

British Columbia Board of Trade.

The report of the recent annual meeting of the British Columbia Board of Trade, of Victoria, is a lengthy and important document. President Robert Ward occupied the chair. In opening the meeting he said this completed the tenth year of the board's existence. They had commenced with a membership of 34, and this had increased until now it was 100. This was to a certain extent a satisfactory growth, but he thought the membership should be fully double that number. Greater interest should be taken by the business men in the general work of the board, and its objects aided at least by the knowledge that the council had the hearty sympathy of Victoria. The question of reciprocal trade, which was briefly referred to in the report, the council did not wish to be understood as an advocacy of what is known as commercial union. The position of British Columbia was an isolated one, and their market was to the south. If their export trade was to increase, they must have greater reciprocal relations with the United States. There were a number of the raw products of this country which the neighboring Republic wanted, and measures should be taken towards securing their entry under favorable conditions into the American market.

The report refers to a great variety of subjects, of local and general interest, including immigration, railroad construction, mining, lumbering, fisheries, etc. Regarding the China steamers the report says: "The non-calling of the China-Japan mail steamers still continues to adversely affect the commercial interests of the port, and the Board has been unremitting in its efforts to have this grievance remedied. In conjunction with the Provincial Government, the Board has again memorialized the Imperial authorities not to grant a subsidy to any line of steamers unless it be made a condition of the contract that such steamers call at Victoria both on the outward and inward passages."

Under the head of telegraph communication the report says:—

"The Board, despite repeated enquiries, has still been unable to elicit from the Dominion Government any information as to their reasons for refusing to permit a private company to construct and operate a line of telegraph connecting Victoria with Puget Sound, the want of which continues to be a source of annoyance, and occasionally of loss to our mercantile community."

Reference is also made to the efforts of the board to induce the Dominion Government to make needed improvements in Victoria harbor, but so far without success.

Upon the insolvency question the board says:—

"In common with other kindred institutions throughout the country, this board has been greatly disappointed at the continued failure of the Dominion Government to terminate by means of adequate legislation the feeling of uncertainty and distrust which has prevailed for several years past, consequent upon the absence of any law providing for the equitable distribution of the assets of insolvent debtors, and the board has been unremitting in its efforts to bring about the necessary change."

On the subject of fisheries the board says:—
"In the absence, however, of a near market, the outlook for the rapid development of this industry is not encouraging, and it is earnestly to be hoped that the Dominion Government may, in view of the great prospective value of our sea fisheries, endeavor to enter into such arrangement with the Government of the United States as will admit of the interchange of all fishery products with that country, where the demand for such products is far in excess of what can be supplied from its own resources."

The matter under the heading of "General Trade Outlook," was published in THE COMMERCIAL last week.

The auditors report showed the assets to be \$3,183.34; liabilities nil. The net gain for the year over 1888, was \$406.61.

Robt. Ward's nomination, for a second term as president, was unanimously confirmed; T. B. Hall was unanimously elected vice-president; W. Monteith was re-elected secretary. The following were elected the council. A. A. Green, R. P. Kitchet, Thos. Earle, A. C. Flum-cerfelt, E. A. McQuade, M. T. Johnson, H. E. Croasdaile, D. W. Higgins. The following were elected arbitrators: J. H. Todd, E. G. Prior, H. F. Heisterman, J. S. Yates.

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