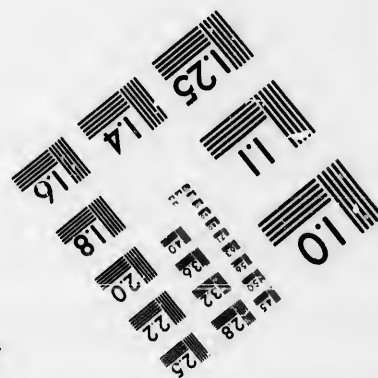
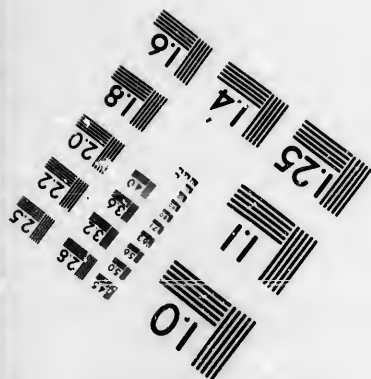
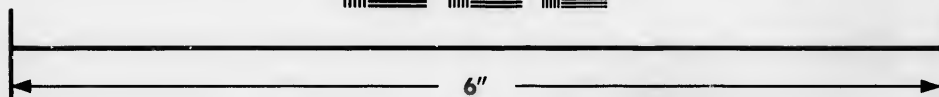
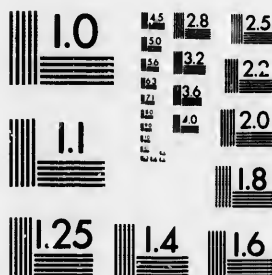


**IMAGE EVALUATION
TEST TARGET (MT-3)**



**Photographic
Sciences
Corporation**

23 WEST MAIN STREET
WEBSTER, N.Y. 14580
(716) 872-4503

18
20
22
25
28
32
36
40

**CIHM/ICMH
Microfiche
Series.**

**CIHM/ICMH
Collection de
microfiches.**



Canadian Institute for Historical Microreproductions / Institut canadien de microreproductions historiques

01
05
57

© 1986

Technical and Bibliographic Notes/Notes techniques et bibliographiques

The Institute has attempted to obtain the best original copy available for filming. Features of this copy which may be bibliographically unique, which may alter any of the images in the reproduction, or which may significantly change the usual method of filming, are checked below.

L'Institut a microfilmé le meilleur exemplaire qu'il lui a été possible de se procurer. Les détails de cet exemplaire qui sont peut-être uniques du point de vue bibliographique, qui peuvent modifier une image reproduite, ou qui peuvent exiger une modification dans la méthode normale de filmage sont indiqués ci-dessous.

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Coloured covers/
Couverture de couleur | <input type="checkbox"/> Coloured pages/
Pages de couleur |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Covers damaged/
Couverture endommagée | <input type="checkbox"/> Pages damaged/
Pages endommagées |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Covers restored and/or laminated/
Couverture restaurée et/ou pelliculée | <input type="checkbox"/> Pages restored and/or laminated/
Pages restaurées et/ou pelliculées |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cover title missing/
Le titre de couverture manque | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Pages discoloured, stained or foxed/
Pages décolorées, tachetées ou piquées |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Coloured maps/
Cartes géographiques en couleur | <input type="checkbox"/> Pages detached/
Pages détachées |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Coloured ink (i.e. other than blue or black)/
Encre de couleur (i.e. autre que bleue ou noire) | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Showthrough/
Transparence |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Coloured plates and/or illustrations/
Planches et/ou illustrations en couleur | <input type="checkbox"/> Quality of print varies/
Qualité inégale de l'impression |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Bound with other material/
Relié avec d'autres documents | <input type="checkbox"/> Includes supplementary material/
Comprend du matériel supplémentaire |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Tight binding may cause shadows or distortion
along interior margin./
La reliure serrée peut causer de l'ombre ou de la
distorsion le long de la marge intérieure | <input type="checkbox"/> Only edition available/
Seule édition disponible |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Blank leaves added during restoration may
appear within the text. Whenever possible, these
have been omitted from filming/
Il se peut que certaines pages blanches ajoutées
lors d'une restauration apparaissent dans le texte,
mais, lorsque cela était possible, ces pages n'ont
pas été filmées. | <input type="checkbox"/> Pages wholly or partially obscured by errata
slips, tissues, etc., have been refilmed to
ensure the best possible image/
Les pages totalement ou partiellement
obscurcies par un feuillet d'errata, une pelure,
etc., ont été filmées à nouveau de façon à
obtenir la meilleure image possible. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Additional comments:/
Commentaires supplémentaires: | |

This item is filmed at the reduction ratio checked below/
Ce document est filmé au taux de réduction indiqué ci-dessous.

