

grades. Their business depends upon this, for if export shipments are below the grades which they are supposed to represent, the effect of this will be felt disastrously upon our exporters in time.

Complaints from the east and from abroad as to the grading of Manitoba wheat have been principally affecting Fort Arthur inspection. Now, it must be understood that the grain trade of Manitoba has no control whatever over the inspection at Fort Arthur. Though nothing but Manitoba grades of wheat are inspected at Fort Arthur and Fort William, yet it is the case that the inspectors there and the system of inspection followed there, is entirely independent of any authority from the trade or official trade bodies of Manitoba. Inspection there is carried out under the rules provided by the Dominion Government, independent of the Manitoba boards of trade. On this account the Winnipeg board has no official right to interfere with the inspection at Fort Arthur. Still, as the reputation of Manitoba wheat was at stake, it was felt that something should be done to protect our interests here from the constant complaints of wheat shipments being under the grade which was certified by inspection to be. Consequently a committee of Winnipeg grain men visited Fort William and Fort Arthur, in an unofficial capacity of course, with a view of looking into the system of inspection there. The Winnipeg grain men, through their local organization, have also discussed the matter fully, and will make such representation to the Dominion Government as in their opinion is necessary to place our system of inspection upon a sound and satisfactory basis. (The co-operation of eastern Canada boards of trade will be asked for, in assisting the Winnipeg people in obtaining the reforms needed.) The aim will be to place the terminal elevators at Fort William, under a system which will provide security that wheat sent out is fully equal in point of quality to the official certificate of grade accompanying it. That there will be any difficulty in securing this, when the matter is presented to the proper authorities, we do not apprehend.

From what can be learned of the system under which inspection is carried out at Fort William, there seems to be need of some reform. In the opinion of some grain men, and the opinion seems to be borne out by facts, it has at times been practically impossible to give a true certificate of grade on shipments from the elevators at the upper lake ports, through which Manitoba grain must pass, on its way eastward. This alone shows the necessity of action in the matter. An official certificate of grade certainly should not be given for grain shipped from an elevator, which may or may not be up to the grade certified to. Every facility should be given the inspector of enquiring into the quality of the shipment as made from the elevators, and unless the assurance as to grade is as certain as it is possible to make it, no certificate should be issued. This, it is declared, has not always been the case in connection with shipments from Fort William.

MANITOBA POLITICS.

Manitoba is now in the excitement of a provincial election contest. The exact dates of the nominations and elections have not yet been announced, but it is understood that it will be very soon. The campaign, however, has been going on warmly for some time. There is one favorable feature about the contest, and that is that it can hardly be said that it is being conducted upon Dominion party lines. As regards Dominion politics the contest seems to be decidedly mixed. There are those who call themselves Conservatives, who are contesting seats as government candidates, while several alleged Liberals are opposed to our alleged Liberal local government. The fact is that these men are probably anything for the time being which will serve their personal ambitions. Be this as it may, we see no good reason why Dominion party lines should be drawn in our provincial elections, but there are certainly many good reasons, too apparent to require specification, why Dominion partyism should have no place in provincial contests.

In the matter of public policy there is really nothing to distinguish the two parties—the government versus the opposition—in the present contest. It was all along supposed that the school question would be the great matter at issue. The *Winnipeg Free Press*, which has been looked upon as the special organ of the opposition, and in fact the front and back of the general attack upon the government, has long and continuously assailed the government upon its school policy. As the articles of the *Free Press* appeared to be imbued with a sort of official tone in this as in other special lines of attack upon the government, it was of course taken for granted that this journal proclaimed the policy of the opposition. But surprising to relate, when the opposition met recently in convention at Winnipeg, they repudiated the *Free Press* by adopting the policy of the government in the matter of the public schools, and have pledged themselves, if elected, to carry out the policy inaugurated by the government in this matter.

This, as stated, swept away the only question of importance supposed to be at issue between the government and the opposition. To be sure the opposition have adopted a "platform," but platforms, we know, are made for electioneering purposes, and are not to be taken at all seriously. But granting for the time being that the platform of the opposition is intended for the actual guidance of the party, and that it will be practically applied if the opposition is given an opportunity, it is still a document without and bristling features as opposed to the policy of the government. On important questions affecting the province, the platform promises the energetic action of the party. For instance, an energetic policy regarding railways is promised. Certainly a government composed of the parties now in opposition, would not be prepared to go to greater lengths than the present government has done, in assisting railways. Manitoba has already incurred considerable debt on this account, and our financial position will certainly not allow of a more extravagant railway policy than the present government has shown. The first sentence in

the opposition platform reads: "The finances of the province should be husbanded to the fullest possible extent, consistent with an efficient administration. This of course precludes any extraordinary energy in assisting railways. The Hudson Bay railway is referred to as a matter which should receive the "loyal" support of the country, but nothing is said as to what the opposition are prepared to do to assist the enterprise. Loyalty is cheap, and usually consists of talk. The existing government has pledged the assistance of the province to this enterprise to even beyond the reasonable ability of the province to meet such obligation. A vigorous immigration policy is also promised, and in this connection it cannot but be admitted that the present government has done very good work. The other planks of the opposition are not of great importance or prominence. An election law, simple, inexpensive, efficient, and equitable, and a redistribution of the electoral divisions having regard to population and identity of interest, is promised. Of course it is always the duty of a new government to provide a new election law and a redistribution, before the next election.

Altogether there is no question worthy of consideration, at stake between the government and the opposition, since the school question ceased to be an issue by the adoption of the government policy by the opposition. The contest is therefore narrowed down to a fight on the part of the government and its supporters to maintain power, and on the part of the opposition to attain power. There is also in the present contest considerable of a personal nature. There is a strong personal opposition to the government, coming mainly from former friends, and which aside from the enemies made by the school policy, seems to be due to disappointed ambition, personal spleen, etc. It comes from men who were not given a position in the governing party in accordance with their own exalted ideas of themselves, or who for some other private reason changed from friends to enemies of the government. This is a class of opposition which should receive little sympathy from the people.

Party lines not being at all closely drawn in the contest, and there being no issue of any importance between the government and the opposition, the contest narrows itself down to almost a purely personal one. In voting, the electors should have for their object the return of the best men. THE COMMERCIAL believes that it would be a calamity to Manitoba, to place in power the men who are engineering the opposition. We make this statement with some reluctance but as a duty we owe the province. There are some good honest men in the ranks of the opposition, including some of the country members in the house which will now be dissolved, and who are offering for re-election. There are also some candidates on the government side who are objectionable, such for instance as Mulvey in Morris, who would be a source of weakness to the government, if elected. When we make this statement against the opposition we do not wish to reflect upon the rank and file of the country candidates, who compare favorably with their opponents

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