

### National Board of Trade.

Considerable space is given below to a report of the annual meeting of the National Board of Trade of the United States. Many of the questions discussed are of interest to people here, besides which the resolutions will show our business people the trend of thought among the business people of the republic.

The twenty-third annual meeting of the National Board of Trade of the United States was held at the Shoreham Hotel, Washington, on January 17 to 20 inclusive. The attendance was not so large as on some former occasions, various delegations being short in numbers, but there was a liberal representation of business organizations in prominent cities of this country from the Atlantic to the Pacific coasts. The session was an interesting one, although not eliciting so much of influential discussion as in some other instances of these gatherings.

The National Board of Trade was organized at a meeting held in Philadelphia in June, 1863, at which thirty-two constituent bodies were represented. There have since been annual meetings, with one exception. The general purposes of the organization were set forth as intended to promote the efficiency and extend the usefulness of the various Boards of Trade, Chambers of Commerce, and other chartered bodies, organized for general commercial purposes, in the United States; to secure unity and harmony of action in reference to commercial usages, customs and laws; especially to secure the proper consideration of questions pertaining to the financial, commercial and industrial interests of the country at large.

President Friley took the chair.

The secretary, Hamilton A. Hill, of Boston, submitted a report on behalf of the executive council.

In view of the position of the anti-option question in Congress, unanimous consent was granted for the introduction of the following, submitted by Mr. Craig, of Detroit, at the beginning of the regular proceedings:

"Resolved, that in the opinion of the National Board of Trade, the business interests of the country demand the defeat of the anti-option bill now pending before the Senate of the United States."

This was adopted without a dissenting vote, and its prompt transmission to the Senate was ordered.

The following, from the Scranton Board of Trade, in relation to uniform commercial law, was adopted:

"Resolved, that the National Board of Trade approves any effort calculated to remove the evils incident to the diverse and multifarious systems of legislation, as now existing in the several states, affecting commercial transactions."

The following, from the New York board of trade and transportation, in regard to trade marks, was adopted:

Resolved, That the growing importance of that species of property known as commercial trade marks, and the interest of the purchasing public therein, merit and demand protection by national legislation which the present registration laws are ineffectual to secure.

Resolved, That the bill entitled "A Bill to authorize the registration of trade marks and protect the same," Senate Bill No. 454, introduced by Mr. Hiscock, and H. R. Bill No. 7216, introduced by Mr. Fitch, in the opinion of the National Board of Trade, is a just, equitable, and deserving measure, which, if enacted, will accomplish a great and necessary reform in the protection of trade marks, of the owners thereof, and of the purchasing public, and Congress is hereby respectfully urged to give said bill an early and favorable consideration.

Propositions relating to a bankrupt law were referred to a committee, which reported favorably concerning the pending bill, and the report was approved.

A department of commerce and manufactures

was favored, in the adoption of the following, from the Philadelphia board of trade:

Resolved, That the commercial and manufacturing interests of the country deserve equally with those of agriculture to receive the attention of the Government; and that for this purpose, a department of commerce and manufactures should be created without further delay.

In view of the extension of public warehouses in the storage of staple products and the enlarging necessity for use of warehouse receipts as negotiable instruments the following, submitted by the Cincinnati chamber of commerce, was adopted:—

Resolved, That it is of particular commercial importance that State legislation governing the issuance of warehouse receipts and the delivery of goods represented by them should be as nearly uniform as practicable, and of such a nature as to furnish the most complete protection to the holder of such receipts.

Resolved, That the National Board of Trade favors the enactment of measures regulating the issuance of warehouse receipts and defining the responsibilities incident thereto, with reference to their application to warehouse receipts of a negotiable nature.

The various propositions on the official list of subjects which related to common carriers and the interstate commerce law were referred to a committee, whose report, with some modification, was adopted as follows:—

Resolved, that the National Board of Trade hereby indorses and approves of the objects aimed at under the interstate commerce enactment, with the recommendation that it be maintained in the statutes of the United States, in the interest of the commerce of the entire country.

Resolved, That the National Board of Trade favors amendments to the law to regulate commerce between the States which will accomplish,

1st: The giving of prompt effect to the findings and orders of the Interstate Commerce Commission.

