

## Winnipeg Board of Trade

A meeting of the council of the Winnipeg Board of Trade was held Tuesday afternoon. A report from Sir Donald A. Smith, high commissioner for Canada in Great Britain, who with others represented the board of trade at the recent congress of boards of trade of the empire in London was read. Sir Donald's report was as follows:

Sir,—I have the honor to transmit, for the information of the Winnipeg board of trade, the proceedings of the third congress of chambers of commerce of the empire, which was held in London from the 9th to the 12th ultimo. The most prominent subject of discussion was the commercial relations between the mother country and her colonies and dependencies, the debate lasting nearly the whole of two days. It was referred to at length by the honorary president, the Right Hon. Joseph Chamberlain, in his speech at the opening of the congress, a report of which appears in the proceedings. You will see from the agenda paper the various resolutions that were placed before the meeting, largely, as you will observe, by Canadian commercial institutions.

At a preliminary meeting of the Canadian delegates, which I convened, it was very evident that there was considerable divergence of opinion upon the various resolutions. After some discussion it was unanimously decided by those who were present, including the delegates from Toronto, that another resolution, or rather an amendment to the Toronto resolution, based upon the resolutions of the Ottawa conference, should be put forward, as expressing the views of the Canadian delegates. Therefore, it was arranged that I should move the following:

"Whereas the stability and progress of the British empire can be best assured by drawing continually closer the bonds that unite the colonies with the mother country, and by the continuous growth of a practical sympathy and co-operation in all that pertains to the common welfare, and whereas this co-operation and unity can in no way be more effectually promoted than by the cultivation and extension of the mutual and profitable interchange of their products: Therefore resolved, That this congress records its belief in the advisability and practicability of a customs arrangement between Great Britain and her colonies and India on the basis of preferential treatment, and recommends that steps should be taken by her majesty's government to bring about an inter-change of opinions on the subject between the mother country and the other governments of the empire."

As you will see from the proceedings of the congress, it became apparent that the Toronto resolution, with a slight amendment, would be preferred to the amendment, I proposed, and after informal conversations with the representatives of several British chambers, and our Canadian friends, I intimated my willingness to withdraw the amendment and allow the Toronto resolution to stand amended to read as follows:

"Resolved, That in the opinion of this congress, the advantages to be obtained by a closer commercial union between the various portions of the British empire are so great as to justify an arrangement based upon the principles of the freest exchange of commodities within the empire, consistent with the tariff requirements incident to the maintenance of the local government of each kingdom, dominion, province, or colony, now forming part of the British family of nations; and that this congress recommends that steps should be taken by her majesty's government to bring about an inter-change of opinions on the subject between the mother country and the other governments of the empire."

I was subsequently, however, given to understand by the chairman, that there was little chance of the resolution even in its amended form being carried unanimously. It was felt also that it might even be rejected, and in view of the desirability of unanimous action, and after considerable pressure, the Canadian delegates agreed to withdraw both the Toronto resolution and the amendment, and to endorse the following resolution to be proposed by the chair:

"That this congress of chambers of commerce of the empire is of opinion that the establishment of closer commercial relations between the United Kingdom and the colonies and dependencies is an object which deserves and demands prompt and careful consideration. The congress therefore respectfully represents to her majesty's government that if the suggestion should be made on behalf of the colonies or some of them, it would be right and expedient to promote such consideration, and the formulation of some practicable plan by summoning an imperial conference thoroughly representative of the interests involved, or by some other means as her majesty may be advised to adopt. That copies of this resolution be forwarded to the president, to the prime minister, the first lord of the treasury, the secretary of state for the colonies, the leader of the opposition of both the houses, the high commissioner for Canada, and the agents general of the other colonies."

As was anticipated this resolution received the support of all the representatives of chambers of commerce from different parts of the empire who were present, and it was carried unanimously and amid enthusiastic cheers. I may add that we were led to understand that the resolution in the form in which it was finally passed would be acceptable to Mr. Chamberlain.

