

CAMPAIGN OF MISREPRESENTATION

Throughout the protectionist press in Eastern Canada, editorial articles and anonymous letters are continually appearing which declare that the Western farmers are extraordinarily prosperous. They figure that wheat growing is a very profitable business and that the farmers are also becoming wealthy through the increase in the value of their land. This claim is supported by a statement to the effect that 25,000 Western farmers are spending the winter abroad. The aim of these articles is to arouse antagonism among the farmers of the East against the farmers of the West. The protectionist manufacturers, who control most of the protectionist newspapers, are seeking for more tariff favors. They know they cannot get any assistance from the West and are, therefore, anxious to stir up animosity amongst the Eastern people against the low tariff Western farmers. Naturally, this kind of reading matter being continually served up to the Eastern farmers will have an effect, as most of them do not get the actual facts of the case. The situation is growing dangerous on this account. As a matter of fact these false notions about the prosperity of the Western farmers are also being encouraged from Western sources. The railway companies, the big land companies, the mercantile establishments, the leading newspapers, and the provincial and federal immigration authorities are encouraging this idea of the tremendous prosperity of the West. In many cases they are assisted by the farmers who believe it is their duty to boost the country regardless of facts and results. The aim of all these institutions is to get more people into the country, so that their business will increase. In plain English this story of Western prosperity so far as it emanates from the West is spread for the purpose of securing more people, through immigration, to be exploited. These same stories are now being seized upon by the protectionists of the East to set all Eastern Canada against the farmers of the Prairie Provinces. The sentiment is being encouraged throughout the East that the wealthy Western farmers are selfish and greedy and in their demand for lower tariff, lower freight rates and better economic conditions, are determined to ruin the industries of Eastern Canada and thus injure the Eastern farmers. The protectionist press at the command of the manufacturers is thus carrying on a campaign to set the East against the West. If the Eastern farmers could know the actual conditions in the Prairie Provinces they would not be so easily misled. This year's crop though a large one, has not been generally profitable to the farmers because of very low prices, financial stringency, large increases in ocean freights and unsatisfactory weather conditions. Thousands of farmers have this year received from 40 to 60 cents a bushel for their wheat after hauling it anywhere from 10 to 40 miles to the elevator. By the time the cost of threshing, the dockage, the cost of hauling and other charges were eliminated from the net returns of this wheat, the farmer did not make ordinary day wages, let alone any return on his investment. The story of 25,000 wealthy farmers from the West spending their winters abroad is a miserable and intentional falsehood. Possibly 1,000 or 2,000 farmers at the most have returned to their old homes in the United States, Ontario or the Old Country to spend Christmas with their own people. In the majority of cases the farmers could not afford the trip and have been saving up for it for several years, because they want to see their parents again in this world. It is true there are some wealthy landlords who pass as farmers who are able to make a three months' tour during the winter. But they are not the farmers who are suffering from present conditions. It is true also that there

are possibly 2,000 or 3,000 automobiles owned by the farmers in Western Canada, which is hardly proof of the general affluence. We make the statement advisedly that not 25 per cent. of the farmers in Western Canada in the past five years have made interest and wages out of their actual farming operations. We believe the time has come when the Western farmers in self defence must publish the actual conditions in this country, if not they are going to be sacrificed by the handful of Special Interests in Toronto and Montreal, who control the eastern press and dictate our national fiscal policy. If the Western farmers do not take steps to have the actual conditions placed before Parliament, and the Western people generally during the present winter, they will have a millstone hung around their necks that it will take 25 years to unloose. It might be expected that some of our Western Members of Parliament would take a hand in correcting these wholesale misrepresentations that are being made in the East. Our Western members should know the actual conditions and should not be afraid to tell them, but we will venture that it will be left for the people themselves to do that necessary work.

DECLARES STOCKMEN INSANE

In its issue of Dec. 28 the Winnipeg Telegram has a long and carefully prepared article dealing with a large number of shipments of Canadian cattle to Chicago during the present season. The claim of this article is that these shippers have actually lost money, and the Telegram concludes its article with this statement:

"The argument that cattle shippers of Western Canada have been injured by the defeat of reciprocity will not stand the test of examination."

