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JULY 6th, 1910

**VIEWS OF WESTERN M.P.'S**

On page 8 of this issue we publish letters from Federal members of the House of Commons giving their views upon matters to be taken up with Sir Wilfrid Laurier when he comes West in a few days. We appreciate very much the courtesy of the members who responded to our request, whether we agree with their views or not. Some of the members ignored us, evidently considering that we were too "small fry" to bother with. Some do not care to give us their views, but prefer rather to give them in the House of Commons. We would suggest to these that not three per cent. of the electors in their constituency ever see a correct and unbiased report of the proceedings in the House of Commons, thus very few of the constituents in the district represented by any member know just what his views are. We considered the present a good opportunity for our Western members to tell their constituents in a few words how they stood on these matters. Those who regard us as "small fry" have still something to learn. They will be glad to give the farmers their views in a couple of years when they come back to seek re-election. Too many of our members disregard the opinion of the farmers until an election is to be held. Then they fall over themselves and endeavor to soft soap the farmers into voting for them. It seems only right that every member should have views on these big subjects and not be afraid to express them. The member who has no views until his party leader makes them for him, is no good to his country, himself, nor to anyone else.

Let us consider these letters from our members. Practically every man favors a lower tariff, and especially on agricultural implements. This is a very hopeful sign. Cannot we induce these members to drop party affiliations for a time and stand together for Canada, and thus force the government of Sir Wilfrid Laurier to redeem its pre-election pledges. Surely that would be doing better work for the West than sparring for political advantage. The Western farmers want free trade in agricultural implements and a general tariff of the kind Sir Wilfrid promised them in 1893. He must make good his promise before he asks the West to support him again. In view of the opinion of the Western members there should be no difficulty in securing a substantial reduction in the tariff at the next

session. Of course the eastern manufacturers will object, but their control of the government of Canada should be brought to a close.

There is but one mind among the members on the terminal elevator question, though some of them seem to think that there is some other way of eliminating the graft. Recent dispatches from Ottawa lead us to believe that Sir Wilfrid will tell us that his government will take over the terminals at the ensuing session of the House. No excuse can be given for doing otherwise. Every device has been exhausted in an endeavor to secure an honest operation of the terminals, but all have failed. Five hundred inspectors and a squad of secret service detectives couldn't make some of the terminal elevator operators do the right thing by the farmers. The only hope is for government ownership and operation under an independent commission, and we hope the transcontinental commission will not be taken as a standard for our "non-partisan" commission, as one of the members suggests.

In regard to the Hudson's Bay Railway, all the members favor "immediate construction," and some are of the opinion that the present rate is really "immediate" construction. No doubt Sir Wilfrid will explain it in the same way. The idea seems to be in certain quarters that the bridge across the Saskatchewan at The Pas must be built before anything else can be done. This is an argument that will not carry weight. The river freezes in the winter, and material should have been taken across last winter to enable the contractors to continue their work all summer north of the river, or the common and inexpensive cable ferry would handle everything needed for construction work. If a private company were building the road the bridge excuse would never have been made. The entire excuse is pure buncombe. Sir Wilfrid must be given to understand that his scheme to hand over the road to Mackenzie and Mann will not be tolerated. The West wants the Hudson's Bay Railway to be built by the government and also the terminals at the Bay, and they want them to be operated by the government and not handed over to any private company.

The chilled meat industry under federal government control does not meet with the unanimous support of the members, largely as most of them say, because they are not informed on the subject. The Alberta members are fully alive to the needs of such a scheme, and if they will push matters, the Dominion government will be compelled to pay attention. It is essential that the chilled meat industry be placed on a proper basis in order that the Western farmers may go into stock raising with a reasonable hope of reward. This they cannot have under the present system of monopoly.

We commend the letters from the members to our readers and we urge that our farmers urge these matters upon the attention of their representatives. It is only in this way that we can hope to secure for the West the attention it deserves at the hands of the Canadian government.

**THE TIME FOR ACTION**

The present juncture in Manitoba brings before the farmers of that province the most important problem which they have ever faced. A general election will be held in the province in a few days despite the fact that the Grain Growers did not want an election until the Elevator Act had been thoroughly tested. Not for another five years will the farmers have an opportunity to have a voice in the affairs of the province. Now is the time for them to secure the reforms they have demanded or they must sit idle for another five years until a general election is held. The Grain Growers have fought for a great many years for public elevators. For a long

time "Constitutional Difficulties" stood in the way. But the farmers did not have any belief in the "Constitutional Difficulties" fable. They organized their forces and the governments of the West decided that they had made a mistake in regard to "Constitutional Difficulties" and that the Grain Growers were right in their demands.

The farmers of Manitoba have their Elevator Act, but it is not what they want. They were, however, willing to make the best of it for the time being and have it amended at the next session of the legislature. The Grain Growers at the Brandon Convention and by resolutions all over the province, have demanded an independent commission to operate the public elevator system. They know they are right in their demands. The only way they can secure an independent commission is to elect candidates who will give them an independent commission. By an "Independent Commission" the Grain Growers mean one that is responsible to the legislature and not to the government. The present elevator commission, although it may be composed of the three best men that can be found for the work, is entirely subject to the government and therefore cannot be independent. The Grain Growers want a real and bona fide independent commission.

Another great question before the Grain Growers is that of Direct Legislation. Today it is agreed by all right thinking men that the common people should have more voice in the affairs of their province than they have. The only way to get it is by Direct Legislation. The Grain Growers have demanded Direct Legislation and put that plank in their platform at the Brandon Convention.

These two great principles for which the Grain Growers have stood are absolutely right and are admitted to be so by the ablest thinkers in the English speaking world. In Manitoba the farmers make the province and form more than two-thirds of the population. Why should they not be given the reforms they have demanded. They can secure them if they are determined. The candidates are now before them. Every farmer who believes the Grain Growers' cause to be just and right should see that the candidate whom he supports is in favor of Direct Legislation and an elevator system operated by an independent commission. The farmers can have what is right just as easily as they can have what is wrong. All that is necessary is to be sure that they elect men who will work in the interest of the farmers and will support the demands of the farmers. No man should vote for a candidate without knowing that candidate's views on these important subjects. If the candidate will not pledge himself to work in the legislature in the interests of the people, then he should not be supported. Now is the opportunity of the Manitoba farmers and it will be the last opportunity they will have for five years.

**AN ENEMY OF THE FARMERS**

We have had occasion to speak of Mr. J. W. Robson, M.P.P., several times and evidence to hand compels us to speak of him again. So far as we can learn Mr. Robson is sparing no effort to discredit all of the Grain Growers' organizations in Manitoba. If such action as this on his part will win him the confidence of the people, then we will be surprised. According to Mr. Robson the Grain Growers' organizations are working against the interests of the country and are controlled by crooks or partisans. We have not, up to the present time, had occasion to speak plainly of any of the members of the legislature but we must do so in Mr. Robson's case. Since he has been a member of the legislature Mr. Robson has done little or nothing for the farmers of Manitoba. He is in his seat during the session and votes just as he is told to vote by his leaders. The idea of him taking up the

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