

minion government. The old jealousies of provincial versus federal jurisdiction might appear again. But it must be borne in mind that the only reason for the various proposals under review is to help the credit of Canadian municipalities. By far the greatest amounts are borrowed by them, in London. The opinion of London must, therefore, be given consideration. *The Monetary Times* favors the supervision of Canadian municipal issues, because it thinks that Canadian municipalities will be greatly helped thereby. For the same reason it favors also the one central board rather than many provincial boards. It would seem quite possible to form a federal commission, with proper representation from each province. This would appeal to the British investor, remove the possibility of too much local color in the supervision, and delete to some extent the bogey of politics. The provincial supervision of municipal loans, we fear, will help matters but little. Why not try the larger, and what many consider the better scheme for assisting Canada's municipal borrowers? They must be heavy borrowers for many years to come.

TWO JOHNS, SAM, AND BUSINESS

While it is admitted that John Bull's privilege is to grumble about everything, it would seem the privilege of John Canuck and Uncle Sam to complain, usually without protest, of John Bull's poor business methods on this continent. Actually, there is little substance, but much habit, in the grumbling of any of the three parties. The old cry has been raised, in Washington this time, that surprise was felt there and in New York at the "slowness of British manufacturers" in recognizing the majority of the lower duties imposed in the Underwood bill now in force. Inquiries made by the London Times do not support that view.

The Imperial Board of Trade has had a number of communications from merchants and manufacturers for exact information with regard to the changes made in the schedules, and no doubt is entertained from that quarter of the alertness of British traders and their wish to take the fullest advantage of the opportunities offered to them. Similarly, it is clear from inquiries made at the London Chamber of Commerce that the liveliest interest is taken in the new tariff by members of that body. Ever since the introduction of the bill merchants and manufacturers have been keen to learn what duties were going to be levied on commodities in which they were particularly interested.

It is known that a number of British firms made tentative arrangements some time ago for opening offices in the United States with a view to possible developments, while others sent representatives there.

The explanation of the impression apparently entertained in certain commercial circles on this side of the Atlantic, says the Times, may lie partly, in fact, that not a few British manufacturers have order books already filled, and say it is mere waste of time taking orders which cannot be executed.

This is a point we in Canada sometimes overlook in analyzing the question, Why do not British firms get more business in the Dominion? Certainly, they are not getting as much as they could, but they no doubt have good reasons, and there are other markets, too. Two matters should however, engage their serious attention. One is the necessity for paving the way now for the trade with Canada which they may need in future years. Otherwise, when this market is needed perhaps to take the place of one of their other markets, British manufacturers may find their United States competitors have almost a monopoly here, and one which will be hard to dent. The other point is that more care should be given by them to small business matters, such as the correct addressing of letters, the use of the proper amount of postage stamps, quotations in our currency, and so on. They may be trivial things, but overlooked,

they cause immense annoyance. *The Monetary Times* saw a letter from an English house, the other day (seeking business in Canada), on which 32 cents postage charges had to be paid by the recipient, because the letter was understamped. It was a simple oversight, but the avoidance of such incidents makes the wheels of trade turn smoothly and help to bring the business.

TORONTO STREET RAILWAY SITUATION

For a month or two now, the ratepayers of Toronto will have an opportunity to consider the proposal to purchase the street railway and the Toronto Electric Light Company, and to digest the experts' reports on the matter. At this stage, opinion is sharply divided as to the wisdom of purchase. The citizens later will decide the matter by vote. One question arising is whether or not it is better to buy now or a few years hence, when the street railway franchise expires. If the citizens mean business, the price is fair and the bargain solves certain problems, there seems little to be gained by delay.

Toronto is probably getting one of the best street car services on this continent, provided by a well-managed company. *The Monetary Times* doubts whether the civic authorities can give a better service without the expenditure of very large sums, and without loading the ratepayers with additional tax burdens. But Toronto folks are hemmed in by lack of suburban transportation. The city is confined to a comparatively small area, where land is selling at high, and in some cases unreasonable, prices. Hundreds of acres of good building land in healthy suburbs remain idle, within a 25-mile radius of Toronto. It is not available to the workers of the city because the steam roads fail to give an adequate suburban service, and because the radial lines are their own masters, and besides have no entrance to the heart of the city. Solution of the radial problem, therefore, seems to be a very important part of the transportation situation. The city proper and the surrounding areas are divided by lack of transportation facilities. In short, the people of Toronto are compelled to live in a metropolitan saucer because a tangle of franchises and poor transportation dictate so. Is not that a serious obstacle to the Greater Toronto, about which we have heard so much?

Mayor Hocken has said that if his proposed deal goes through, it will clean up the entire franchise situation. On this point, he stated this week in council:—

"There was a further consideration in my mind in trying to put the transportation system of the city under public ownership, and that was to make it possible to admit the radial railways which might come to the borders of our city from any direction. For twenty years past the advisability of getting radial railways to the centre of the city has been discussed almost continuously. The accomplishment of this highly desirable object has been prevented by the character of the franchise held by the Toronto Railway Company, and only by the acquisition of that franchise by the municipality can we succeed for the next eight years in bringing about this much-desired end."

That may be so, but Mayor Hocken also said, in discussing some of the other franchises: "At some time or other, these ends of railways and franchises must be dealt with, if the city of Toronto is to have an adequate railway system." Why not deal with the entire matter now, instead of leaving part of it until "Some time or other"? Toronto has suffered badly in the past by dealing with only part of its municipal matters, by rushing the easy sections of its problems and leaving the difficult ones for "some time or other." While several cities have been called to book for looking too far into the future and financing that way, Toronto has failed to look ahead sufficiently. Its municipal governors have, generally speaking, shown little capacity for dealing with the city's business outside of current years.