

farm is reduced by one-quarter or 25 per cent. The average price of wheat in the Western Provinces to the grower for the last crop was approximately 75 cents per bushel. It may safely be assumed that the purchasing power has been reduced at least one-fifth or fifteen cents. To put it in another form—of the wheat raised by the farmers of the West, one bushel out of every five goes to pay the tribute levied by the manufacturer, by virtue of the customs duty.

Grain Growers' Demands

In order to get relief from the customs duties the Grain Growers desire the government to proceed along two distinct lines.

First, Reciprocal free trade arrangements between Canada and the United States in all natural products and manufactured goods not largely exported by Great Britain.

Second: By an increase of the British preference immediately to fifty per cent, and a gradual increase until free trade is established between Canada and Great Britain. While asking for a policy that would within reasonable time provide free trade between Canada and Great Britain, on all manufactured goods and natural products, we repudiate the adoption of any fiscal system that would have the effect of increasing the price of food stuffs to the people of Great Britain for our benefit, and resent the implication that is made in certain quarters that the loyalty of the Western farmers to the Mother Land can be secured or maintained by any advantage that might accrue from any preference in trade relationship. We have hitherto successfully competed in the markets of the world in the sale of our commodities. If the burden imposed on us by protection is removed we are prepared to face open competition in the world markets without any burden of protection from the government. The farmers of Canada require no pampering and are prepared to stand on their own feet. Apparently ours is the only important industry in Canada that is prepared to do that. The fact that the small measure of relief from customs duties on manufactured goods provided for in the reciprocity agreement before Parliament has led to such strenuous opposition by financial institutions and beneficiaries of the protected system, indicates what a government that would attempt to materially reduce the burden of protection would have to face. We therefore confidently look to you and our representatives in Parliament to assist in changing Canada's fiscal system so as to reduce the burden now imposed on all the rural population of the Dominion by customs duties in the direction of the demands made by the organized farmers at Ottawa last December.

FARMERS WANT RECIPROCITY

The paper of Mr. J. W. Scallion on reciprocity was as follows:

This delegation representing the organized farmers of Manitoba, desires to thank you for affording us this opportunity of meeting you and presenting to you our views and desires regarding the enactment of certain measures of legislation which we consider of vital importance to the development and prosperity of the agricultural industry of this country, and to the great body of this country and to the great body of the common people. The farmers of Canada have been pressing for such legislation for some time. When the premier visited the West last summer the farmers placed their demands in that regard clearly and strongly before him. They followed up that action by sending a large delegation representing the agricultural interests of Canada to Ottawa to present those demands, which we regard as our Bill of Rights to the government and Parliament of this country. Today we present that Bill of Rights to you, Sir, the leader of the Opposition and prospective leader of the government, and strongly urge you to use your influence as a leader, and the weight of your following in Parliament, to have every one of the measures set forth in that Bill of Rights enacted into law.

An Unjust Burden

We demand a reduction in our protective tariff, which is felt to be an injustice and a burden on the agricultural industry of this country and the great body of consumers of protected commodities. We are willing to be taxed to meet the public expenditure of the Dominion, but strongly protest against being taxed for the special benefit of private interests.

Such a tariff is not only unjust and oppressive in its operations, but is dangerous and incalculable in its tendency to corrupt public life and secure legislation in the interest of privileges as against the interests of the people. Our protective tariff has become a breeding ground for mergers and trusts, combinations organized for the purpose of killing competition and fixing prices charged the consumers of protected commodities. Prices made for the purpose of paying dividends on capitalizations of industries that in many cases are half water. Such conditions can only exist under the shelter of the protective tariff, which is nothing short of a license to practice grand larceny on the people. We demand the enactment of a fiscal system that in the matter of taxation will give justice to every public and private interest in this country and that will entirely abolish special privileges.

Increase British Preference

The products of our farms, when exported, are sold in the markets of the world where prices are fixed by free competition and the export prices practically fix the prices for home consumption while the supplies for our farms are purchased in a restricted market where prices are fixed by methods already mentioned. That is not a square deal and we demand that such restrictions be removed. We strongly urge that the British Preference be increased to fifty per cent. of our general tariff, and gradually be increased from year to year until free-trade-with-Britain is established, at farthest, within ten years.

We are strongly in favor of, and will continue to press for, the widest possible measure of reciprocal trade with the United States. Such a measure was pressed for when the premier was in the West last summer and it was demanded by the delegation representing the farmers of Canada at Ottawa last December. We not only regret, but we wish to record our entire disapproval of the tactics resorted to in Parliament to try to prevent the passage of that measure and force a dissolution of Parliament upon it before a redistribution measure could be passed, which would give the West fair play in parliamentary representation. We have studied the question of reciprocity with the United States, more especially with regard to its bearing on the present and future agricultural interests of our country for in its present form it deals almost entirely with the natural products of both countries and is therefore largely a farmer's question. We have endeavored to inform ourselves as to its effect on present and prospective conditions, and capabilities of both Canada and the United States, with regard to production and consumption of foodstuffs and we find that while the lines of production and consumption of food stuffs are rapidly converging in the United States, these lines are rapidly widening in Canada.

