

His predecessor in the office of Mayor, the late Thomas W. Peters, had secured the Carleton Branch from the government and had subsidized the elevator, but the Canadian Pacific had done nothing to develop trade through St. John, and the only purpose the Carleton Branch and its wharf property was used for was to handle the coal consumed along the line of railway, the hoisting being done by the elevator engines. One day Mayor Robertson surprised the Council by calling attention to this fact in a message from the chair, which resulted in the appointment of a winter port committee. But this also was without direct result.*

*The text of the message which was read at a meeting of the Common Council on October 24th 1895 above referred to is as follows :

MAYOR'S OFFICE,

ST. JOHN, N. B., October 24th, 1895

TO THE COMMON COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF ST. JOHN.

GENTLEMEN:—

I feel it to be a duty resting on me to bring especially to the notice of the Common Council a matter of paramount importance to us all, and one in which the future interests of the Maritime Provinces is very deeply involved.

We expected that in the development of the Dominion the winter commerce of Canada with Europe would pass through the ports of the Eastern Provinces.

We knew that the ports of New York, Boston and Portland would be powerful competitors against us for that trade, and that extraordinary efforts on our part would have to be put forth to secure this business and in that view our city has done a great deal to meet the demands.

We bought the Carleton Branch railway, paid for it, and practically made a gift of it to the Canadian Pacific company.

We presented to the company, at a nominal rent of twenty cents per year, the site of the grain elevator, and paid a large part of the cost of equipping and erecting the same, and we have built at a very great expense, the new and extensive wharves on the western side of the harbor, costing in all, a sum greater than a quarter of a