10X	12X	14X	16X	18X	20X	22X	24X	26X	28X	30X	32X
						/					

The copy filmed here has been reproduced thanks to the generosity of:

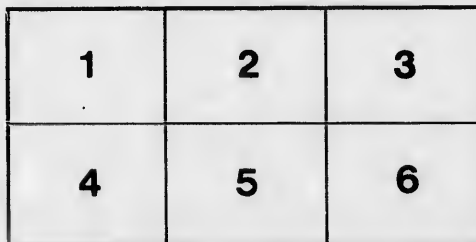
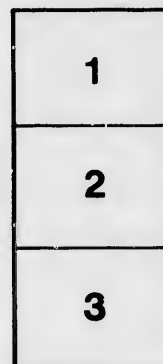
National Library of Canada

The images appearing here are the best quality possible considering the condition and legibility of the original copy and in keeping with the filming contract specifications.

Original copies in printed paper covers are filmed beginning with the front cover and ending on the last page with a printed or illustrated impression, or the back cover when appropriate. All other original copies are filmed beginning on the first page with a printed or illustrated impression, and ending on the last page with a printed or illustrated impression.

The last recorded frame on each microfiche shall contain the symbol \rightarrow (meaning "CONTINUED"), or the symbol ∇ (meaning "END"), whichever applies.

Maps, plates, charts, etc., may be filmed at different reduction ratios. Those too large to be entirely included in one exposure are filmed beginning in the upper left hand corner, left to right and top to bottom, as many frames as required. The following diagrams illustrate the method:



L'exemplaire filmé fut reproduit grâce à la générosité de:

