

### Allowed Farmers to Ship Direct.

Another drawback to the grain grower dealt with by the Grain Act was the transportation system. The railway companies refused to load grain direct to cars at stations where there were elevators, but would only load from the elevators. This threw the buying of the grain into the hands of the elevator owners, giving them a monopoly which they used to the limit. The Grain Act compelled railways to allow the erection of warehouses at all their stations and sidings and compelled them also to provide loading platforms so that the farmer could get ordinary storage for the grain he hauled to the station or load it direct to the car.

The Act further compelled the railway to provide farmers with cars as they ordered them, the cars being supplied in rotation as the farmers' orders came in. The object of this was of course to break the monopoly of the elevator owners, and thus rescue the grain growers from the monopolistic grasp of the middlemen.

This Act was vigorously opposed by the elevator men, headed by Sir Rodmond Roblin, later head of the Manitoba government, and the Conservative party led by Sir Charles Tupper. It was fought all through one session of Parliament, but at the next session the Laurier government passed it.

### Continuous Opposition from "Interests."

The Act was found so beneficial to the Western grain growers that it was continually opposed by the elevator and railway interests, while the farmers as strenuously fought for it. In 1906 the Laurier government appointed a Commission to investigate grain trade conditions in various countries, and on their report amendments to the Act satisfactory to the grain growers were made by Sir Richard Cartwright, and confirmed by Parliament in 1908, in the face of strong opposition from the railway and elevator interests, the Bankers' Association, the Millers' Association, and the Conservative party, who were joined together to defeat the demands of the grain growers.

### Government-owned Terminal Elevators.

Eventually it was found impossible to prevent the "mixing" of grades at privately owned elevators, so it was proposed to have Government-owned terminal elevators. In 1911 the Laurier govern-

ment made provision for a revised Grain Act. This retained the original principles of car distribution to farmers, regulating of grade mixing and in addition the establishment of a Grain Commission to handle the trade and further provided for Government control or ownership of terminal elevators. This Bill was brought down by Sir Richard Cartwright in the Senate, and passed through. It was bitterly opposed by the Conservative Opposition in the Commons and talked out, being killed with the dissolution of Parliament on the reciprocity question.

Although temporarily killed by the Conservatives in Opposition, the Borden government at their first session found the demand for this legislation so strong that they were compelled to take it up as a Government measure and practically the only useful legislation of their first session was to carry out the Liberal plans with regard to the Grain Act.

### Senate Saved the Act in 1912.

As usual however they tried to favor "the interests" and several apparently innocent amendments were made, aimed to interfere with the right of the farmer to share in the distribution of cars. The Liberal legislation made statutory provision for the supply of cars direct to farmers; the Tory version strove to give the Grain Commission authority to suspend that provision whenever they saw fit—that is they could play into the hands of the railways and elevator men if they wanted to. Other amendments were presented favoring the interests of the railways and elevator owners as opposed to those of the grain growers. Fortunately there was a Liberal majority in the Senate. These amendments were thrown out, and the Borden government was compelled to accept the Senate's amendments.

Owing to the vigilance of the Liberal Opposition and the Liberal majority in the Senate, therefore, the Grain Act is now practically in the same shape as it was presented by the Laurier government in 1911, when it was temporarily killed by the Tory Opposition. Whatever advantages accrue to the Western grain growers through its working are entirely due to the work of the Laurier government, which forced the measure through and to the Liberal Opposition since 1911 which has kept it from being emasculated by the Borden government for the benefit of "the interests."

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### SIR WILFRID'S APPEAL TO QUEBEC.

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*"This, my compatriots, is what I ask—this is the entente cordiale I would have us achieve by service together. I have followed the ideal of conscience as prompted by my heart. Do not let us waver from the right line of conduct. I am older than most of you, and I am more than ever convinced that there is no real success but that which is based and has its foundations on right and justice and the generous instincts of the human heart. Let us unite to allay and, please God, to extinguish the prejudices that pull us apart, and do our utmost like real men and women to bring together the two elements in our country.*

*"Come, my young compatriots, with these brave young men who offer their services—their lives—that France may live, that Britain may continue her noble and generous rule and that heroic Belgium may be restored to her standing as a nation."*

*Sir Wilfrid Laurier, at Recruiting Meeting, Monument National, Montreal, June 3, 1916.*