

Saskatchewan Elevator Commission

The Saskatchewan Elevator Commission continued its meetings last week at Wapella, Wolsley and Indian Head. Much evidence both for and against a government owned system was gathered.

On Tuesday, May 31, the Commission met at Wapella and at once proceeded with the examination of Mr. Salmon, representing the Kelso branch of the Grain Growers' Association, of which he is president. Mr. Salmon asked for a system of provincial owned elevators, so that the identity of a farmer's grain would be preserved till it reached the buyer. It was advisable, he thought, to have purely national elevators to weigh, care, and ship only, the farmers to petition for such elevators and give security, the same to be indicated by the commission. He would be willing to pay a tax of 1 cent a bushel on all grains. Mr. Salmon asked for a sample market.

Mr. Eastman, a member of Spring Creek Grain Growers' Association, said he considered the initial elevator a public utility and that there was no room for speculation between the elevator and consumer. In case there was a deficit it should be met by a tax on all the ratepayers. He thought the government should have the appointment of the commissioners.

C. Ketchison, president of Spring Creek Grain Growers' Association, was asked to support the plan of the grain growers. He promised that after hearing the evidence before the commission, he would call a meeting of his association and send in a written list of answers to the questions submitted by the commission.

Joseph Robinson of the Walpole Grain Growers' Association wanted a government system of handling elevators.

R. Hicks, vice-president of the Kelso Grain Growers' Association, was questioned with regard to preserving the identity of the small farmer's grain. He asked why small bins should not be made and small farmer's loads not be put in them. A sample, he thought could then be taken and sent to Winnipeg, and after being graded, the wheat would then be transferred to a carload bin of the same grade. He advocated government ownership under a government commission and a tax and sample market.

The Wolsley meeting opened Wednesday, June 1. Levi Thomson of the Wolsley Grain Growers' Association expressed himself as opposed to government ownership, but was in favor of a number of farmers' elevators working in harmony with companies buying and selling grain and controlled by the grain growers of the province. He thought the government should assist in building elevators and the deficit should be met by a tax on those asking for the system or from the general revenues of the province. The elevators should be compelled to be prepared to clean wheat and have separate bins of at least car-load capacity.

Mr. Thomson said he would like to preserve the identity of wheat until it reached the buyer. He did not believe in terminal elevators within the province, as this would cause unnecessary handling and delay and increase the cost.

Benefited Individuals.

Gerald Fitzgerald, president of the Grenfell Grain Growers' Association, complained that at present the elevators were constructed for the benefit of private individuals and not the interests of farmers; that they refused to give special bins; charged excessive dockage and mixed grades. The loading platform was of little use to farmers ten or twelve miles from town. With regard to an independent commission Mr. Fitzgerald suggested that the Grain Growers' Association nominate six or seven men and the government could select three of these to form a commission. The government should get a monopoly by building an elevator at each point or buying the existing farmers' elevators and by closing, taxing or buying out the other elevators.

John Bateman, of the Wolsley Grain Growers' Association believed that government ownership would give a better service than the present system. The government should have charge of wheat from the time of leaving the farmers' hands till it reached Liverpool storage. A farmer company would be too un-

wieldy and not to be depended upon to oppose the existing companies. He could give legal guarantee to government, an elevator commission of five should be formed, two each to be chosen by the farmers and the government, and the fifth by these four.

A. B. Bompas, Reeve of the Wolsley municipality stated he got better weights by using the loading platform. He did not believe in government ownership of elevators but thought the government should lend money at a low rate to enable the farmers to build a system of elevators.

Continuing their investigation at Wolsley, Thursday, Levi Thomson was recalled. In answer to questions from the commissioners Mr. Thomson stated that he thought the government should not advance money without security, except in the form of bonds. The most feasible plan would be to form joint stock companies, as a man is likely to take interest in what directly affects his pocket. The same rule would hold good if one great joint stock company were formed, farmers to put in ten per cent, and the government to advance the remainder on adequate security. He thought a system of farmers' elevators on a large scale might be successful, but any system which was met by the opposition of the Grain Growers' Association would be a failure.

