

THE FARMER'S ADVOCATE AND HOME MAGAZINE.

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AND N.-W. T.

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service of the Department of Justice is to be invoked in dealing with violations of the Grain Act.

DR. DOUGLAS STARTS THE DEBATE.

Dr. Jas. M. Douglas, M. P. for Assiniboia East, inaugurated the debate with his resolution for "all papers and correspondence relative to the present wheat blockade in Manitoba and the Northwest Territories, and the incapacity and inability of the Canadian Pacific Railway Co. to move the crop of last year in such a reasonable period of time as to prevent the grain-growers of the country being subjected to serious financial loss." Dr. Douglas said the congestion was confined to East Assiniboia, between Moosomin and Moose Jaw. He brought up the matter in order that the discussion might lead to such legislation as would effect the relief of the present difficulties. The crop of 1901 surpassed anything that had ever been produced in any country on the face of the earth. The tendency of the wheat-producing area was to recede northward; the farther north the limit was pushed the stronger the grain and the more profitable. In answer to Mr. Charlton, Dr. Douglas gave the following explanation of this phenomenon: "If you take a spikelet in Wisconsin or Illinois it would produce formerly three grains of perfect wheat, but now only two perfect and one imperfect grain. Two grains ceased to be profitable. In Manitoba we have always been able to produce three perfect grains, and this year has been exceptional, and we have produced four perfect grains on one spikelet. Whilst in Manitoba we have the three perfect grains almost every year, to the north, in Saskatchewan and Prince Albert, you have almost invariably four perfect grains on the spike. This has predominated this year, so that the yield has varied from 25 to 55 bushels per acre. Hence the immense yield which has caused difficulties to arise in moving the crop."

Up to January the C. P. R. moved some 40,000,000 bushels, while the Canadian Northern moved some 11,000,000. To-day there was 50,000,000 bushels more to be moved before navigation opens, still leaving 26,000,000 for bread and seed next year. He quoted from the report of Mr. Cassells, warehouse commissioner, who said that he was informed by Superintendent Leonard that the C. P. R. had in use on the western division 7,000 box cars and 256 engines. Of these cars 4,000 were for carriage of general merchandise and 3,000 for the removal of grain. Of the engines, 38 were used in the passenger service in ordinary season, and 20 in the grain season, and 236 in freight traffic during the grain season. Grain was hauled on the average of 700 miles on that division, and an engine ran 200 miles a day. The elevator capacity at Fort William and Port

Arthur was 5,850,000. With this equipment the largest weekly delivery was 1,335,414, and the total delivery in September, November and December 14,281,401. In addition to this there were delivered 289,642 bushels oats, 31,764 bushels barley, and flour the product of 3,000,000 bushels, and 1,000,000 bushels oats shipped to Montreal and eastern points, mostly from the Edmonton district, none of which appeared in the weekly elevator report. There were 187 points from which grain was shipped through elevators. If one and a half cars a day were supplied to each shipping point the amount so delivered to Fort William would be 1,430,550 bushels, nearly 100,000 bushels more than was actually delivered in Fort William and Port Arthur in any week. Provision should be made for at least 2,000,000 bushels a week.

It was evident from the report that the grain facilities of the C. P. R. were far short of what was required. He estimated the loss to the farmers through imperfect transportation at \$5,000,000. In Assiniboia, where the Canadian Northern did not exist, the congestion was worst, as cars were sent to competing points in Manitoba. At Wolsley, 64 flat warehouses had been built to store the grain. He estimated the loss to the farmers of Assiniboia at \$1,546,834 already, with the prospect of heavy loss on that now on hand. At Indian Head, 115 small warehouses had been built, and 35 more were in the course of erection. Farmers had been defrauded by the elevator companies, who said they were not buying No. 1 hard, as they had no bins for it, thus compelling farmers to sell at a lower grade. This was done systematically, and these elevators should have had their licenses withdrawn. As to the remedy, he approved of the double tracking of the C. P. R. from Winnipeg to Port William. He did not approve of double tracking in the Territories, as this would not relieve those who had to haul grain long distances. The extension of the Great Northwest Central even for the 100 miles now proposed would be an advantage. There must also be increased storage capacity. The storage capacity at the lakes should be increased by at least 3,000,000 bushels, and the Government should even consider the advisability of assisting in that increase.

The dealers were enabled, by the refusal to supply proper bins, to rob the public by blending the grades. The remedy was in the legislation of 1900, which, if it had been strictly carried out, would have stopped the practice, but some amendments were required which would be put before the House before the session closed. What the people of the West wanted was perfect freedom of access to their market, independent of the elevator men; they wanted no legislation telling them that they must go along certain lines, but perfect freedom to present their products at the railway stations along the lines, and to have the facilities which the Dominion Railway Act has insured to all Canadians.

BETTER TRANSPORTATION FACILITIES NEEDED.

