

Massey-Harris Replies

NOTE—The Massey-Harris Company, feeling that they have suffered an injustice from the comparison quoted in *The Guide* a few weeks ago, have taken advantage of *The Guide's* standing offer of free space to manufacturers to reply to criticisms. The reply to the Massey-Harris letter and the other side of the case from the farmers' standpoint will be found on page 4 of this issue.

Agricultural Implement Prices

Toronto, June 3, 1914.

The Editor,
The Grain Growers' Guide,
Winnipeg, Man.

Dear Sir,

Referring to comparative retail prices of implements at Winnipeg and Minneapolis, printed in *The Grain Growers' Guide* of April 1, 1914, would say this article was, of course, intended to convey to the grain-growers of the West the impression that the figures given were a fair indication of the difference in price to the grain-growers of the Western Provinces as compared with the Western States, and we feel it would be most unfortunate to leave your readers so grossly misinformed regarding the actual comparative prices paid by the farmers on the United States side of the border and in the Provinces of Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta.

Claims Guide Unfair

When sending our price list to you we took occasion to advise that a comparison such as you proposed to make was entirely misleading and of no value whatever to anyone desirous of having an accurate knowledge of the conditions prevailing in regard to implement prices in the Western States and in the Western Provinces of the Dominion. The price of implements at Minneapolis, or in Winnipeg, is of interest to very few grain growers, but the price of implements in the States of Minnesota, North Dakota, Montana, and in the Provinces of Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta, is a matter of personal and individual interest to many thousands of grain growers. As pointed out when sending you our list, our prices were not only f.o.b. Winnipeg prices, but they were also the prices for delivery at any customer's station in Southern and Central Manitoba. The prices you quoted for Minneapolis are simply prices in what is almost altogether a wholesale centre, and are no indication whatever of the cost to a farmer even twenty miles away from Minneapolis, and are very misleading if applied generally to the State of Minnesota. We think everyone will concede, if prices are to be compared, that the Northern portion of Minnesota and the States of North Dakota and Montana must be taken to give parallel illustrations of prices in Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta.

We sent you along with our price list retail prices of a number of implements at five different points in North Dakota and three different points in Montana, vouching for the accuracy of the information, as we had sent a special man to these points for the purpose of securing prevailing retail prices. We suggested that you print these prices rather than Minneapolis prices, pointing out that the comparison would be a fairer one.

Government Figures

However, as a result of the debate in the House on the reduction of duties on binders, mowers, and reapers from 17½ per cent. to 12½ per cent., official statements have been made regarding freight costs and prices of binders at various points, which, having been secured through an absolutely disinterested source, will perhaps carry more conviction to your readers than prices secured by our company, although the prices we sent you are just as reliable as they could be from any source.

First as to freight costs—we quote Hansard of April 30, No. 70, page 3257: "MR. WHITE: I have looked very carefully into the question of freight charges. For a period of over a year and a half or two years I have been giving very full and careful consideration to the question of the duty upon agricultural implements. In view of the statement made here the other night by my hon. friend from Assiniboia (Mr. Turritt) with regard to the rates on binders at Minneapolis, I desire to place upon Hansard," for the information of the House, a statement as to the difference between the freight rates from Chicago to Canadian points and to American points opposite Canadian points, and from Toronto or Hamilton, to points in the Northwest.

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Freight on Binders

"I find that the freight charges upon an eight-foot binder are as follows:—

From Chicago to—	
Minneapolis	\$ 3.90
Fargo, N.D.	8.19
Grand Forks, N.D.	9.16
Valley City, N.D.	10.14
St. Thomas, N.D.	10.53
Devil's Lake, N.D.	11.31
St. John, N.D.	12.48
Rocklake, N.D.	12.48
Charles, N.D.	12.48
Lansford, N.D.	12.87
Minot, N.D.	12.87
Gardena, N.D.	12.87
Williston, N.D.	14.82
Havre, Mont.	22.81
Great Falls, Mont.	23.01
Billings, Mont.	21.84
Winnipeg	10.53
Brandon	12.09
Weyburn	15.79
Regina	16.18
Calgary	22.03
Edmonton	22.03
From Hamilton to—	
Winnipeg	\$12.80
Brandon	14.40
Weyburn	17.40
Regina	17.80
Calgary	24.00
Edmonton	24.00