The present monopoly gave grain buyers too much opportunity. Whatever an elevator system cost was bound to fall on the producers. He had not given the subject of the skinning of grain, insurance, commission on wheat and cheating on steamship space much consideration. The grain industry was the most important business in Saskatchewan, and the government was therefore justified in assisting its development. The complaint that farmers were losing 10 cents a bushel was either imaginary or else the managers of grain warehouses must be acting dishonestly.

Large Fluctuation.

He could not account for the large fluctuations in the price of Canadian wheat compared with Russian and Australian wheat, but believed the rush to get the grain out before shipping on the Great Lakes stopped would cause some fluctuation. He believed in retaining the loading platform as the farmer could ship his grain at less cost by this means besides being more independent. It also meant excellent competition with the elevator, especially if some scheme of cleaning grain at home could be evolved, such as attaching a cleaner to the threshing machine.

H. O. Partridge of Sintaluta, mentioned as some of the grievances of which he had heard that prices were usually lower when a blockade occurred and that farmers were sometimes obliged to put their grain in lower grades because they were told there was no room for their actual grades. He was prepared to give evidence regarding the management of the Sintaluta farmers' elevator. He was in favor of government elevators for weighing and grading but not for marketing and believed farmers would patronize a government system.

Andrew Johnston, Wolsley Grain Growers' Association, said his experience with elevators has been satisfactory for the past two years. He had acted as assistant buyer for a few months at the local elevator, but had never been asked to cheat in weights. He had found some difference in dockage. He thought elevators were far more particular about weight than about grading, and that there was competition between them as to binning but not as to prices. He had never seen good No. 3 put in No. 2 bin. He thought companies might bring pressure to bear on buyers by reporting poor grading. He thought all wheat should be sold by sample.

E. E. Perley, Wolsley Grain Growers' Association, reported concerning his elevator that he had shipped 111,000 bushels this season and had 3,000 bushels still in the elevator. He found odd pounds over a half bushel sufficient dockage and 1 and 1 1/2 cents sufficient for elevator charges. He thought the present system of elevators satisfactory, unless some change could be made in terminals. He

was opposed to government ownership and did not think ten per cent. of the farmers wanted it. The government should not be expected to contribute more than fifty per cent. of the cost of the system.

J. F. Middlemiss gave evidence regarding the management of Wolsley farmers' elevator and stated it has not been a success. There has been some complaints about weights and dockage, but one year the elevator showed a shortage and the following year the surplus was very small.

At Indian Head, Friday, most of the session was taken up by the evidence of John Millar, formerly chairman of the royal grain commission, by Andrew Hamilton, a prominent farmer, and J. Gray, representing the Avonhurst branch of the Grain Growers' Association.

Mr. Millar disapproved of the elevator scheme for three reasons. First the government would be taking over the non-paying end of the business as the present elevators if used only for handling and storage, are not a

GOLDWIN SMITH DEAD

Goldwin Smith, the "Grand Old Man" of Canada, former tutor to the late King Edward and one of the world's most prominent literary men, died at Toronto, Tuesday, at 3.30 o'clock p.m. Full particulars in next week's issue of The Guide.

paying concern. The elevator companies at the present time sustain in many cases losses through deficits on weight at the end of the season, due to the dishonesty of some employees.

The men employed to manage government elevators, he said, would undoubtedly cause the government to sustain heavy losses, as more men will endeavor to graft from a government than from a private company, and third, the system of handling grain by a special binning is necessarily expensive because of the extra storage necessarily occasioned by the special bins being only partially full for a considerable length of time.

Mr. Millar was before the commission for over three hours. He admitted that evils existed but claimed they would be remedied by additions to loading platforms and additional railway lines and ear facilities, but not by additional farmers' elevators to any appreciable extent. He claimed that the expenditure of money provided by the state should not be under the control of anybody not responsible to all the citizens. Andrew Hamilton expressed himself in favor of government owned terminal elevators, but was opposed to a system of government owned internal elevators. He gave as his reasons that it would not remedy present wrongs, but would create wrongs that do not now exist, owing to the interference of politics.

The Saskatchewan Elevator Commission commenced their session in Regina Monday, and throughout the week it is the intention of the commissioners to conduct an investigation into the books and business affairs of the different farmers' elevator companies.

The idea of the investigation is to get information as to the success or non-success of the elevators conducted by these local companies on the storage basis.

The books of a number of companies, including those at Regina, were investigated, and in the majority of cases it is understood that the outcome was far from satisfactory, but of course it is impossible as yet that the commissioners can express anything yet in the way of an opinion.