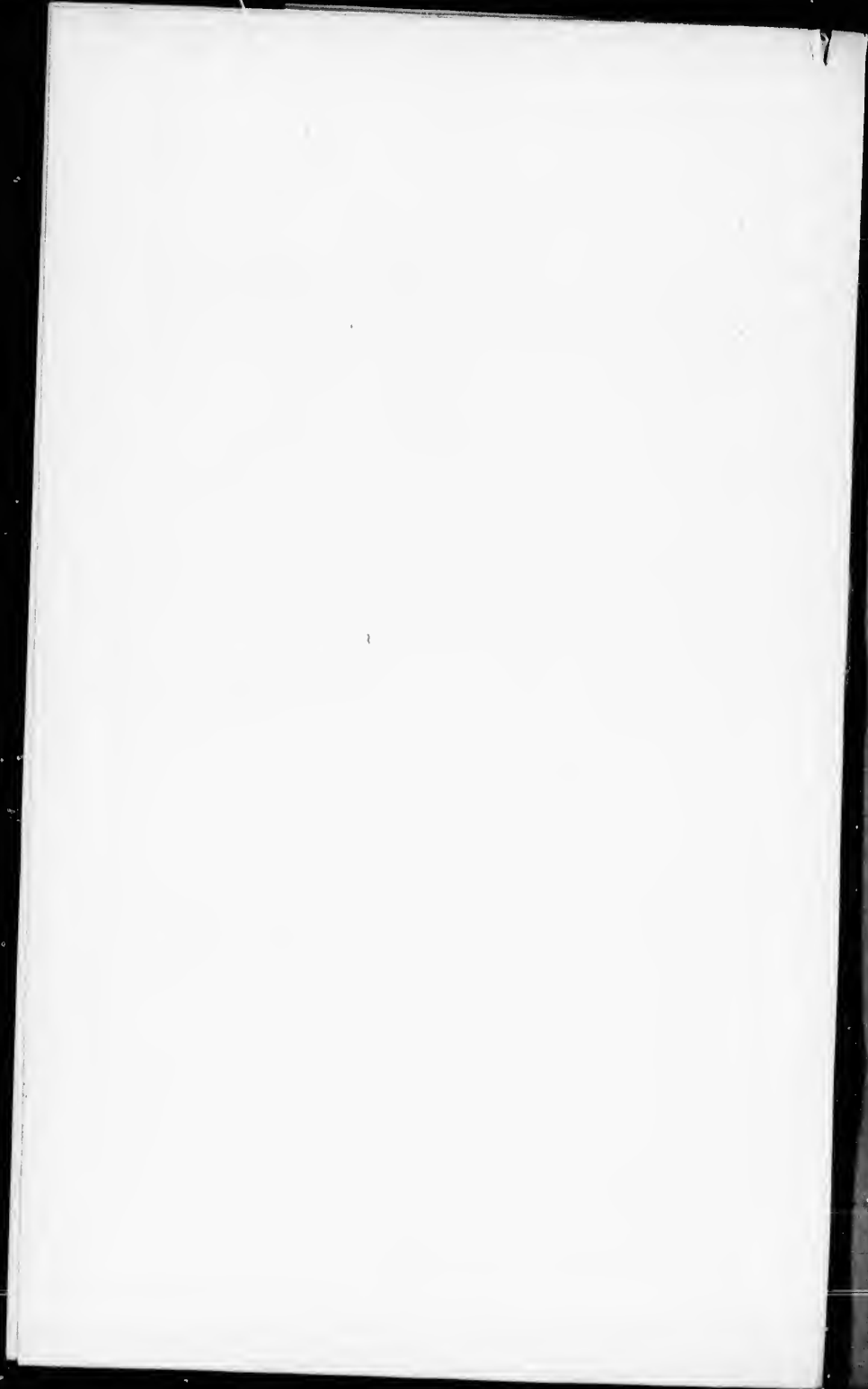
Bibliothèque nationale du Canada

Les images suivantes ont été reproduites avec le plus grand soin, compte tenu de la condition et de la netteté de l'exemplaire filmé, et en conformité avec les conditions du contrat de filmage.

Les exemplaires originaux dont la couverture en papier est imprimée sont filmés en commençant par le premier plat et en terminant soit par la dernière page qui comporte une empreinte d'impression ou d'illustration, soit par le second plat, selon le cas. Tous les autres exemplaires originaux sont filmés en commençant par la première page qui comporte une empreinte d'impression ou d'illustration et en terminant par la dernière page qui comporte une telle empreinte.

Un des symboles suivants apparaîtra sur la dernière image de chaque microfiche, selon le cas: le symbole \rightarrow signifie "A SUIVRE", le symbole ∇ signifie "FIN".

Les cartes, planches, tableaux, etc., peuvent être filmés à des taux de réduction différents. Lorsque le document est trop grand pour être reproduit en un seul cliché, il est filmé à partir de l'angle supérieur gauche, de gauche à droite, et de haut en bas, en prenant le nombre d'images nécessaire. Les diagrammes suivants illustrent la méthode.



THE DETROIT
COMMERCIAL CONVENTION
OF 1865.

