you handle, such as Windsor, Patent and Household, and would refuse to use any of the tea which you import, such as Hazelfield, Lomax, Chester, Lotus, Forest, etc., or would refuse to purchase Avalon Creamery, Clover and Sunshine butter, you would no doubt reduce your sales.

How can you expect that your action of Saturday, which we have reviewed herein, will endear the fishermen to your firm? You played with fire in order to gratify the whim of your Mr. Gosling, and if the result will show that you burnt your fingers, you cannot but blame yourselves.

Yours truly,
THE FISHERMEN'S UNION TRADING CO. LTD.
Per W. F. Coaker.

You went as far as to state that the price would be \$82.50. Your admission "that for the time being you had lost faith in the market" caused no surprise, for we have never heard you express the opinion that prices would advance locally, and some how you always expect lower prices, while you hope always for advances abroad.

You fail to state that while you offered us \$72.00 for oil you were paying others in town \$78.00. You have but yourselves to thank for any unfavorable changes in the foreign market. You tried to force us to sell our oil at your price and we were compelled to seek a market abroad, and succeeded in disposing of the oil at prices which insured us against loss.

The tone of your letter is overflowing with your regrets of having compelled us to find a market abroad. We have been informed by agents in Boston that you are offering oil at 8c. per gallon less than the fringe quoted by the trade there, and that this has resulted from the fact that we sold oil to Boston firms at a lower price than you quoted at the time we sold. I am glad, however, to learn that you are not a party to this petty spite.

With regard to our having reduced the price abroad, we had no knowledge of what you were asking. All that we know is that we made an offer to a firm there, who were recommended to us, the prices offered were accepted, and we were saved from meeting a loss and from being compelled to sell to you at a big loss. We had no thought of injuring anyone. We did not know that those people purchased from you, neither did we know what figure you were asking.

We have shown you that when we cannot secure fair play here, we can find a way to get around the trouble, through your compelling us to seek an outlet abroad. We have found our feet now in the foreign market, for which we tender you our warmest thanks. We have learnt a lesson, and that lesson is "Don't expect anything but kicks and blows from Water Street." The lesson has been well learnt, and we are now resolved to export sooner or later every drop of oil, every quintal of fish, every barrel of herring and every case of lobsters produced by the members of the F.P.U. This is a big statement, but time has shown that our big statements in the past have been followed by deeds which have surprised the country.

I wish to clearly state that you started this oil row and we had to defend ourselves, and if in doing so, we have nipped your corns, it is with regret. We trust the pain is not as acute as one would gather from the perusal of your letter.

Yours truly,

THE FISHERMEN'S UNION TRADING CO. LTD.
Per W. F. Coaker.

The fish buyers endeavored to get after us because we paid \$6.00 for fish in outports when they were offering but \$5.00, and they endeavored to cut prices here from

THE FISH BUYERS. \$5.00 to \$5.00 by the time our \$6.00 fish arrived, in order to cause a loss to us of \$1.00 per quintal on all we had purchased at \$6.00. The "Nellie R." arrived here early in September with 1400 quintals and not one of the exporters would offer us a price, although there were not then 3000 quintals of fish in the city. Mr. Murray eventually purchased at \$6.00, and but for his doing so, the bottom would have fallen out of the price for fish, and \$5.00 would have been the prevailing figure for the early fall, with lower prices later.

For a month after the sale of the "Nellie R." fish, we were successful in holding prices up to \$6.00 here, although the largest houses refused to purchase any fish at \$6.00 and offered only \$5.50 to \$5.75 and purchased a considerable quantity from non-Union men at those prices while we were selling at \$6.00. When heavy arrivals pour in, about October 12th, the price fell twenty-five cents. The Trading Company had about 5000 quintals then afloat at St. John's for sale. We sold some at \$5.75 and as we saw lower prices still were being attempted, we resolved to store our fish and hold for a higher price or export it later on. This created firmer prices and prevented a big slump.

The Labrador fishermen were treated much worse, for the strong demand at first caused planters to ask \$4.00 and \$4.50, but as the bulk of stopp came in the price slumped a dollar and the large firms would not purchase fish outside of what belonged to their dealers, thus discriminating against the independent man to the extent of 25 to 50c. This was poor encouragement to those who purchased their fit-out for cash in the Spring and are trying to keep their heads above water. I firmly believe that nothing less than \$4.00 should have been paid. I believe the Government should have fixed a \$4.00 price for stopp fish and refused to allow anyone to buy at a less price. Had they done so, \$4.00 would have been paid by all for stopp fish. The Government should also have fixed \$6.00 the price of tallow shore fish.

