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RELATIONS WITH AUSTRALIA.

The *Colonist* still continues the good work of showing how that it is possible to develop satisfactory trade relations between the Dominion of Canada and the Australasian colonies. It produces the official returns to show how and in what way the outside business at the Antipodes is done, conclusive evidence being given that, there is a business that may be profitably cultivated between all of them and the Dominion *via* the Canadian route. Our contemporary has done good service in this direction, and its enterprise thus manifested is worthy of all praise. Doubtless, the facts that have been already adduced will have had their influence upon the authorities at Ottawa and will have materially facilitated the work of Hon. Mackenzie Bowell, who went out upon the Warrimoo to negotiate with the Governments of the different Antipodean provinces for the extension of trade relations; to promote which it will no doubt be necessary to bring about many tariff modifications by and in the interest of all the parties concerned.

As Mr. Rithet expressed it, the course taken by the Dominion Government in sending a representative such as Hon. Mr. Bowell to Australia was the action which they ought to have taken, and the sentiment of the Victoria meeting, as was also that of the people of Vancouver, was that British Columbians generally endorsed that course. The discussions among commercial men of both cities served to show that the idea of extensive business relations was a very feasible one, first one and then another dwelling upon special lines in which there might very well be an interchange; but this, as has been said, would necessitate extensive tariff changes in the countries directly concerned, an exceedingly difficult thing to bring about in view of the widely different fiscal systems obtaining in the Australasian colonies. On this point, Mr. Rithet remarked that the subject was one that would require a good deal of consideration. If Canada was to give Australia any special advantages or receive especial favors in return, it would be difficult to avoid doing something for the Mother Country in the same direction, which would lead back to the question of Imperial Federation once more. If Australia was going to have special advantages in trade, it would be a difficult matter to avoid extending these to England and her other colonies, and the result might not be that which at the outset was contemplated.

As a matter of course, during his re-

marks, Mr. Bowell referred to the enterprise that had led Mr. Huddart to promptly fall in with the Government's long standing proposition for direct communication with Australia and the promising outlook that already existed. He, however, recognized the difficulties involved in the way of reciprocal arrangements, there being no less than seven separate tariffs with which to deal. Mr. Bowell spoke of the opposition to the contract raised by the Canadian Pacific Railway people, for reasons which he (Mr. Bowell) did not feel called upon to explain; and in this we think he made a mistake, for it is only right that the people of Canada, who have done so much for the railway and in return have obtained so comparatively little, should know something about the lobbying and wire-pulling that the Company have indulged in to the disadvantage of the country—notably in the case of Manitoba in which they exercised for several years an oppressive, not to say grinding, monopoly. Having the monopoly of a through line in Canada and of Canadian steamships to the Orient, it is manifest, that the C. P. R. have done all in their power to place the Dominion at their feet for a line to the South Pacific, and with that in view have allowed a substantial subsidy to remain in abeyance.

It is, everything considered, strange indeed that the Government should have allowed them to become the agents of the Australian line, for before the contract was executed it would have been easy to have made stipulations, if not to have prevented their management of this end of the service to have at least interposed safe guards that were entirely overlooked. For instance, the well known attitude of the C. P. R. Company towards the city of Victoria should have certainly rendered it impossible for Mr. Bowell to admit that while it was a condition of the contract that the vessels were to call at this port, it was only by inference that they were to discharge freight, although it was never contemplated that the ships should carry Victoria freight to Vancouver and send it back from there. But there being no provision in the bond that ardent lover of Victoria, Mr. Fullerton, the C. P. R. Co.'s manager of shipping, found it very easy to direct a severe blow at this city. In regard to this, more explanations are needed in view of the minister's assurance that "an arrangement had been made between the steamship company and the C. P. R., by which they worked in harmony; and he was quite satisfied that there would be no complaint in the future."

It was all very well for Mr. Bowell to say that as a business proposition, Mr. Huddart could not afford to have any friction of the kind, and he was sure would not countenance for a moment any slighting of Victoria's interests. But, when it has served their purpose, their object having been secured, experience has shown that the C. P. R. authorities would not have lacked a scape goat, and this was manifestly the opinion of the Council of the B. C. Board of Trade who, at a meeting specially called for the purpose adopted a resolution declaring that Captain Arthur, of the Warrimoo, was in no way responsible for the non-landing here of the freight for Victoria and the Sound,

Moreover, the secretary was instructed to forward a copy of the resolution to the ship's owners. Such incidents as the one to which we refer are most regrettable.

THAT AWARD.

THE Americans are not as well satisfied with the Behring Sea award as they at first pretended. Calmer reflection convinces them that though, as they say they got more than they expected—and we may add much of it under false pretences—there are accompanying obligations which are more burdensome than had been supposed. Public men and papers have both spoken, and among the latter the *San Francisco Call* says, that under the circumstances the United States has a right to consider if it is worth while to protect seal life in American waters and on the American coast, to the end that the seals may be slaughtered on the high seas. It goes on to say that there is a period each year when the seals are American property, and, as General Tracey put it in the *Forum*, since the Court of Arbitration took a purely commercial view of the subject and declared that the property right did not follow the seal in the high seas, the United States might conclude to settle the whole controversy by the short and easy process of killing the seals on the islands, the result that must attend pelagic sealing. The Americans manifestly find the task of policing Behring Sea a bigger job than they had contracted for. In regard to the indemnification of the B. C. sealers, whose vessels were illegally seized by the United States, Tupper, the younger, is credited with having said that he imagined it would not belong before a way of ascertaining the amount of damages were reached, and doubtless the United States Government would not delay paying the indemnity.

AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT.

We are well satisfied that our contemporary the *Times* has given publicity to a letter signed "Progress," and has editorially commented on the burthen of its complaint that agriculture—the important natural industry of the province—has been and still is sadly neglected. This, we are sorry to think, is no new tale; it is the same old story which cannot be too much dwelt upon until a change takes place. We are in the habit of largely purchasing food products in foreign markets which we might just as well get at home; and it is unmistakably true that within our own territory we have ample land to feed all the population that the province will contain in the next twenty years. Fortunately, the facilities are being afforded to supply the existing lack in some lines from the sister dependencies of the Southern Seas. Still we ought not to forget that we can raise at home almost any quantity of the direct and indirect products of the soil. We may add that an experimental shipment of hops from Saanich is about to start for England, it being expected that profitable business can be done in the English market. The subject of hop growing on Vancouver Island has of late greatly engaged the attention of the Department of Agriculture, and an evidence of this is the issue of a bulletin on the subject by Mr. Charles St. Barbe.