1585. 2, *

THE DETROIT
COMMERCIAL CONVENTION

OF 1865

AN

ADDRESS

BY

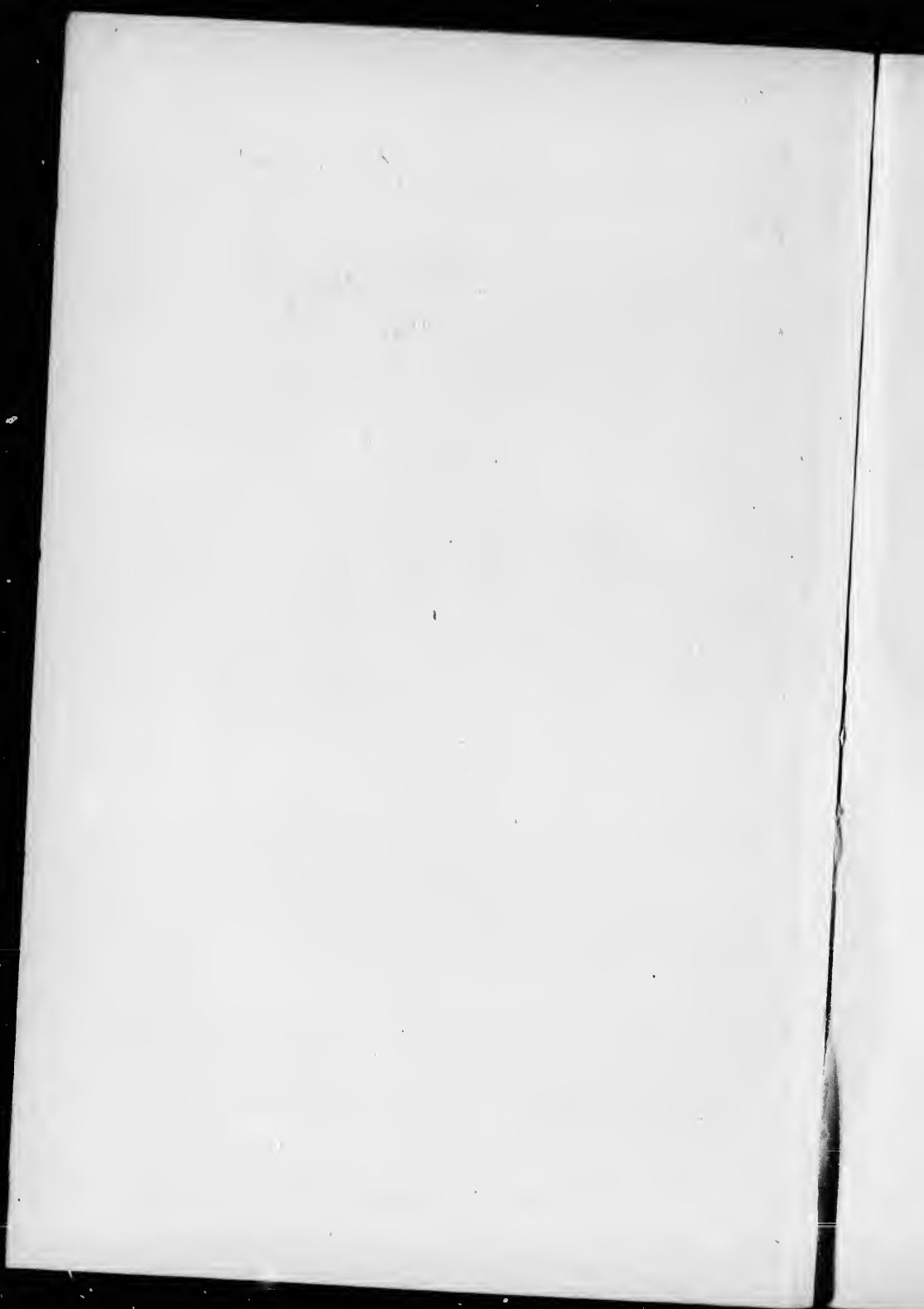
HAMILTON ANDREWS HILL

DETROIT JUNE 16 1866

BOSTON

GEO E CROSBY & CO PRINTERS 383 WASHINGTON STREET
1866

1582.9.7



ADDRESS.

MR. PRESIDENT AND GENTLEMEN :

I have no official report to present at this time to the Executive Council of the National Board of Trade, further than to say that the proceedings of the annual meeting held at Washington in January last, have been printed and widely circulated. With your permission, however, I will occupy a few moments with some reminiscences of, and remarks upon, the Commercial Convention which met in this prosperous and attractive city one and twenty years ago; which, with many of us, comes vividly to mind, as we find ourselves here again, by the courteous invitation of this energetic Board of Trade; and from which sprang the national organization, as whose representatives it is our honor today to be assembled.

The Detroit Convention of 1865 marks an epoch in the commercial history of the country. It was the first great meeting called and held for business purposes, and controlled by men delegated by the leading Boards of Trade and Chambers of Commerce. Two popular conventions had previously met in Chicago, to consider and act upon questions of internal improvements,—the River and Harbor Convention of 1847, and the Ship Canal Convention of 1863,—but these were controlled by public men and politicians, and the part taken in their proceedings by business men was altogether a subordinate one. The meeting of 1865 was convened by and under the auspices of the Detroit Board of Trade, and the large majority of those who attended it were members of kindred organizations. The few public and professional men who were present were supposed to represent business interests, and were expected to keep other considerations for the time in abeyance.