These actions on behalf of the trade and Government clearly prove to me the urgent necessity of forming a Company of business men and fishermen to export fishery produce and transact all the exporting business of Union fishermen. We were driven to form the Trading Company because merchants were taking profit off provisions and putting it on other goods which we did not or could not handle as a Union. They were not willing to have a half loaf but still wanted the whole, so we established the Trading Company which, this year, has put a Million Dollars into the pockets of the fishermen of the country, for fish would have been \$4.50 and provisions much higher but for the action taken by the Company in buying fish at \$6.00 when it was \$4.50 here and buying 15,000 barrels of flour in order to prevent dealers from charging what they like, for if the merchants who bought flour before the war, which flour was to come in during September and October at \$4.85, and could sell it when the war broke out at \$7.00, then those same men would not hesitate to ask \$10.00 if no one stood in their way to defend the toilers.

Yours truly,
JOB BROS. & CO. LIMITED.
Robert B. Job, Director.

Letter From the Trading Co. to Messrs. Job Bros.
October 20th, 1914.

Messrs. Job Bros. & Co.
Water Street.

Gentlemen.—Yours of the 19th duly received. We repeat the statements in our former letter and wish to clearly say that some of the statements contained in your reply are incorrect. We offered you all our collection under last year's arrangement, but you refused. You personally informed the writer that you would not pay more than \$72.00.

We were forced also in 1910 to form a Publish-

ing Company to insure liberty of free speech for our opinions because other papers refused to support us.

WILL EXPORT UNION PRODUCE. and attempted to kill out the Union movement. We were therefore compelled by the circumstances facing us to establish a paper of our own, and today it is the pride of the toiling masses and the toilers' sole friend in the Colony.

Now we have seen the daggers drawn to devour us because we attempted to buy fish and oil since the war at prices which offended the combines and big grabbers. To insure ourselves against such treatment in the future and to make sure that the independent fishermen's interests will not be sacrificed by big fish buyers and Government intolerance and indifference, I sincerely propose that we use our best influence to establish a Company to export fishery produce and handle all the Union's trade in fish, oil, lobsters, berries, herring, salmon, etc.

There is about \$6,000,000 lying in the Banks at St. John's belonging to the people, and I advise every fisherman who has any means to purchase shares in the new Company. I advise the Trading Company also to help. I advise the F.P.U. to help. We must have this new Company and we should allow the outside public to purchase shares, but Union men should come forward and buy the largest portion of them.

One of the best fish exporters in the Colony is available to come in and invest his money and become Manager of the concern. I have no hesitation in recommending all to buy shares. It is our only chance to secure a square deal in the selling of produce. A big company is required with large capital which will be able to handle at least half a million quintals of fish annually.

I ask you to fully consider this proposal and take final action before we separate, to bring into life this remaining link which is necessary to make every fisherman his own importer, trader, and exporter. When such a company is in operation, my work on behalf of the fishermen will be complete, and each fisherman will be his own importer, retailer, fish buyer and exporter. There can be no doubt as to the benefits to be derived or the success to be attained. Gird up your loins for we are now approaching the full completion of our desires respecting commercial matters, and it will only be a matter of short duration when the Colony will be governed by a Union Government and our political aims consummated.

The Trading Company's business last year (1912) was 400,000. In 1913 it was \$250,000. Up to the end of the year about \$87,000 worth of shares had been sold.

THE TRADING COMPANY. This year, so far \$10,000 worth have been sold. The Company will require a capital of at least \$150,000 if the Exporting Company is established for it will have to provide for issuing supplies to planters. More stores will have to be established in order to buy produce and sell goods at the larger Union settlements.

The standing of the Company is excellent in every way. The business this year will amount to \$500,000. The Company paid a dividend last year of 10 per cent. and added to its reserve fund. The mortgage of \$10,000 on the "Can't Lose" has been paid off. The sales for flour, pork, beef, butter and tea for this year are far in excess of last year's sales. The Company has curtailed all possible expenses and closed a few of the smaller stores and the clothing factory. The auditors report for last year which proves the Company's affairs to be in a flourishing condition will be submitted to the shareholders.

Last January a new daily paper was started and it was intended to publish it for a new Company, but subsequently it was determined by the Publishing Company to become the sole owners of the daily paper and the Daily and Weekly were united under the name of "The Mail and Advocate."

The daily and weekly issues are making good progress. The circulation of the daily is growing continually. The weekly is as popular as ever with the fishermen, and as it will be sold the coming year at 50 cents, every fisherman's family should subscribe for it, where a weekly mail is in operation. Where a daily mail is received, the daily should be taken, and as it only costs \$2.00 per year, a large circulation in the outports should result. If two families would jointly subscribe for the daily, it would mean only the cost of other weekly papers.

We have installed two Linotype machines during the year in order to turn out a daily paper, and we are now in as good a position as publishers, as the best in the Colony.

I advise our friends to purchase shares in the Publishing Company as a considerable block of shares still remain to be sold. The Company paid a dividend of 10 per cent. last year. The money for improvements in the printing outfit was secured from the F.P.U. on mortgage. It is no easy matter to establish a daily paper and to do so has demanded a considerable portion of my time, but time has shown that we were exceedingly justified in what we did, and without a daily paper very little progress would be made and very little known about public affairs.