Factory Costs

Following the above statement there was some discussion as to the relative

the matter fairly, for, after all, it is a business matter. There is an enormous amount of capital invested—a great deal of English capital—in the manufacture of agricultural implements in Canada, particularly in Ontario. So far as the East is concerned, there is very little difference in the price of agricultural implements on either side of the line. The statement which I will give the committee, which is taken from the report made by Mr. Costello, a very trusted and, I believe, competent official of the customs department, gives the following as comparative prices, cash on delivery, of eight-foot binders:—

United States:—Fargo, \$147.50; Grand Forks, \$147.50; Valley City, \$150; Devil's Lake, \$150; Lansford, \$160; Minot, \$160; Gardena, \$160; Williston, \$165; Havre, Mont., \$190; Great Falls, \$190; Billings, \$190.

Canada:—Winnipeg, \$160; Brandon, \$160; Weyburn, \$165; Regina, \$165; Calgary, \$170; Edmonton, \$170.

The difference, therefore, would run from \$10 down in favor of the price at the American points. The committee will bear in mind two things that I have mentioned: first, that the Canadian manufacturer is at a disadvantage in respect of freight rates, which are higher from Toronto or Hamilton to the Canadian West than they are from Chicago. Second, the cost of production in Hamilton, as shown by the returns of the International Harvester Company, are considerably higher in that city than they are in Chicago. Bearing these two facts in mind, the committee will have one explanation at least for the fact that the cash price of agricultural implements is somewhat higher in the Canadian West than it is across the line.

Different Equipment

MR. McCOIG: The hon. gentleman has quoted the price of eight-foot binders at dif-

Costello; first of all as to freight costs—you will see that the cost of laying a binder down in Minneapolis from Chicago is \$3.90, as compared with from Hamilton to Winnipeg \$12.80, or Brandon \$14.40. Our price list, which you quoted, provided for the delivery of the binder at any point in Southern or Central Manitoba, and in very many cases this involves the Winnipeg or Brandon freight, as indicated above, plus local freight from these points to the customer's station—in fact, we calculate that our average freight is the Winnipeg freight plus about \$5.50, so that in your comparison you were putting a freight of \$3.90 per binder against an average freight of \$18.50.

More Comparisons

Now as to prices—we are going to compare the prices secured by the government official with various points on the Canadian side of the border, selecting towns as nearly directly north of the United States towns mentioned as is possible.

Fargo is on the border of Minnesota and North Dakota, and practically directly south of Winnipeg. Mr. Costello gives the price of an 8 ft. binder at that point as \$147.50; our price for an 8 ft. binder, having an additional knife and an additional pitman, at Winnipeg is \$164.00, but our price at Winnipeg has to cover the possibility of delivery at any point in Central or Southern Manitoba. The freight to Fargo on a binder from Chicago, as shown above, amounts to \$8.19, whereas the freight to Winnipeg from Hamilton is shown as \$12.80.

Valley City is practically directly south of Morden. At this point the price of an 8 ft. binder is shown as \$150.00; at Morden our price, including an extra knife and an extra pitman, is \$164.00.

Devil's Lake is practically directly south of Pilot Mound. The price at Devil's Lake is quoted at \$150.00; at Pilot Mound, Carberry or Brandon, with the extra equipment mentioned above, our price is \$164.00.

Minot and Lansford are practically directly south of Virden, Reston, Nipinka and Melita. The price quoted at Lansford and Minot is \$160.00. The price of our binder, with an extra knife and an extra pitman, at the Canadian points mentioned is \$164.00, whereas the freight from Chicago to Lansford and Minot is practically identical with the freight from Hamilton to Winnipeg only.

Prices Identical

Williston, North Dakota, is practically directly south of Regina or Weyburn. The retail price of an 8 ft. binder, as quoted by the government official, is \$165.00. The retail price of our 8 ft. binder, with the additional equipment of one extra knife and one extra pitman, is \$165.00 at Regina or Weyburn, or at any other agency covering a comparatively wide area with Regina as a centre.