About five hundred delegates were in attendance, representing twenty-eight Boards of Trade, Chambers of Commerce and other mercantile organizations in the United States, and fifteen in British North America. To a certain extent, the occasion was an international one; it had been intended to be so in the original plan, and it was so, so far as the fact of attendance of gentlemen from the Canadas, and the participation of some of them in one or two of the debates, was concerned. But the hesitancy of these gentlemen to accept office in the organization of the convention, and their absolute refusal to vote, placed them in the position of guests rather than members, and made the convention national, and American, in the more limited use of that word, rather than international, and American, in its broader significance.

It will be interesting to recall the names of some of the delegates. From the State of New York, there were present, Hiram Walbridge, James S. T. Stranahan, W. K. Strong, L. J. N. Stark, and Edward Hincken, of New York; DeWitt C. Littlejohn, and Henry Fitzhugh, of Oswego; David L. Seymour, and Martin I. Townsend, of Troy; John V. L. Pruyn, and Lyman Tremaine, of Albany; Israel P. Hatch, P. S. Marsh, S. S. Guthrie, George S. Hazard, and William Thurstone, of Buffalo. From Pennsylvania, Samuel V. Merrick, Frederick Fraley, John Welsh, A. G. Cattell, Samuel E. Stokes, George L. Buzby, Joseph S. Perot, and C. J. Hoffman, of Philadelphia; and George H. Thurston, of Pittsburgh. From Massachusetts, James C. Converse, Joseph S. Ropes, Lorenzo Sabine, William W. Greenough, William Hilton, and Hamilton A. Hill, of Boston. From Maine, T. C. Hersey, A. K. Shurtleff, and M. N. Rich, of Portland; Samuel Dale, Hannibal Hamlin, and John Appleton, of Bangor. From Ohio, R. P. Spaulding, and J. P. Robinson, of Cleveland; S. Lester Taylor, John A. Gano, and Joseph C. Butler, of Cincinnati; Morrison R. Waite, Denison B. Smith, and M. D. Carrington, of Toledo. From Michigan, Joseph Aspinwall, Henry P. Bridge, James F. Joy, Duncan Stewart, Franklin Moore, and Richard Hawley, of

Detroit. From Illinois, Charles Walker, John V. Farwell, W. F. Coolbaugh, B. F. Culver, Murry Nelson, J. C. Dore, Charles Randolph, Hugh McLennan, N. K. Fairbank, and J. Young Scammon, of Chicago; William H. Green, and William Barker, of Cairo. From Wisconsin, William Young, William P. McLaren, and John Johnston, of Milwaukee. From Missouri, Barton Able, J. O. Broadhead, Nathan Cole, Samuel Treat, Samuel Plant, and J. H. Alexander. Among the distinguished Canadians present, were Joseph Howe, Malcolm Cameron, Hugh Allan, Thomas Ryan, C. J. Brydges, Peter Redpath, and Isaac Buchanan. Hiram Walbridge, of New York, a large-hearted, patriotic, public-spirited merchant, was chosen president, and Ray Haddock, of Detroit, and William Laey, of Albany, were secretaries.

The civil war was just over. The process of disbanding the regiments which had constituted the great army of the North was still in progress. The work of political, fiscal and commercial reconstruction was about to begin. Abraham Lincoln had been murdered only three months before; and the railroad directors' car in which some of us rode to Ann Arbor, in acceptance of an invitation from the University there, still bore the emblems of mourning with which it was dressed when it took its place in the long funeral procession from Washington to Springfield, Illinois. Whether or not the Board of Trade of Detroit sent invitations to the commercial organizations of the South, I do not know; certainly none of them were represented in the convention. The struggle was too recent, the wounds on both sides were too fresh, for those who, during four years, had been in deadly conflict, to come together in a spirit of conciliation and mutual respect, and by their reunited energies, as Whittier wrote, to "harvest the fields where once they fought."