"The Mail and Advocate" has done its duty to the public in exposing political corruptions and wrong-doing and but for it, the peoples' opinions regarding the sealing disaster and other matters of first public importance would not have been ventilated. All should endeavor now to give the paper as large a circulation as possible. The papers cannot be sold cheaper. The Company is not after money-grabbing but it takes a lot of money to run a daily paper. I am confident you will bear testimony to the value of the paper to you, and I feel sure that your resolve is to stand by it at all cost.

Last March we held our Third Annual

Union Sealers' Mass Meeting, and to afford the citizens of St. John's an opportunity of learning something about the Union's objects, the largest building

THE SEALERS' ANNUAL MEETING. In St. John's was secured and the largest public meeting ever convened in Newfoundland resulted. About 5000 persons attended, about 2000 being sealers. The speakers were Messrs. Kent, Lloyd, Cowan and myself.

I had the pleasure of visiting the haunts of the breeding seals last March in the good ship "Nascopie," commanded by Captain George Barbour, and the knowledge acquired through the trip will, I trust, be valuable to the sealers and country, for I am convinced that anyone who does not take a trip to the icefields and acquire a personal knowledge of the industry cannot intelligently discuss matters pertaining thereto. Up to the time of the "Newfoundland" disaster, the trip was a surprising pleasure to me and I will always possess pleasant memories of my first trip to the haunts of the breeding seals along the Northern Coast of Newfoundland.

Nineteen Hundred and Fourteen will be remembered as one of the most peculiar years in the history of the Fisheries of Newfoundland.

THE FISHERY OF 1914. The sealing disasters, which claimed a payment of 252 lives of the Colony's best sons, was the beginning of a chain of troubles. The seal fishery was far below an average on the Eastern Coast but the catch in the Gulf was the best on record. The Spring was a backward one, probably as late a Spring as is known to the present generation. Ice hugged the Northern Coast until June and on the Labrador it held the shore a month longer than is usual. The consequence was that the caplin school catch of cod to the North was almost a total blank. I can safely assert it was the worst catch for twenty-five years.

On the Labrador the usual time for fishing was passed when the coast cleared, the result being that many floaters returned before the Labrador fish struck in and those who secured catches, considering time would not permit curing into dry fish, salted their catches heavily. This caused a large over-supply of stopp fish and frightened the exporter, causing, with the abnormal conditions created by the war, a cut in price for the later shipments by the fishermen. Had the usual quantity of Labrador fish been cured dry, the price for stopp would not have declined below \$4.00 per quintal.

All that could be done was done by me, and when we remember what happened in 1905 when about the same quantity of stopp fish was thrown on the market and prices cut to \$1.50, we should be grateful to those fishermen who formed and supported the F.P.U., for, but for the operation of the F.P.U., the price of stopp fish would not have exceeded \$2.00. Some buyers on the Labrador Coast actually fixed \$2.00 per quintal for stopp fish in the early days of September but no one shipped for such a price as they depended upon getting a figure mentioned by the Union, from \$3.00 to \$4.00, and I believe \$4.00 is the price fixed as the current price of the Labrador.

Cod oil held its price to \$75.00 most of the season, principally because the Union Trading Company took a large part in buying and selling it, and although every effort was made to get prices down to \$65.00, yet the \$75.00 figure was maintained.

Shore fish was purchased at \$4.00 here after the war broke out. At one time, fish was unsaleable at any figure. The Trading Company then started buying at \$6.00 at all its Stores and gave Union fishermen for five weeks an opportunity to sell at \$6.00. This action, backed with an appeal not to sell at less than \$6.00, caused buyers at St. John's and some outports to pay \$6.00, which price was maintained until the 12th of October. Had the fishermen not held back for \$6.00 not one cent over \$4.50 would have been paid by any exporters. By so doing, they had an opportunity to dispose of a lot of fish at \$6.00 and what was not sold at \$6.00 was disposed of at \$5.50.

The fight to maintain prices at St. John's was one which will, in time to come, prove the value of the Union to the country. When future generations look back and realize that such splendid prices were paid during the operation of a world struggle foretold thousands of years ago as the Armageddon of Wars, when every country's commerce and trade was dislocated and brought, in some cases, to a complete standstill, then our efforts during the last three months on behalf of the fishermen in Newfoundland will be understood.

I have worked hard and passed through some trying ordeals during the six years I have had head of the F.P.U., but I assure you I have endured more since the war started than I did during the previous five and a half years of the Union's existence. The burden I carried before the war was very light compared with what it has been since August. I dreaded the arrival of floaters with their catches at St. John's. I dreaded the arrival of the boats with fishore fish from the outports. I knew what every buyer was expecting. I knew they were resolved to fight me desperately, first to smash the Trading Company which had made its own price for fish and compel buyers to pay it, and secondly, to refuse to buy when large quantities arrived, except at their own prices. The two great forces were arrayed against each other. We had powerful influence working against us and we determined upon a \$6.00 price for shore fish. We arrayed against our opponents the Union and the power of the Union's paper.

The fact that the fishermen responded to my

(Continued on page 5.)