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Our Ottawa Letter

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lished record made last year a profit of from thirty to sixty per cent. upon their capital.

"They did not pay their shareholders that," remarked Mr. Burnham.

"This statement was sent broadcast throught the country. Surely the big milling industries are not foolish enough to send broadcast a statement which is not in their own interests if it is not true," replied Mr. Carroll.

West Should Be Meek

Oliver Wilcox, Conservative member for North Essex, in the course of his reply, said that as a farmer he demanded protection for the agriculturists of the Dominion as well as for the steel and other industries. He protested against the proposal of Mr. Carroll to give aid to the steel men while advocating doing away with the protection which up to the present time has been accorded to farming communities. "I contend," he said, "that if we are to have a protective system in this country, it ought to be fair and equitable to all interests and there is no just ground why the farmers should have to go and sell their corn in the open market when the United States produce seven-eighths of the corn, and when every other product which the farmer raises is entitled to, and does receive, the advantage of tariff protection. Dealing more particularly with the demands of the West Mr. Wilcox quoted statistics to prove that the three Prairie Provinces are developing in an industrial as well as an agricultural way. He said that such members as Mr. Turriff and Mr. Neely have been hollering "wolf, wolf," when there was not any wolf. He did not desire to take any credit from the West to which it is entitled, "but is it not a fact that if they are frosted out we are only too glad to buy them more seed; and if they are hauled out we are willing to help them. We have built transcontinental railways to traverse the west, including the Winnipeg-Moncton line proposed by the leader of the opposition, which will cost this country \$260,000,000. We are building them elevators; we are doing everything that a government can do, in reason, to help that western country to obviate as far as possible anything that militates against its development. But I was born and raised in the woods of Ontario and I submit that pioneer conditions prevailing in Western Canada are not to be compared for difficulty with the pioneer conditions which had to be faced in Ontario and Quebec."

Referring to the big farmers' delegation which came to Ottawa on December 16, 1910, Mr. Wilcox said that Sir Wilfrid Laurier had been frightened "when these farmers came here by the thousand from the wild and woolly West, where the gophers roam by day and the coyotes howl by night."

All Need Protection

There was some sharp criticism of the attitude of the people of the Canadian West as well as demands for protection for the Eastern farmer in other speeches delivered by ministerial supporters during the week.

J. A. M. Armstrong, of North York, said that one would think when listening to the wailing of such members as Dr. Neely and Mr. Knowles that the portion of Canada lying between Manitoba and the Rockies was a plague-stricken country. He thought it passing strange that of the thousands of sons and daughters of Ontario who had settled in the West nine-hundred-and-ninety-nine out of one-thousand preferred that country to their native province. It was strange that they do not want to leave such a plague-stricken land. Mr. Armstrong declared that opposition members from the West are not fulfilling their duty because they are trying to draw a line of cleavage between eastern and western Canada. He was never so proud to be a Conservative as at the moment the minister of finance took his seat after delivering the budget speech. He was proud because once more we could make the boast that so far as tariff matters are concerned the Conservative party can

claim consistency. It was the duty of the House, he said, to realize that in dealing with the tariff question we must have regard to the interests of the whole of Canada. The country cannot live by any one industry alone. The farmer must co-operate with the manufacturer and the laborer is just as important as the capitalist. All should have protection.

A Wheat Expert

Dr. Edwards, of Frontenac, in a speech lasting two and a half hours, produced an immense mass of figures to prove that no benefit could possibly result to Canadian farmers as a result of free trade in farm products with the United States. He maintained that the Canadian farmers should receive more protection in order to give them better prices. Strangely enough he argued a few minutes later that the lower tariff which recently came into effect in the United States had not lowered the cost of living. This was a nice illustration of the inconsistency into which high tariff arguments invariably lead all but the most wary speakers. What Dr. Edwards particularly demanded was an increase in the duty of two cents per pound on meat. He also expressed the belief that the farmers of the Dominion would be better off if a higher duty was placed upon butter and eggs.

Blindly Favors Privilege

But the most thorough going protectionist arguments were those given expression to by J. H. Burnham member for West Peterborough. He smote free trade doctrines hip and thigh. He declared that under free trade cheapness is the great consideration. The only way the free trader can command the home market is by superior cheapness. This he declared is the death of civilization; it is the ruin of the hope of those people who would rise above the level of the beasts. He believed that if Canadians had their own market exclusively and no other market in the world, in a short time, with all our great natural advantages, we would have an ideal country to live in. Every industry would be balanced with each other; we would have plenty. This balance of industry is dislocated by such things as British preference and the competition from abroad. Mr. Burnham thought it positively absurd to borrow money from abroad and then send it abroad to pay for goods which we can manufacture in Canada. An ideal condition could be brought about by imposing a uniform rate of duty on everything and making it sufficiently high to be protective. Referring briefly to the demands for free wheat Mr. Burnham said that the request of the western farmer were not alone to be considered. He maintained that the farmers of his own county were not in favor of the duty being taken off wheat and that their interests were to be considered as well as those of the farmers of the West.

Enough has been quoted from these speeches to indicate the extreme protectionist views still held by many of the members who, in part at least, represent rural constituents in the East. The "spread" of opinion between them and the western farmers who desire wider markets is indeed very wide and indicates that the battle for freedom of trade in farm and other products has in all probability just begun, unless the advice given by Mr. Buchanan, that the parties should get together and deal with the problems of the east and west is adopted.

ABSOLUTE PROHIBITION

Absolute prohibition will prevail in the United States navy after July 1 next. Secretary Daniels made public an order which not only will abolish the traditional "wine mess" of the officers, but will bar all alcoholic liquors from every ship and shore station of the navy.

This order, constituting one of the most notable victories ever won by the prohibition forces, was issued upon the recommendation of Surgeon-General Braisted. It follows:

"The use or introduction for drinking purposes of alcoholic liquors on board any naval vessel or within any navy yard or station is prohibited and commanding officers will be held directly responsible for the enforcement of this order."