

level of wages is below the line of comfort would destroy the whole protectionist case. Mr. Cockshutt, therefore, talks about "affluence" and "comfort," but nobody takes him seriously.

WILL WE EVER GROW UP?

When will the daily newspapers of Western Canada realize that the places in which they are published are grown-up cities and no longer infant prodigies? Every time a stranger with a title or an office comes to Winnipeg the daily papers record his amazement at the wide streets and magnificent buildings of this wonderful city. And if there does not happen to be anyone of distinction in the city for a day or two, they discover some commercial traveller from New York or Chicago in one of the hotels, and induce him to make a statement of his amazement at the city's marvelous parks. In the same way every visitor of note who sees Canada from an observation car is permitted at every place he stops off to express his surprise at seeing a modern metropolis instead of the collection of shacks which, in his ignorance he had imagined was called a city in the West. They all tell us that Canada has a great future before it, and that it is destined to be the granary of the Empire. Having seen this sort of thing in the papers every morning for the last fifteen or twenty years, it is almost time that we could take it for granted. It may be quite proper to admire a nice fat baby, and to glory in the fact that it has cut another tooth, but the same sort of adulation bestowed upon a grown man is merely humiliating.

TOLL FROM THE WORKERS

In the last two sessions of Parliament the people's representatives handed over to Sir William Mackenzie and Sir Donald Mann, of the Canadian Northern Railway no less than \$21,940,000. "Railway development" is the fine-sounding phrase which is thrown over these deals like a blanket whenever objections are made to this squandering of the people's means. But if we could only follow these transactions a little further and see where the burden inevitably falls, no soft-spoken plea about our millionaire railway promoters "needing the money" could cover up the unjust deals. One thing is clear. That \$21,940,000 will not come out of the coffers or bank vaults of the millionaires or from the privileged classes. If they appear to bear some of the burden it is only for a moment, until they can shift it onto the shoulders of the producers and working class. Now, if the working people of Canada were so prosperous that they would not miss \$22,000,000 it might not be so serious, although that would be a poor excuse for picking the nation's pocket. But everybody knows, most of all the people themselves who must foot the bill, that the wage-workers of Canada are hard pressed in these days of rising prices to make even the plainest living. According to the census taken June, 1911, there were 471,126 employees on wages in manufacturing concerns throughout Canada in 1910. The wages paid these people amounts to \$197,228,701 a year, or an average of \$418.63 each per year, or \$8.05 a week. How much can these wage workers, eighty per cent. of whom are men, save from an average weekly salary of \$8.05? Could they save one dollar every week from the claims of themselves and families and from the grasp of that High-Cost-of-Living monster? As a matter of fact few could spare that much without acute deprivation, yet the handout to Mackenzie and Mann is equal to a tribute of one dollar a week from the 471,126 employees in the Dominion continued for 46 weeks. Or put in another way, the politicians at Ottawa handed these railway magnates a sum which will absorb every cent earned by the nearly half a million men,

women and children wage-workers of Canada for forty days' work. Considering the men workers alone, 376,872 receive \$173,435,642 a year, an average wage of \$460.19 or \$1.46 each working day. The C.N.R. bonus would absorb the whole earnings of this army of men for 46 days. But perhaps the women workers could better afford this tribute? Let us see. The census reports 72,571 women employees receiving a total of \$18,970,212 or \$261.40 a year, \$21.78 a month, 83 cents a day. All of Canada's wage-earning women would have to work 420 days or 60 weeks to pay for this little cash donation to the millionaire magnates. The children under sixteen years employed in our Canadian factories will feel the pinch of this governmental extravagance as soon as anyone. Can they afford to have their bitter lot made still more burdensome just to save some railway adventurers from the slightest financial anxiety? There are 13,382 of them in Canadian factories, earning \$2,112,648 a year, or an average of \$159.06 a year, \$13.25 a month, or 50 cents each working day. There should be no necessity for boys and girls of fifteen years or younger to enter a factory, leaving youth and education behind. Society owes them a better start in life than being tied down to unwholesome if not dangerous toil before they should be out of school. Yet there are 13,382 wage-earning boys and girls in Canada and it would take them nearly 10½ years to earn the sum which our politicians so generously handed out to the railway chiefs.

