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THE INTERNATIONAL EXPORT EXPOSITION  
AND COMMERCIAL CONGRESS.

The opening of the National Export Exposition, at Philadelphia, on September 14th, was an event of much interest not only to the manufacturers and people of the United States but to Canadians and the commercial interests of many other countries. At the time set for the opening exercises it is estimated that about ten thousand people were present. Mr. W. W. Foulkrod, the first vice-president of the Association, opened the Exposition in an address explaining its scope and referring to the expected importance of its results, and Director-General W. P. Wilson gave an account of the enterprise, calling attention to the wide scope of the commercial congress to be held in connection with the Exposition. He outlined the object of the entire enterprise as follows:—

“This Exposition means, first, the supplying of new markets with American-made wares in every country of the world. It emphasizes the necessity for the thorough equipment of men in higher commercial education, who shall study the wants of these markets and the adaptation of our skill to the fulfilling of these needs. The time is coming when this nation will lead the world in manufacturing interests as it does to-day in agricultural exports.

“It means, also, the fuller employment of our labor and the renewed activity of all our factories full-handed. Then will follow the prosperity of the laborer and the citizen of the United States in every walk of life.

“And more important than all this, it means a closer and more friendly relation between all commercial countries. This, in reality, will be the supreme event of this Exposition.”

The opening address was delivered by Hon. W. P. Hepburn, Chairman of the Committee on Interstate Commerce of the House of Representatives. Mr. Hepburn showed the importance of foreign markets for American products and outlined some of the methods to be employed in building up an export trade. He spoke in part as follows:—

“Among the limitations upon manufactures and commerce to enlarge the labor field is the want of markets. Give to

them unlimited markets, and they will solve all the questions of labor and wages with which we can be confronted.

Years ago we began the struggle of securing to ourselves our own home market. We then thought if that could be accomplished the completeness of our labor field would be established. But, under wise policy, we have accomplished this, and still find that that is not enough; that supplying it does not exhaust the energies of those who have won it. We are selling many millions' worth of manufactures abroad more than we buy; but to keep our people employed we must do more. And again I say that the necessity to keep them so employed is the great question before us, and that it can only be solved by securing our full share of trade in the markets of the world.

“And in efforts to secure it we must meet and overcome the fiercest rivalry of the great nations. These nations are now engaged in a struggle as bitter and as remorseless as any that have ever engaged the martial spirit of men. The time has come when we must enter this contest for the commerce of the world. And we must do it now. Ten years from now, if during that time we are not alert, we will be shut out from the greater portion of the trade of the east. We must not only enter the contest now, but must enter upon it fully equipped.

“We must educate our merchants and our manufacturers so that they can do their full part. They must have an intimate knowledge of the people and of the countries with which they propose to trade. They must know their wants. They must know their resources. They must study the tastes, the preferences, the weaknesses of these people. They must adapt their products to meet the whims and tastes and fancies and more substantial wants. If they have not the needed article on hand, they must make it. They must not be content with trying to sell an undadpated surplus.”

Mr. Hepburn referred to the Exposition as a “University of Commerce,” and spoke at length of its manifold benefits to trade and commerce.

The International Commercial Congress, held in connection with the Exposition, began its sessions on October 12th, after the opening exercises of which addresses were made by delegates from different countries, the lead being taken by Gen. J. W. Laurie, well known in Canada, and representing the London Chamber of Commerce. Hon. R. H. Dobell, representing the Canadian Government, made a very effective address. Some forty foreign governments sent envoys to the Congress, and more than two hundred chambers of commerce, boards of trade and similar commercial and industrial bodies, including the Canadian Manufacturers' Association, were represented there by accredited delegates. Besides these, individual representatives of prominent business concerns in all parts of the world were present, participating in the proceedings and contributing to the fund of information which cannot but be most valuable in the consideration of the subjects under discussion.

The programme of the Congress was a large one, and filled up every day of the time which intervened between the opening ceremonies and November 1 when the farewell session was to be held. The appointment of a different presiding officer for each day, selected indiscriminately from among foreign and American delegates, accentuated the truly international character of the Congress. This feature was further emphasized by the setting apart of special national days, on which presumably the delegates from different countries held the floor, or topics peculiar to trade interests in their respective divisions of the commercial world engaged the attention of the assemblage. It is to be hoped that a peaceful body like the Commercial Con-