Mr. T. O. Davis, M. P. (Saskatchewan), fancied that the shortage of cars was not due so much to the neglect of the C. P. R. as it was to their not being equipped to move two crops in the one year, but it was high time the Government of the country did something towards the appointment of a railway commission to settle all these disputes. If the Act had not been carried out, it must be because the commissioner had neglected to enforce the provisions of the Act, or the parties having a grievance had not reported it to him. The great problem with which the people of this country had to deal was the fact that there were not enough railways in the Northwest to move the crop at the present time. Four hundred thousand people, all told, had produced 100,000,000 bushels of grain. The House would, he thought, agree that it was time something was done to improve the facilities for getting the crop to market. Up to this year there had been but one line of railway from Winnipeg to Port Arthur. Of course, later on the Canadian Northern had been opened, but by reason of their not having elevator facilities, the people could not avail themselves of their line to any great extent this year. Provision had been made that if a certain number of farmers petitioned for a flat warehouse they could get it, with proper sidings; but although the Act contained this excellent provision, Mr. Davis said he believed it could be amended with advantage. However, taking the Grain Act on the whole, if had, he believed, worked out satisfactorily. A quicker mode of transportation was required than the canals afforded. The difficulty was to get the crop out in the same season it was raised. The wheat depreciated six cents per bushel by being kept over the winter, and this, added to the insurance and the cost of storage, made the loss upon the products of the farmer, owing to the inability to ship it out the same year, something like ten cents per bushel. The grain commissioner could not deal with the shortage of cars; that was a matter that could only be dealt with by a railway commission.

REFORMS MUST BE MADE.

Mr. W. F. McCreary, M. P. (Selkirk), read a resolution passed by the Board of Trade of Winnipeg, pointing out that the loss to the farmers of the West by the shortage of cars had been estimated at \$7,000,000 this year, and suggested that if the farmers of the older Provinces had suffered to a similar extent the House would have heard from the members of those Provinces before. At the meeting at which that resolution was passed, Mr. McCreary said that Mr. White, of the C. P. R., stated his road had already hauled out 35 per cent. more wheat and 125 per cent. more oats than in 1899, when it was a comparatively good crop, and they had taken every reasonable precaution to meet the situation, but he asked whether the road should be expected to provide sufficient rolling stock to take out a crop of 100,000,000 bushels in the comparatively short space of time that elapses between threshing and the close of navigation. The crop begins to move about Sept. 1, and from that on till Dec. 1 it continues to move; but this year, owing to the wet weather, the time which the C. P. R. had to move the enormous crop was limited to 43 days. If it had been moved faster the grain would probably have been blocked farther east. Replying to Mr. E. F. Clarke, Mr. McCreary said that it was true some vessels went away from Fort William without a cargo, because of the delay in threshing caused by the wet weather holding the grain back, but a couple of days after they had gone there was plenty of grain waiting shipment. Local conditions sometimes influenced prices, as shown in a case that came to his attention when in Lisgar recently. There the price of wheat was some 16 cents per bushel lower than in the market town just across the border. This was partly accounted for by the demand from Minneapolis and by the local demand, but as far as he could learn the difference could not be attributed to the difference in railway rates. He suggested that a competent commission of three or five men be appointed to go to Duluth and other United States points and work back along the line in order to ascertain where the difference in price arose. With reference to the Grain Act, Mr. McCreary was of the opinion that it had not been sufficiently considered before it was passed, and stated that the Minister of the Interior, when he returned, intended introducing some amendments to remedy the defects which had been detected in its operation. He suggested that the time given the farmer to load cars be extended, and that the time allowed for the construction of loading platforms by the railway companies be shortened considerably. Mr. McCreary pointed out the serious influence which the shortage of cars might have upon the prospects of the whole Northwest if it resulted in checking the stream of well-to-do settlers who were now flocking in there, and who might become alarmed if they found that the difficulty was likely to become chronic.

PLEA FOR A UNITED CANADA.

Hon. J. I. Tarte, the Minister of Public Works, followed, admitting that the C. P. R. had not been able to grapple with the extraordinary crop of the past year, and said they have been allowed to increase their stock by \$20,000,000 to provide more power. He believed the Northwest should have as cheap transportation as it was possible to give. Elevator and railway facilities must be increased and waterways developed. The different sections of Canada must stand solidly together, and while the East stood by the West in certain directions, the friends of the West must stand by the national interests and industries of the East.

Hon. Wm. Ross (Victoria) expressed his satisfaction with the present fiscal tariff, and W. R. Brock (Toronto Centre) asked that the representatives of all the Provinces unite in making Canada a great nation on broad and patriotic lines.

A COMBINE SKINNING THE FARMER.

Mr. Frank Oliver, M. P. (Alberta), replied that the people of the Northwest had taken a broad view upon questions that came before them. And was it not an important national question that members from the Northwest had brought before the House, involving some \$25,000,000? The crop this year had not come by chance, but by hard, struggling energy, and by everything that goes to make men and make them great. A large part of the wealth of last year's production was lying useless, and to-day if eastern men were receiving apologies from the Northwest instead of remittances, it was largely because of the conditions of which the Northwest asked to be relieved. The East was as much interested in this question as the West. Mr. Oliver emphasized the fact, referred to by other speakers, that the C. P. R. did well until navigation closed, but since the elevators became full there had been an absolute deadlock and not a wheel had rolled to carry grain to market. The company had increased the price of their lands by \$1 per acre, thus increasing their wealth \$10,000,000 by a stroke of the pen, and increased their stock by \$20,000,000, and they should have used the money to raise the blockade. Although the C. P. R. was moving grain now, they had acted like a dog in the

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