But the railways milk the Prairie Provinces more than any other part of Canada. What does the \$21,940,000 subsidy mean to the working population of the West? In the industrial concerns of Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta the yearly earnings of all the employees (including "salaries," which in the other census tables quoted were not lumped together) amount to \$14,481,762 a year. That means that every worker in all the manufacturing concerns in the West, from the president and superintendent down to the office boy, would have to give up their wages and salaries for a steady year and a half to make up the \$21,940,000 tribute to Mackenzie and Mann. Can it be pretended that our members of Parliament did the will of the people in handing over a full year's savings of all the 471,126 wage-earning employees in the Dominion, or the complete earnings of Canada's industrial manhood for 46 days, of the women wage-workers for 420 days, or of the children employees for ten and a half years?

LET THE BATTLE PROCEED!

We consider the recent action of the Retail Merchants' Association to be of sufficient interest to bring it again before our readers in the following dispatch which appeared two weeks ago in the Western press:

Saskatoon, July 13.—E. M. Trowern, secretary of the Dominion Retail Merchants' Association, at a meeting of the local association, held here last night, made a strong attack on co-operative trading societies, saying "they are the greatest frauds that ever struck the community. The Grain Growers know no more about running a co-operative business than a cat knows of its grandmother. I make this statement publicly, and wish the press to make special mention of it. We have gone to the government from time to time opposing co-operative societies. I have never seen an honest co-operative store yet, and there has not been one found in Europe. They are a fraud from top to bottom. We have asked every wholesaler in the Dominion by letter what he thinks of the co-operative societies, and if he sells to them we will cease doing business with him."

A handful of retail merchants have thus thrown down the gauntlet to the 50,000 members of the organized farmers. Henceforth the farmers in every local community are to be under the thumb of their local merchant, provided he is a member of the Dominion Retail Merchants' Association. Already the

wholesale houses are beginning to boycott the co-operative stores, and there is a prospect of a lively fight during the next year. We mistake the temper of the organized farmers if they will be dominated by any little bunch of retail merchants, and we believe that the first retail merchant in the West that attempts this domination will find his business disappearing like magic. The Grain Growers must take hold of this situation and handle it without gloves. Co-operative stores, and co-operative distribution generally, are an absolute necessity in this country, if the farmers are to retain the slightest particle of freedom and in any way reduce the ever-increasing cost of living. This statement about co-operative stores being frauds is a malicious falsehood, and the alleged interest of the Retailers' Association in the public welfare is pure hypocrisy. When a little bunch of retail merchants can get together and tell the public how they must conduct their own private business, then the situation is very little better than the feudal days when the tenant baked his bread in his master's oven and on bended knee swore fealty to his over-lord. The Retail Merchants' Association is going to compel the wholesalers to boycott all co-operative stores, according to Mr. Trowern's statement. The promoters of this diabolical scheme should not forget that many men have gone to jail for smaller crimes and that the courts of our land are still open to the common people. We do not overlook Mr. Trowern's statement as to the influence his association has with the government, and we believe he is quite right in this statement. Sir Wilfrid Laurier refused to enact a co-operative bill, even though it was asked for from all parts of Canada. Premier Borden, when he toured the West, gave a definite promise that he would provide machinery for co-operative associations, but he apparently has also bowed to the orders of the Retail Merchants' Association. While prophets are without honor in their own country we will venture to predict that the co-operative store movement will sweep over these Western Provinces at a remarkable rate in the next ten years, and that they will be supplied from their own wholesale houses, and that those retail merchants who set themselves up as local czars over their fellow citizens will find their business dwindle and disappear. If the Grain Growers of the West permit the Dominion Retail Merchants' Association to succeed in their miserable scheme, then the Grain Growers will not be worthy of the traditions of the Anglo-Saxon race.

Those journals and politicians which are owned and operated by Mackenzie and Mann or their friends are laboring hard to excuse the gift of \$15,000,000 made to these two gentlemen by Parliament. The excuse is that railways are necessary to the development of the country and therefore the money must be spent and no one should complain about it. A binder is a necessity to the grain grower, but if he were compelled to pay \$350 for it when the market price was \$175, the grain grower would be justified in his complaint. No one knows the necessity of railways more than the grain growers, but the money given to Mackenzie and Mann doesn't go into railways. It very largely goes into their other enterprises.

Toronto was invaded the other day by a party of twelve Chicago millionaires, worth \$27,000,000. Five of them were bankers, four brokers and three stockyard men. Strange that there were no farmers in the party, isn't it? However, this is not the feature which the Toronto papers laid stress on, but the rules which the millionaires adopted for their holiday jaunt, such as having to drive their own car, and not being allowed to spend more than five dollars a day for each person. How could the poor fellows live on that?

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