In some quarters the resolution has been described as being of a colorless character. I think its importance is much greater than is usually imagined, especially in view of the fact that it was carried unanimously. You will see that the resolution contains two expressions of opinion, 1, that the establishment of closer commercial relations between the United Kingdom and the colonies and dependencies is one object which deserves and demands prompt and careful consideration; 2, that the congress respectfully represents, if the colonies or some of them should suggest the convening of an imperial conference for the formation of some practicable plan, that it would be right and expedient on the part of her majesty's government to adopt the suggestion.

I may state that the resolution as originally drafted, instead of the words, "establishment of closer commercial relations" read "the formation of a commercial union," and further that it required all the colonies to make the suggestion for a conference; and besides the words "if possible" were added after "practicable plan." I was able, however, in conjunction with the other delegates, to procure the modification, or rather the strengthening of the resolution in the way in which it now stands. I hope that the Winnipeg board of trade will commend the matter to the favorable consideration of the Dominion government.

Other questions were discussed at the conference of interest to Canada, but I will only refer to the resolution relating to the encouragement of emigration to the colonies. It was somewhat modified at the preliminary meeting of the Canadian delegates to which reference has already been made, as will be seen in the report of the proceedings. The resolution was moved by the Hon. T. Mayne Daly, in a forcible and eloquent speech, which was listened to with great attention and respect by the delegates who were present. It was seconded by Mr. Nairn and supported by myself and other Canadian representa-

tives. As you will observe the resolution was carried unanimously, and I trust that the action of the congress will have the effect of directing attention to this important subject.

Mr. Henric B. Murray, secretary of the London chamber of commerce, wrote regarding the intention of the imperial government to be represented at the international exhibition to be held at Brussels next year, and intimating that colonial products should be included. Mr. Murray added, "I am also to suggest that local chambers might act as local committees for the purpose of obtaining exhibits; and this chamber would be glad to co-operate in any way which might be thought advisable to make such colonial exhibits representative and successful."

The following communication from Gordon Kirkpatrick, of Newcastle New South Wales was read:

Sir,—Will you be kind enough to send me by return mail any books or papers in connection with land settlement in Manitoba? There are many practical farmers with money in this colony and Queensland, who, if they knew of the land and of the means of obtaining it in Manitoba, would not hesitate in going to that province. There is such a demand for homesteads in this colony at present that for one special piece of land with river frontage, thrown open for selection recently, there were 5,000 applicants; and for the 17,000 acres on the Murrumbidgee river, to be thrown open on the 26th inst., there is an enormous rush anticipated. Farmers are coming from the neighboring colony (Victoria), and there are farmers here who have been waiting a year for land. I have been a resident of Queensland and N. S. Wales for twenty-five years and am thoroughly acquainted with the country and people, and if I had pamphlets, etc., I feel sure I could induce many to take up homesteads in your province. My uncles, John and George Kirkpatrick, left England with their families for Canada about thirty-six years ago, during which time I have heard nothing of them. They settled in Simcoe county, Ont. It might be possible for your government to offer me a trade agency in Australia for your province. Mr. Larke, the Canadian commissioner, is here, and as the Canadian-Australian steamers run directly from Sydney to Vancouver, there should be trade resulting. The farmers I should influence would be picked men, practical farmers, with means. I should be pleased to receive a few files of local newspapers. I should also be pleased to receive a few pamphlets for distribution. Awaiting your favorable reply.

### A SUGGESTION.

A letter was read from John Binns, of Chicago, suggesting that an international exhibition be held at Toronto next year, in honor of the 60th anniversary of Queen Victoria's reign, and the visit of the Duke of York to Canada.

### VOTES OF THANKS.

The council passed votes of thanks to the delegates of the board to the chambers of congress, Sir Donald A. Smith, Hon. T. M. Daly, and Mr. Stephen Nairn. Votes of thanks were also passed to the London chamber of commerce, for courtesies extended to the board's delegates.

Joseph Stovel, an old-time Winnipegger, was renewing acquaintances in the city last week, after an absence of eight years. Mr. Stovel was formerly in the merchant tailoring business here. He now visits the city as representative of the Gutta Parcha and Rubber Manufacturing Co., of Toronto. This company does a very large business in Canada and the United States, particularly in rubber coats and similar lines, of which department Mr. Stovel has special charge. Mr. Stovel goes to Chicago from Winnipeg, where he expects to do a large business,