2nd: Amendment of the Interstate Commerce law which will exempt in conformity with provisions of the Constitution witnesses from criminal penalties, to the end that information as to its violations may be made available in the courts.

3rd: Such further amendment of the law as will make corporations indictable and subject to exemplary fines for all violations of the law committed by their officers or agents.

4th: Such definition of the terms of the act as may be necessary to bring within its terms of provisions and restrictions all common carriers engaged in interstate commerce, whether individuals, corporations or lines embracing a diversity of carriers.

5th: Enforcement upon common carriers of strict accountability to the owner or consignee for the prompt delivery of property entrusted to the care of such common carrier for transportation by the imposing of a proper demurrage charge for delay beyond a reasonable time in the transportation of such property.

6th: Freedom from unreasonable declarations of exemption in contracts for interstate carriage.

The Louisville Board of Trade introduced the following proposition:

Resolved, That the forced withdrawal from bond, by payment of tax or exportation of distilled spirits, is detrimental to the commercial, financial and manufacturing interests of the country.

Mr. Shirley, of Louisville, spoke at considerable length in support of the measure, introducing data concerning the workings and effect of the existing system, and pointing out the consequences to be reasonably looked for if the proposed relief should not be provided for, in view of the increased tax on spirits which is expected to be enacted, and its influence on production. Hon. John W. Mason, Commissioner of Internal Revenue was present, and explained various features of the system of collection.

Mr. Stinard, of St. Louis, did not agree with the idea that the bonded period should be extended. He recognized the demand for such relief as due to overproduction, and could not support a measure which proposed such relief by governmental action in the event of overproduction in one article not enjoyed by producers of others.

The merchant marine subsidy question was freely discussed, on a proposition from the New York Board of Trade and Transportation, resulting in the adoption of the following:

Resolved, That every legitimate means to foster our merchant marine engaged in foreign commerce should be adopted by Congress.

Propositions relating to immigration and quarantine matters were referred to a committee, and the following ultimately adopted:

Resolved, That the National Board of Trade hereby recommends the strict enforcement of the immigration laws of the United States, and further recommends that those laws be so amended as to require from every immigrant desiring to come to the United States a certificate from the authorities of the town or district where he or she resides, that he or she is a person of good moral character, has never been convicted of crime, has never been a public charge, and is of industrious habits and capable of taking care of himself or herself, such certificates to be countersigned by the nearest United States consul. Said consul shall also be required to ascertain and certify as to the illiteracy of the immigrant, and the purpose of the individual seeking residence in this country to become a good and loyal citizen of the United States.

Resolved, That the National Board of Trade recommends the establishment by law of national quarantine regulations.

The following from the New York Board of Trade and Transportation was adopted:

Resolved, That Congress be memorialized to provide for commercial relations with the neighboring countries upon broad and comprehensive principles of reciprocity.

The Nicaragua Canal received consideration. The regular list presented several propositions, which were referred to the officers of the Board, with instructions to prepare a memorial to Congress embodying the views indicated in the propositions.

The following, relating to an American ship canal, offered by the Albany Chamber of Commerce, was adopted.

Resolved, That the National Board of Trade heartily endorses the bill now before Congress appropriating the sum of \$100,000 or so much thereof as may be necessary, to defray the expense of such surveys and estimates of the cost of construction of a ship canal wholly within the territory of the United States, from the great lakes to the navigable waters of the Hudson river, and urges its passage by Congress.

A proposition from the Cincinnati Chamber of Commerce relative to a ship canal from Lake Erie to the Ohio river was submitted, as follows:—

Resolved, That the plan of effecting water communication from Lake Erie to the Ohio river, along a line from Conneaut Harbor, Ohio, to Davis Island Dam, near Pittsburgh, as surveyed by a commission of the State of Pennsylvania, and reported to the State legislature of Pennsylvania in 1891, is deserving favorable consideration, and Congress is hereby requested to provide for a survey and report upon the feasibility of such a plan, inasmuch as the accomplishment of the project would be of the highest importance to the commerce of the Ohio valley and its connecting interests.

An interesting paper, bearing upon the above proposition, was read, from Col. Thomas P. Roberts, of Pittsburgh, an eminent engineer. Reference was made to the origin and condition of the various canals of Western Pennsylvania, Ohio and Indiana, with much of data pertaining to the line above proposed, and the extent of commerce between the North-