

The Grain Growers' Guide

Winnipeg, Wednesday, September 17th, 1913

CONTROL OF ELEVATORS

The handling of the grain crop of Western Canada has become one of the very largest commercial industries of this country and the Board of Grain Commissioners was established for the purpose of managing that trade. It was to be expected that in the first legislation creating the grain commission and defining its powers there would be many things overlooked and this has been the case. In order that our Western grain should be safe during transit to tidewater, it is essential that the jurisdiction of the grain commission should extend over all the public elevators from Halifax to Vancouver, but at the present time the jurisdiction of the commissioners practically stops at Fort William and they have no control over the Eastern transfer and terminal houses. The Dominion Government owns terminal elevators at Halifax, St. John and Port Colborne, but these are operated in connection with the Intercolonial Railway by the department of railways. The big elevators at Montreal are operated by the Montreal Harbor Commissioners and are not subject to the jurisdiction of the Board of Grain Commissioners. In addition there are some of the transfer elevators and privately owned terminals between Fort William and tidewater that do not seem to be under any particular control or supervision. It seems only reasonable that there should be one executive head to the department in charge of the Western grain trade and that head should be the Board of Grain Commissioners. All these elevators from Fort William to Halifax were built and are operated for the purpose of handling Western grain and therefore the board that handles the grain trade west of Fort William is the natural authority to have charge of it east of that point. At present we do not know what is happening to the grain after it leaves Fort William and there is apparently no way to find out. The Western grain growers would favor an amendment to the Canada Grain Act, extending the powers of the grain commissioners to include the control of all the elevators east of Fort William.

Another peculiar feature in the administration of the Canada Grain Act is that the Board of Grain Commissioners have no control over the weighing systems throughout the various country and terminal elevators, this being a branch of the work controlled by the Inland Revenue department. It is very essential that the scales used in the country elevators, as well as in the terminals, should be correct at all times. This can only be assured by at least quarterly inspections by competent authorities, instead of the present annual or less frequent inspection by the Inland Revenue department. Several additional advantages would accrue from the placing of the control of elevator weights in the hands of the grain commission. The inspectors, in traveling throughout the country, could furnish a lot of additional valuable information necessary for the board, which would not be secured by the ordinary scale inspector. The Board of Grain Commissioners, during the short time since its appointment, has labored hard in the study of Western grain trade conditions and is undoubtedly placing the grain trade on an ever better footing. It is to be hoped that the Dominion Government will see the wisdom of extending the powers of the commission and give that body every encouragement to make the grain trade what it should be to safeguard the interests of the Western producer.

If all the profits made by real estate specu-

lators went into the public treasury there would be no need of taxes. The real estate speculators' profits are made by the public as a whole and should belong to the community. That is the Single Tax theory.

MANUFACTURERS UNDECIDED

Having received no further communication from the Canadian Manufacturers' Association in reply to our invitation to debate the tariff question, we sent the following telegram to the president last week:

"Robert S. Gourlay, President Sept. 10, 1913
Canadian Manufacturers' Association,
Toronto, Ont.

Has your Association yet decided whether you will accept our challenge to make free use of The Guide to debate the tariff question? If not, when do you expect to make a decision? Please reply by wire.

(Sgd.) Grain Growers' Guide."

The next day we received the following reply from Mr. Gourlay:

"Grain Growers' Guide, Toronto, Ont.
Winnipeg, Man. Sept. 11, 1913

Committee delegated to deal with your offer will probably meet Wednesday or Thursday next in Halifax.

(Sgd.) Robert S. Gourlay."

It is quite evident that Mr. Gourlay and the executive officers of the Manufacturers' Association regard it as a very serious matter to attempt to educate the readers of The Guide to the principles of Protection. We had rather expected in the beginning that the Association would be more than delighted to have the opportunity to place their views before our readers. The annual convention of the Canadian Manufacturers' Association meets in Halifax this week on the 16-17-18, and we hope that the spirit of loyalty will be manifested on the part of the delegates present, to such an extent that they will unanimously pass a resolution urging the government to reduce the tariff on British imports to one-half that charged upon foreign imports. The Canadian Manufacturers' Association is, of course, an exceedingly patriotic organization and such an action on their part would be quite in keeping with their vigorous and unceasing protestations of their loyalty.