Decrease in U.S. Exports

In the year 1898 the total acreage of wheat, corn, oats, barley and rye sown in the United States was 151,784,501, and the exports of those crops were 598,715,000 bushels. In 1907, nine years later, the acreage under those grains was 183,353,000 or an increase in acreage of 21 per cent. But the exports in these grains that year were only 427,442,000 bushels, a decrease in nine years, notwithstanding the increased acreage under crop, of 69 per cent., showing how rapidly home consumption of these grains was overtaking their production. But it might be said that this tremendous falling off in the export of grain was owing to its being fed to stock and exported in the form of beef or pork. However, the falling off in the export of these commodities was fully as remarkable as in grain for the period named. In 1900 the report of the United States department of agriculture shows 47,610,000 cattle on the farms of the nation. In 1908 the number had increased to 50,100,000, an increase of 81 per cent. The exports of cattle had decreased 14 per cent. In 1899 the number of swine on United States farms was 38,500,000. In 1908 the number had increased to 56,000,000, an increase of 45 per cent. But, notwithstanding the large increase in production, the exports of pork and its products showed a falling off of 441,000,000 pounds. During the same period the number of cows increased 34 per cent., while the exports of butter and cheese went down from 79,000,000 pounds to less than 15,000,000 pounds, and the imports of butter and cheese

increased from 10,000,000 to 33,500,000 pounds, an increase of 232 per cent., showing that the consumption of butter and cheese in the United States had outgrown the production of those commodities and that it was necessary to import, in order to meet home consumption. The United States bureau of statistics, 1909, shows a falling off as compared with the previous year in the exports of beef of 35 per cent., of pork and its products, 15 per cent., of grain, 49 per cent.—this falling off in one year.

Where is the Market?

During all these years, in which consumption of foodstuffs has been overtaking production, the United States was bringing new land under cultivation. But she has practically reached her limit in that respect. This statement of facts taken from the records shows that in a short time the United States will be a large importer of foodstuffs and there is no country in the world more capable and in a better position to supply that demand than Canada. Canada is just beginning to develop her immense resources for the production of foodstuffs. In a few years our Great West will be raising for export hundreds of millions of bushels of grain, and hundreds of thousands of live stock and other produce. Where are markets to be found for all this? Britain can only take a limited quantity. Last year we exported 50,000,000 bushels. Britain took only a part of it. France and Belgium took some and the United States took 2,000,000 in flour and wheat in face of a tariff of 35 per cent. When Canada has, in the near future, as it is calculated she will have, 500,000,000 bushels of wheat, besides millions of bushels of other grains for export, where is she going to send it? Where is she going to send her large production of other commodities? Shall we refuse the market offered by 90,000,000 or 100,000,000 of people right at our doors? An open market which will, in a short time, be the best market in the world for our surplus products. Our trade with the United States is greater than our trade with all other countries combined. Last year it was greater by over \$100,000,000 than our trade with Britain, notwithstanding the preference given Britain in our tariff and that trade has been increasing from year to year, in face of a hostile tariff which makes it less profitable to all engaged in it. This trade with the United States, in view of conditions already stated, will expand immensely. Why should that great open market now offered us be refused? The whole range of history furnishes no example where the offer of such a market, under such conditions, was refused by any nation.

The By-Interests

But we are told by our financial interests, our protected manufacturers, our transportation companies and politicians standing in with those interests, that reciprocity with the United States would lead to annexation, would disrupt the Empire, would be a bad thing for our farmers. Those interests are afraid of losing their grip on the farmers of this country. They have controlled the markets in which these farmers purchase their supplies. Now they want to dictate to them the markets in which they must sell their products—control both ends of the farmers' business. Those interests now carry on operations in the United States with money obtained from the Canadian people but they would deny similar rights to the farmers of this country similar rights to the farmers of this country. We take no stock in the annexation or disruption of the Empire cry. Such arguments only show the weakness of the cause they are intended to support. Is it not strange that during those years when the United States was a large exporter of foodstuffs every political party in Canada was in favor of reciprocity but now, when the country is about to become a large importer of such products, and, consequently, our greatest customer, in these lines, we hear all sorts of arguments urged against it. The favored nation treaties, we are told, are going to flood us with the products of those countries with which such treaties are in existence. We meet their product now in the markets of the world, and generally our produce commands a higher price than theirs. It would be like sending coals to Newcastle for those nations to send their produce to Canada. But, if found necessary, these treaties could be

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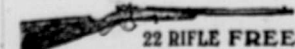
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denounced as was done in the case of Germany a few years ago when the treaty with that country was formed to operate against our interests.

The question of reciprocity is the most important one placed before the Canadian people since Confederation, and we demand that, in view of its importance to the agricultural interests of this country, as already set forth in this paper, it be dealt with in a broad, statesmanlike manner by our representatives in Parliament and not from the view-point of political advantage, a practice too often resorted to, in order to promote the interests of a party instead of the welfare of the people.

I beg to present this statement for consideration.

Continued on Page 13