GOOD ROADS MAKING

An interesting demonstration of road building will be given in the neighborhood of the Manitoba Agricultural College during the progress of the noxious weeds convention, which takes place from June 14 to 17. The demonstration will be under the supervision of Mr. McGillivray, the government good road commissioner, who has just returned from a trip through the province on a visit of inspection of the existing highways. Mr. McGillivray reports that, he considers all the grades too narrow and insufficiently drained, making the money expended in the making practically of no account.

LABORITES SELECT CANDIDATE

F. J. Dixon, who has gained prominence as a strong advocate of the single tax, was selected by the Labor party Monday evening at a well attended meeting of that body, as its candidate for Centre Winnipeg at the forthcoming provincial elections. R. S. Ward, president of the Trades and Labor Council, was appointed registration agent, and sub-agents were appointed for each of the 21 subdivisions in the constituency, the latter all being volunteers who were present at the meeting.

The report of the committee appointed in respect to the nomination of candidates recommended that the party concentrate its efforts in one constituency and suggested Centre Winnipeg as the most suitable. This was considered desirable to gain a foothold after which other constituencies could be contested.

The names of F. J. Dixon, W. J. Bartlett and W. N. Goodwin were then voted on by ballot with the result above indicated. W. D. Price resigned as vice-president of the party and S. Halliday was appointed his successor.

The Municipal League of the Trades Council which was brought into existence at the time of the last municipal election was dissolved. The financial statement showed a deficit of \$15.80, but there were some assets principally consisting of chairs which had been purchased for the meetings held. The party decided to take over the liabilities and the property of the league.

Mr. Dixon, the candidate selected, gave a short address in which he referred to the party's achievements in the past. It had elected a representative on the city council, through its efforts the hospital bylaw had been defeated, and he felt sure that the party could go one further and elect a representative to the Provincial house. He was in the field to fight to the last and he claimed that no other party could show such enthusiasm as had been exhibited by the volunteers for the registration work.

Additional Markets

British Live Stock

LIVERPOOL, JUNE 6.

John Rogers & Co. cable that trade at Birkenhead lairage has been slow, but Saturday's prices have been well maintained on the short supplies in prospect. Canadian cattle making 15 1/4 to 15 3/4c. and fed ranchers 14 to 14 1/2c.

DEPTFORD, JUNE 5.

The cattle receipts at Deptford during the past week were 15 American, 581 Canadian shipped via United States ports and 1,554 from Canada. Two hundred Canadian animals were sold during the week averaging 15 1/4 cents, and 824 Canadian were sold Saturday averaging 14c. Six hundred and sixteen will be killed prior to sale, probably on Monday.

Montreal Live Stock

JUNE 6

About 800 head of butchers cattle, 250 calves, 100 sheep and lambs, and 1,050 hogs were offered at Montreal stockyards today. Offerings of live stock during the week were 2,550 cattle, 1,400 calves, 225 sheep and lambs and 2,000 hogs. Damp, muggy weather caused a slow trade, but prime cattle were rather scarce, and brought firm rates, but common stock and milkmen's strippers were rather numerous, and brought lower rates. Hogs were also lower, prime beefs, 6 1/2c. to 7 1/4c. per pound; pretty good animals, 5 1/2c. to 6 1/2c. per pound; milkmen's strippers, 5c. to 5 1/2c. and common stock 4c. to 5c. per pound; calves, 3 1/2c. to 6c. per pound; sheep, 5c. per pound; lambs, 45.50 to 86 each; good lots hogs, 9 1/2c. to 10c. per pound.

Toronto Live Stock

JUNE 6.

Both export and butcher buyers were busily engaged today at the Union stockyards. Butcher cattle particularly were in good demand and dealers were generally of the opinion that the market for the best quality was fully 15 cents per cwt. higher than in the last weekend trade.

The best export cattle sold on an average of from \$6.75 to \$7.25 per cwt., but special sales were made at \$7.40 to \$7.50.

Closing quotations: Export cattle, choice, \$6.50 to \$7.50; export cattle, medium, \$6 to \$6.25; export cattle, common \$5.50 to \$5.75; stockers, choice, \$4 to \$5.25; stockers, light, \$3 to \$5.