"It is believed," said the call, "that this is eminently a proper time for the business men of this country, through their several Boards of Trade and Chambers of Commerce, to meet in council, to discuss matters of Finance and Commerce, and

thus give to the people at large the life-long experience of men devoted to commercial affairs. Such discussion cannot produce evil, and may result in material good." As already intimated, a national convention so constituted was something new in the history of the country; even to the business men themselves, it was an experiment. The qualified remark of the Detroit Board was all that many of them would have been willing to commit themselves to. "Such discussion cannot produce evil, and may result in material good." Some members of the Government at Washington, however, and many politicians, would not admit as much as this; they thought that the discussion of questions of national commercial policy by the business men of the country *would* "produce evil," and they would have prevented the meeting had it been in their power to do so. And when the Convention was in session, and while the debate on reciprocal trade with Canada was in progress, Hannibal Hamlin, late Vice President of the United States, took pains to say; "I do not believe it is wise that this body should assume to itself the duties that belong to the Executive of this country. I do not think that it reflects credit upon the high character of the mercantile associations met here, to do it. I can call to my mind no instance in the history of my country when any body of men have undertaken to advise the Chief Magistrate of this country in reference to his executive acts." It might have been answered to this, that the question then under consideration was not strictly an executive one, for Congress had taken it into its own hands, had voted in favor of terminating the treaty of 1854 at the earliest practicable time, and one of its committees had been in conference with Canadian delegates who were authorized to ask for the negotiation of a new treaty. But Mr. Hamlin was replied to more broadly than this. Mr. Hersey, of Portland, said: "I am a plain, simple business man, and don't pretend to know much about conventions and their rights,—we brought no lawyers from Portland to plead our cause,—but as merchants, we believe that we have a right to be

heard and to make our wants known to the Government." And Mr. Joy, of Detroit, expressed himself more emphatically: "But to approach the Executive, and to suggest a policy to it, is most extraordinary, says the gentleman from Maine Ah, indeed! what is the Executive of this Republic? Is he the master of the people, so high that he may not be approached by them, that it is sacrilege to look him in the face and proffer an humble request or petition? Are these the notions that gentleman has imbibed by or from the high positions he has occupied? Or, is the Executive of this country but the servant of the people, appointed to execute its will, as its name indicates? Sir, in this country, there is no Sovereign but the people, and all who are placed in office by them, from the Chief Magistrate down, are but their servants, and there are none so humble in all this broad land that they may not approach boldly the highest official, and respectfully proffer their petitions. The right of petition in this country is a sacred right."

Mr. Hamlin was not the first public man to call business men to account for undertaking to deal with matters of governmental policy. Lord George Germain, in a speech in the British Parliament in 1774, in support of the measures introduced by Lord North for the punishment of the people of Massachusetts, spoke as follows: "Nor can I think he will do a better thing than to put an end to their town-meetings. I would not have men of a mereantile cast every day collecting themselves together and debating about political matters. I would have them follow their occupations as merchants, and not consider themselves as ministers of that country. * * * The whole are the proceedings of a tumultuous and riotous rabble, who ought, if they had the least prudence, to follow their mereantile employments, and not trouble themselves with politics and government which they do not understand." At the close of this remarkable speech, Lord North rose and said: "I thank the noble lord for every proposition he has held out. They are worthy of a great mind, and such as ought to be adopted."

The object for which the Detroit Convention was called, was

the consideration of "Commerce, Finance, Communications of Transit from the West to the Seaboard, Reciprocal Trade between the United States and the British Provinces, and such other business as may come before the Convention, not of a purely local or political character." The chief interest centered in the debates on the multiplication of transportation facilities, and the renewal of reciprocal trade relations with Canada. Referring to the former, it is interesting to notice how much stress was laid in all the discussions, upon the necessity which existed for the enlargement and multiplication of canals, and how little was said about the transportation of the products of the country by rail. A very large majority of the delegates voted for a resolution asking from the General Government the immediate construction of a ship-canal, round the Falls of Niagara; and the enlargement of the Erie Canal was most earnestly urged upon the State of New York. It is difficult for us today to realize how imperfect were the means then furnished by the railroad companies for the conveyance of freight. Speaking for Boston, the city from which I come, our railroad to Albany was only partially double tracked in 1865, the bridge across the Hudson at Albany was not completed until that year, and our tracks did not reach the steamship wharves until two or three years later. Other seaboard cities were not quite so badly off, but none of them possessed such connections and terminal accommodations as they now enjoy.

