

Board of Trade.

A special meeting of the Winnipeg Board of Trade was held on Tuesday afternoon last to hear the report of the Board delegate, Mr. J. H. Ashdown, regarding the visit of the deputation to Ottawa in connection with the disallowance question. Mr. Ashdown prefaced his remarks by entering into details of his work in gathering statistics for the purpose of presenting before the Government.

On arrival at Ottawa they were met by Mr. Searth. Mr. Robertson's anti-disallowance pamphlets had been distributed among the members of the House, but quite a number of these were returned some of them being accompanied with very strong remarks. A day or two afterwards pamphlets in opposition to the movement were laid on the members' tables in the Commons and distributed broadcast through Montreal and Ottawa. A meeting of the Manitoba and Northwest members had been called a few days before the arrival of the delegation. Messrs. Ross and Royal were the only members present, Messrs. Searth and Watson not having received invitations. Two days later a second meeting had been held, at which Mr. Van Horne was present and submitted his idea of the situation. Consequently on their arrival the delegation found those members impressed with the idea that the agitation against disallowance was largely a Winnipeg movement and did not concern the west.

It was found that the eastern people looked upon the question with very little knowledge of its merits, and with a strong feeling that the delegation was going to ask for something that would endanger their own selfish interests.

The impression had been inculcated upon them that the requirements, if granted, would tend to divert their trade to the United States, and that the large amount of money expended by the C.P.R. would be of no avail. A large number of the Conservative members of the House were found to be distinctly hostile to their views. The best view those gentlemen could be led to take of this matter was, "Well, it is a Government question, and if the Government decide to meet your views we will support them." As regarded members of the Opposition, many of them were luke-warm. Looking at the matter from the eastern standpoint they did not agree with it, and looking at it from a party standpoint, they were not inclined to take much interest, inasmuch as Manitoba had returned four supporters of the Government and one of the Opposition. This latter view was very clearly expressed by Mr. Blake.

It was claimed that they wished to divert trade to the United States, and that the next move would be the abolition of the customs barriers. The delegation endeavored to show that such was not the object, but to find a competing route to the markets in the east.

Mr. Searth and Mr. Daly were prepared to stand up to their pledges in regard to the matter, and not only to vote but to speak in favor of the scheme. Mr. Ross, they were informed, had a speech prepared against them. He was challenged regarding the rumor but declined to answer. They could not ascertain what Mr. Royal's position on the question was. As regards the western members, Mr. Perley had

originally agreed to second Mr. Watson's resolution, but eventually expressed a desire to see Mr. Van Horne first and understand relative to freight rates and finally declined to second the motion.

They met the Government in due time, and the question arose as to whether they should invite the Manitoba and Northwest members to attend. They had been told some of these members were distinctly hostile to their wishes, but it was decided to have those gentlemen present and run all risks. The position of the members showed the question to be a Government one, and they concluded, as it was a party matter, that it would be better to go to the Government with a plain, unvarnished case, and not do anything to excite hostility. The idea prevailed that they were asking something unreasonable. After their arguments were concluded, Sir John A. Macdonald said they had submitted the matter temporarily before them. They were received by the Government as a whole with the single exception of the Minister of Customs, who was absent.

Mr. Ashdown then entered into comparative statistics with Dakota, the object being to show that Manitoba had not made the progress which she should have done, and this was declared to be owing to monopoly. The progress was due to the law of free trade in railways. It was only necessary in that state for railroad corporations doing business in other neighboring states to show their charter and deposit \$25 to have right of way.

They had stated that they wanted competition mainly because of its moral effect upon the present settlers and also because of its effect in deciding new settlers to come among them. The question of rates might be left to settle itself. If they had the competition they desired the other question would speedily adjust itself. Winnipeg owed its existence to its being a distributing centre. To show that all business would not be done with Montreal and Toronto, Winnipeg distributed 91 per cent. of the entire commodities used in the Northwest. Consequently, discriminating charges made against Winnipeg were practically also against the settler, and had to be paid by him. He quoted figures showing that by the Canadian Pacific railway tariff the distribution of all goods west of the great lakes was discriminated against, the freight charges in Manitoba being three or four times what they are in the east. As regarded the cost of operation of the Canadian Pacific, it was not nearly so great as on the eastern sections of the line. The carriage of grain from Ottawa to Montreal was \$3.50, while for a similar distance in the Northwest it was \$13.50. They objected to the fact that the Canadian Pacific was at present, and had been for some time, paying the Manitoba road twelve per cent. of their gross earnings from Port Arthur to Winnipeg in order to keep that road from competing for their trade. By granting a competing route the C.P.R. would not be injured, as the large increase in the sale of their lands would be thereby facilitated. These were some of the of the arguments which the delegation had laid before the Government. When they had finished the Government replied they would take the matter into consideration. After waiting some time in vain for a reply, he had

seen Sir John, who had told him the Government would not decide until they heard the debate in the House.

Mr. G. F. Galt was called upon, but had nothing to say beyond endorsing the sentiments of the previous speaker.

Mr. Carruthers moved, seconded by Mr. Straug, that the report be adopted, which was agreed to.

Mr. Whitla drew attention to the necessity of having a competing line west from Winnipeg to connect with the line to the boundary. The road to and from Winnipeg to Emerson would not afford the required relief, and it was necessary that a line should be built which would be able to compete with the C.P.R. for the western trade. He moved a resolution requesting the Provincial Government to give the matter their careful and earnest consideration.

Mr. Steen thought that the resolution furnished an opportunity to show that it was in the interests of the Province and not of Winnipeg alone that the agitation had arisen. He would second the resolution, but would like to add that a line be built to Brandon from the terminus of the M. & N. W. Ry. at Rapid City; thus furnishing a competing line to that point.

It was then moved by Mr. L. M. Lewis and seconded by Mr. James Porter, resolved, that the Winnipeg Board of Trade express the ardent hope that the government of Manitoba will by railway legislation afford the relief to its inhabitants which the gridding monopoly of the C.P.R. makes so seriously necessary. Carried unanimously.

After another discussion in the course of which Mr. Bridges suggested that the Portage la Prairie scheme should be left to commercial enterprise.

Mr. Porter, spoke relative to the recent tariff charges, and brought forward the following resolution: That this Board view with the greatest disfavor the change in the tariff whereby the Dominion Government have imposed a largely increased duty on many articles of hardware, crockery and glassware, apparently with the intention of creating industries whose existence is incompatible with the requirements of a limited market, and consequently the forced production of the articles referred to in the Dominion is obtained at a cost ruinous to the best interests of the consumer.

Mr. Hespler moved in amendment that a committee be appointed to consider the matter and report to a special meeting of the board; the committee to consist of Messrs. MacKenzie, Macdonald, Ashdown, Bertrand, Whitla, Galt, Porter and Redmond.

The amendment was carried, and the meeting adjourned.

A Long Haul.

"How much am I to pay you for going on this errand, Jimmy?" asked a kind old lady of the Tuffboy scion.

"Let's see, it will cost you 40 cents."

"What? Why I only paid you 10 cents for an errand yesterday."

I know it ma'am, but I'm compelled to charge accordin' to the interstate law, the same in proportion for a long as for a short haul. This was four times as long as yesterday's errand, an' I can't make a rebate."