Yet the whole article in the Telegram is a conclusive proof that the above statement is false. The Telegram admits in some cases that the shipper profited by sending his cattle to Chicago, but claims that in other cases there was a small loss after paying freight, duty, and allowing for extra shrinkage. Yet for the sake of argument, by taking the figures in the Telegram and eliminating the 27½ per cent. duty every shipper would have made a big profit. Thus the Telegram admits that free trade in cattle would have been profitable to Western Canadian stockmen. But even with conditions as they are it will be a remarkable revelation to these shippers that they have lost money where they thought they were gaining. Hundreds of steers have been shipped to Chicago and sold for as high as \$10 per hundred-weight, where they could only have secured from \$5 to \$6 in Winnipeg. The whole article in the Telegram has the appearance of being prepared by the little group of men who control the cattle trade in Western Canada. If the Telegram succeeds in convincing the farmers that free trade in cattle, which would allow them to take advantage of the Chicago market which has been about 66 per cent. higher than the Winnipeg market, will cause them a loss, then we will take off our hat to the Winnipeg Telegram. Any newspaper can juggle figures when paid for it, but to prove that our leading stockmen are lunatics will require further proof.

WOMAN SUFFRAGE FIND FAVOR

Those who believe that the franchise should be extended to women on equal terms with men, will be very much interested in the discussion which occurred on this question in the Saskatchewan Legislature recently. Practically every member of the Legislature, regardless of party, approved of the principle. There was, however, a general feeling that it would not be wise to grant the franchise to the women in Saskatchewan until the women themselves expressed a desire to have the franchise. It practically now is in the hands of the women

to secure a ballot in Saskatchewan if they want it. With such a feeling prevailing in the Legislature there is no doubt if the women make it evident that they desire the right to vote it will be extended to them. At the same time, if the legislators are as firmly convinced of the justice of woman suffrage as they claim to be their excuse for delay is a weak one. Slavery would still be flourishing had not men who believed in justice taken action without waiting for an uprising among the slaves. But the legislators are the men who rule and if they have decided upon this rather amusing excuse for neglecting their duty then the women should act. There are several ways in which the women could express their desire. They might do it through organization and the circulation of petitions, the petitions in this case to be signed by women only, over twenty-one years of age, as the Legislature takes the stand that the men are as a whole in favor of the principle. Much good work might also be done by the women of Saskatchewan setting forth their views in letters addressed to the Premier of the province. There is no doubt but that the women of Saskatchewan will within a few years cast their ballots the same as the men. The Saskatchewan government is dealing with several most commendable pieces of progressive legislation and is in this respect setting the pace for the other provinces of Canada. Even the strongest advocate of reform, however, realizes that it is dangerous for any government to enact legislation in advance of the intellectual progress of the people. The fact that the Saskatchewan Government has recognized the progressiveness of the people of Saskatchewan is one of the best possible tributes to the value of the educational work which the organized farmers are carrying on in that province.

"Who are supreme, the Government or the Canadian Pacific Railway?" asked Geo. T. Somers, president of the Toronto Board of Trade, also president of the Sterling Bank of Canada and of other concerns, when a new instance of the Canadian Pacific Railway's disregard for authority came to light. Mr. Somers thinks it is time the rulings of the Railway Commission had some finality, so that the railways might not go on for years disregarding their rulings under pretext of appeals and counter appeals. Western farmers have been saying the same thing for years, but they did not attract the publicity of front page head lines in the Toronto papers. Now that the Canadian Pacific Railway has tramped on the toes of the Toronto millionaires, let us hope that their protest will do more good than those of the thousands of western farmers who have had the Canadian Pacific on their backs for the past twenty years.

Financial brokers and real estate agents who are making fat profits by handling British funds invested in Canada, are making a great fuss over Mr. Lloyd George's attempt to collect income tax on the profits which British residents are making in this country. We are sorry indeed for the poor British investors, but why do not our Canadian governments do the taxing instead of leaving it to Lloyd George? As far as profits on real estate are concerned, every dollar that outside speculators make is a dead loss to Canada.

If one of our Western Members of Parliament would place before the House of Commons the actual conditions in the Prairie Provinces he would be doing excellent work. It would be an eye-opener to the Eastern Members, and it would also bring down upon his head the condemnation of all those interests who are exploiting the people of the West. But it will be done some day and to the lasting good of Canada as a whole.