

THE BURDEN OF RAILWAY RATES

The beaver stands for Canada. But Western Canada, while retaining its due share in the ownership of the beaver as the emblem of the whole Dominion, is entitled to have some animal as its own particular emblem. The buffalo, of course, would be the right animal historically; taking things as they actually are, however, the animal that would most accurately represent Western Canada would be a milch cow with the marks of the railway branding-irons burnt in deeply all over her hide.

Not only has Western Canada borne, and is still bearing, the heavy end of the burden of the cost, in lands, money and tax exemptions, of the railways which have made possible the national progress of the last fifteen years, but Western Canada has also borne, and is still bearing, the heavy end of the burden of railway rates. Scores of millions of dollars have been paid in subsidies for the building of railways for the development of Western Canada; all that money was money borrowed by the Dominion, and constitutes to-day a part of the public debt of Canada, in the carrying of which the people of Western Canada are bearing a full share.

The 31,864,054 acres of land given to the railways, by which the Provinces of British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba have profited, have been provided by Manitoba (3,566,977 acres), Saskatchewan (15,177,063 acres), and Alberta (13,120,014 acres.) The exemption of railway property from taxation has meant an immense total of money out of the pockets of the people of the West, and will continue to mean a heavy cash tribute paid to the C.P.R.

And yet the railways levy rates upon the people of Western Canada which are heavier than the rates in the East.

In comparison with the adjoining States, too, as in comparison with Eastern Canada, Western Canada is heavily burdened with extortionate freight rates—and that though the construction, maintenance and operation of railways in these Prairie Provinces is less costly than in any