PREFERENCE AND FREIGHT RATES

H. L. Drayton, chairman of the Railway Commission, has been on a visit to England for the purpose of investigating the question of ocean freight rates, which was raised in the House of Commons last session by Arthur Meighen, member for Portage la Prairie, and is now on his way home. The regulation of ocean freight rates by the government will admittedly be a difficult matter, and Mr. Drayton's report will be awaited with considerable interest. A method by which ocean freights may be reduced without direct government regulation is, however, suggested by a despatch to the Winnipeg Telegram by that paper's well informed London correspondent, "Windermere." In a cable dated September 11, this correspondent quotes a statement which he says "comes from one who should know." It is as follows:

"Drayton's conference with the steamship owners of Liverpool had, for its chief discussion, the establishment of arbitrary freight rate across the Atlantic. This object, when fully explored, is practically unattainable. Steamship reports show that the high rates are due to the difficulty of securing sufficient cargoes on the British side. It does not pay to send half-loaded ships westward to bring back Canadian grain.

Typical Case

"The following is a typical case put to Mr. Drayton: A ship due to bring back Canadian grain leaves Liverpool laden with steel rails

or machinery for the Argentine, which buys British goods. Canada mostly buys hers in the United States or makes them herself. From Argentine the ship carries local freight to Brazil, where she is loaded with coffee for New York. Then she gets her cargo of Canadian grain. Canada does not buy freely enough from England to enable the steamship owners to give lower rates, which would come with full Anglo-Canadian cargoes both ways. The great mercantile fleet of England only exists by contriving that the ships will never be idle or travel empty.

"In the opinion of experts it will be impossible, even by the aid of subsidies, to fix ocean steamship rates with the balance of trade all in one direction."

The plain moral of this is that if we want lower freight rates on grain crossing the ocean we must buy more British goods, and so give British ships more cargoes to this country. The only reason why more British goods are not bought in this country is the high rate of duty which Canada maintains against the manufactures of the Motherland. As a matter of fact far higher duties are at present collected on British goods than on goods which come from the United States. By this we do not mean that a higher rate of duty is charged on a given article imported from Britain than on the same article imported from the United States, but that the Canadian tariff, framed by the ultra loyal, flag-flapping, Imperialistic Canadian Manufacturers' Association, enacted by the Liberals, and continued in force by the Conservatives is so arranged that the class of goods which Canada imports from Great Britain bear a higher rate of duty than those which we are in the habit of getting from the States. For instance, mowers and binders, which are imported almost entirely from the United States are subject to a duty of 17½ per cent., while cotton and woollen goods, which come chiefly from England, are liable under the British Preference to duties of 25 and 30 per cent. Then a large number of articles are admitted free of duty when imported by manufacturers for use in their factories, and this list consists very largely of goods which cannot be secured from Great Britain and which are brought from the United States. That this arrangement of the tariff works out in such a way that the average duty on British imports is higher than that on United States imports is shown by the annual reports of the Customs Department. The report for the year ending June 31, 1912, shows that the percentage of duty on total value of goods entered for consumption, dutiable and free was 16 per cent., while on goods from the United States the average duty was 13.8 per cent., and on goods from the United Kingdom it was 19.1 per cent. These figures are given not to suggest that the duties on United States goods are too low, but, on the contrary to show that those on British goods are too high, and that the British preference is a myth and a delusion. The Guide has consistently advocated an increase in the British preference and eventual Free Trade with the Motherland. If such a policy will bring about lower freight rates on wheat, that is an additional reason for pressing it upon the government.

THE HUMAN SLAUGHTER HOUSE

Official Germany has been shocked and annoyed, while thinking Germany has been stirred up by a little book, "The Human Slaughter-House," recently written. The author Wilhelm Lamszus, a schoolmaster, gives what he calls a few "scenes from the war which is sure to come." It is sure to come unless the mad program of the mili-