The table of freight costs shows that the cost of laying down a binder at Williston from Chicago is \$14.82; from Hamilton to Regina \$17.80.

At Havre and Billings, Mont., which are nearly directly south of Maple Creek, Sask., an 8 ft. binder is quoted at \$190.00; our binder at Maple Creek, with an extra knife and an extra pitman, costs the Canadian farmer \$168.00.

Grand Falls, Mont., while not so far west as Lethbridge, Calgary or Edmonton, is the farthest west quoted by the government official. The retail price of an 8 ft. binder there is given at \$190.00; our retail price of an 8 ft. binder, including the extra knife and the extra pitman, delivered anywhere

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PROTECTION IS ROBBERY

The greatest book on the tariff question in Canada that has ever been written is "Sixty Years Protection in Canada," by Edward Porritt. It deals with the tariff question fully, and is written in very plain, simple language, so that it can be easily understood by every farmer. No man who reads this book can fail to see where the protected manufacturers are using the protective tariff to increase their own great wealth at the expense of the common people. Mr. Porritt shows particularly how the farmers have been plundered on practically everything they buy. Free trade in agricultural implements alone would mean a saving of a great many dollars every year to every farmer. Free trade in other articles would mean even a greater saving. The whole inside story of the Manufacturers' Association, watered stock, political corruption and broken pledges, is given in this famous book. It contains 500 pages of large print and is handsomely bound in red covers. Postpaid to any address in Canada for \$1.25.

BOOK DEPT., GRAIN GROWERS' GUIDE, WINNIPEG

factory costs of binders made in Chicago and Hamilton, the minister of finance advising that, speaking from recollection the difference was either \$7.00 or \$9.00 on an 8 ft. binder. Then followed a discussion of relative prices in the two countries, which we quote from Hansard, pages 3258 and 3259, as follows:

MR. WHITE: I sent a representative from my office to look into the factory cost in both places. In addition to that, as long ago as December, 1912, I asked the commissioner of customs to send a representative to our Canadian manufacturers of agricultural implements and to those engaged in the business in the United States, and also to their agents along the border, with a view of ascertaining as accurately as possible the difference in the selling price of agricultural implements on either side of the line. That report was made. It contains a good deal of matter that is confidential, and necessarily so, because our agent was given access to the books and was treated in a very fair fashion by all the manufacturers. I have in my possession a record of the selling prices which might form a basis of comparison for points in Canada with points in the United States, where freight rates are at all equal. I mention this to show that the matter has received very careful and full consideration on the part of the government.

MR. MACLEAN: Could the minister make that statement part of his remarks by handing it to Hansard? Would there be any objection to that?

Selling Price in U.S.

MR. WHITE: No, I think not. I am as anxious as my hon. friend is to deal with

ferent points. Are these binders not turned out with different attachments at the different points?

MR. WHITE: A statement which I have here in that regard says that the Canadian manufacturers of binders supply an extra equipment consisting of a knife, etc., valued at about \$7. This extra equipment is not supplied in the United States.

MR. McCOIG: The binders supplied by Chicago firms are equipped with only one knife, whereas the Canadian manufacturers supply an extra knife. In some cases with the American binders one may obtain a pole truck for \$15 extra, and a transport truck for \$10 extra.

MR. WHITE: The comparative figures which I have given are in each case for an eight-foot binder. I understand that the Canadian machine, at the price which I have mentioned, carries an extra knife and certain other equipment valued at \$7, which is not carried by the American binder. In answer to enquiries made, telegrams have been received from the following firms in North Dakota, stating the cash retail selling price of eight-foot binders: Lewis and Durocher, St. John, \$155; Aitkens and Lea, Rocklake, \$155; D. G. McIntosh, St. Thomas, \$155; Hazelett and Naismith, Charles, \$160.

Claims Government Figures Accurate

Here then, at last, we have a disinterested and authoritative statement, which cannot be gainsaid, as to prices of binders to farmers at a number of points in the Western States along the International boundary, also a statement of comparative freight costs at a number of important centres.

Referring to the above report of Mr.