The truth is, the members of that Convention had no conception of the marvelous railroad development which was to come in the near future. The railroad mileage of the United States, at the close of 1864, was 33,908, of which only 738 miles had been completed in that year. Who among us then, could have foreseen that in one year, 1882, 11,568 miles would be completed,—more than the total mileage in 1851,—and that at the close of 1884, there would be 125,379 miles of railroad in operation in the United States? And who could then have foreseen, that in 1884, 390,074,749 tons of freight would be carried by the railroads of

the United States, at an average charge of a cent and one-eighth (1.124) a ton a mile?

The second question of paramount interest at the meeting in 1865, was that of the continuance of reciprocal trade relations with Canada. Notice had been given by the Government of the United States, for the termination of the arrangement of 1854, and our business men generally desired the negotiation of a new treaty¹. Almost the only opposition to such a treaty in the Convention came from the lumber interests of Maine, but so overwhelming was the opinion on the other side, that the representatives of those interests were silenced if not convinced, and the final vote was unanimous as well as most enthusiastic. It should be added, that the absolute unanimity reached at the last stage in the proceedings, was in consequence of the conciliatory spirit manifested by the delegates from Pennsylvania, and particularly the remarks of Mr. Fraley, and his recommendation that the proposed treaty should not only be "just and equitable to all parties" in its provisions, but that it should be negotiated "with reference to the present financial condition of the United States."

In the paper which I had the honor to present at the meeting of the Council in Chicago a year ago, the policy of our Government with reference to Canadian Reciprocity, and the results of that policy, were considered at some length, and I will not advert to them again; but, perhaps, I may be excused for a personal reminiscence. In the spring of 1867, I was crossing the English Channel from New Haven to Dieppe, and on the passage made the acquaintance of a gentleman who proved to be the British Consul at Chicago (Mr. Wilkins). In the evening, at the hotel in

¹ The official correspondence between the two Governments would seem to show that at one time, just before the assassination of President Lincoln, there was a very fair prospect for the negotiation of a new treaty. The British Minister at Washington wrote to Earl Russell, March 9, 1865, as follows: "Mr. Seward requested me to say to your Lordship that, with a view of still further inaugurating a more friendly policy with Her Majesty's Government, they were perfectly willing, as the season advanced, to enter into negotiations for a remodelling of the Reciprocity Treaty on terms which might prove, he hoped, advantageous and beneficial to both parties."

Dieppe, our conversation turned upon the Detroit Convention, and he gave me a copy of a despatch which soon after its adjournment he had written to Sir Frederick Bruce, by whom it had been transmitted to Earl Russell, cautioning his Government against attaching too much significance to the action which had been taken, and expressing the opinion that it had assumed, both in the British and American press, an importance to which it was not entitled. National feeling on the subject of reciprocity, the consul thought, was not correctly reflected by the Detroit resolutions. I happened to have in my bag a copy of a pamphlet which I had written at about the same time, for the purpose of interesting the merchants and manufacturers of the East in the convention and its proceedings;¹ and in that quaint old town, so far away and so different from the scene of action in the United States, we exchanged documents with each other.

In 1865, the national debt which overhung the national prosperity like a pall, amounted to three thousand million dollars. The Hon. Mr. Tremaine, of Albany, made a brief report to the Convention from the Committee on Finance, in which it was said: "Every consideration of honor, duty and good faith, demands that every dollar of this debt, principal and interest, should be faithfully paid. He knows but little of the American people, who doubts that the statesman or party who breathes the word Repudiation will be indignantly repudiated and condemned by the people of the country." One of the resolutions which accompanied the report and were unanimously adopted, was as follows:

"That, regarding such national debt as a pecuniary obligation, most sacred in its character, this convention declares its conviction that all sacrifices will be cheerfully made that may be necessary to maintain the national credit unimpaired, at all times and under all circumstances, and that every dollar of such debt, principal and

¹ A Review of the Proceedings, published in 1866, which had appeared, in part, in a series of articles in the "Boston Post."

interest, can and will be discharged, without retarding, in the slightest degree, the onward progress of the nation in its career of prosperity, greatness and glory."

The most prominent, and perhaps valuable, result which came from the Detroit Convention of 1865, was one that was hardly thought of by most of the delegates when they came together. It was demonstrated that the business men of the country could organize effectively, and deliberate and act intelligently and harmoniously, with reference to great questions like transportation, finance, and the extension of trade, and it was seen to be exceedingly important that some plan should be devised for their meeting at stated intervals and in a representative capacity, to define and concentrate public opinion upon such questions, and to bring that public opinion to bear upon Congress and the National Executive. The Boston Board of Trade was charged with the duty of preparing a plan, and of submitting it to the various Boards of Trade and Chambers of Commerce, for their consideration. It was also authorized to take all necessary steps for the organization of a National Chamber of Commerce, as it was then proposed to call it; and, as one step in this direction, the Boston Commercial Convention was called, and was held in February, 1868. The Philadelphia Convention followed in June of the same year, and the National Board of Trade was then brought into existence.

But the Detroit Convention not only declared itself in favor of a National Chamber of Commerce or Board of Trade; it also expressed the opinion that there ought to be a department of the national government, answering more or less to the Board of Trade of Great Britain, and the Ministry of Commerce in several of the countries of Continental Europe. It adopted, unanimously, the following resolutions:

"That in order to relieve some of the Departments of the General Government, and especially the Treasury, from many of the

details with which they are now crowded, and in order to secure for the various industrial interests of the country the benefits of a systematized, experienced and permanent Board, it is the judgment of this convention that a Government Board of Trade should be formed, for the especial oversight and care of all questions relating to our agricultural, manufacturing and commercial interests, for the compilation of statistics, for inquiry into casualties, and for such other objects as may properly be included in such a department.

“That the Secretary of the Board of Trade of Boston be requested to prepare and present, in behalf of this convention, a memorial to the Congress of the United States, asking, in view of the immense industrial and mercantile interests involved, its early consideration of, and action upon, the subject.”

The National Board of Trade has urged the establishment of such a department as was recommended in this city in 1865, upon Congress and the General Government, almost every year since it came into being.

Our retrospect today would be incomplete, if we failed to make mention of our friends—how large the number—who were our fellow members in the Detroit Convention, and who have passed on before us “to the land of the great Departed, into the Silent Land.” We might name them one by one, and recall what was accomplished by each in his own Board of Trade or Chamber of Commerce, in his own community, and in the country. The record would be an honorable and an inspiring one. Two have died since the annual meeting in January, who assisted at the formation of the National Board of Trade in 1868, and took part in its earlier proceedings, and to whom it will be proper to refer particularly. Theophilus C. Hersey, of Portland, was a modest, quiet, self-possessed, intelligent man, and a leader in the group of enterprising and far-seeing merchants, who, by their indomitable energy and will, did much for the beautiful city by the sea of

which they were so proud, and which is so proud of them. John Welsh, of Philadelphia, stood among the foremost, in a city where distinguished men in all the professions abound, and added dignity and lustre to his calling, as a merchant, by his broad culture, his generous sympathies and his public spirit. His appointment as ambassador to the Court of St. James was more than a compliment to him personally; it was an honor to his profession, and a credit to his country. Wheaton says of the art of negotiation, in his *Elements of International Law*: "It depends essentially on personal character and qualities, united with a knowledge of the world and experience in business." Mr. Welsh's qualifications for the high mission entrusted to him could hardly have been more exactly stated, and they became only the more conspicuous during his official residence in England. His fellow-citizens of Philadelphia are proposing to place a statue in their public park, to commemorate his name, and character, and services. William E. Dodge has been thus commemorated in New York, and George Peabody in London. It is fitting that John Welsh should be remembered in the same way, in the city in which he was born and where he lived and died; and upon his pedestal, the words of wisdom uttered three thousand years ago might well be inscribed: "Seest thou a man diligent in his business? he shall stand before kings; he shall not stand before obscure men."

