

The Grain Grower's Guide

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Twentieth Century Patriotism

A Dominion Day Address delivered in Sweet Valley, Alberta

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Late Travelling Investigator U. S. Dept. Commerce and Labor

ON an occasion of this sort, Patriotism is the natural subject for an address, and it is of Patriotism, true Patriotism, Patriotism of the Twentieth Century, that I am to speak. We are living in Canada during her brightest period. The Twentieth Century will be the greatest the world has ever seen and Canada will be the brightest star in the sky. This will be the greatest country in the world and we who are here now will share her glory. Nature has endowed this country with all things that go to make a nation great and a people happy.

Unlimited natural resources, wide range of opportunity and a most glorious climate, coupled with the utmost degree of freedom make this a country to love, to live for, yes even a country to die for. What man can look around him, see what he now has, what is in store for him and what the future but faintly reveals, does not feel his pulses throb? Who does not feel that pride of home, that love of country, that we call Patriotism?

We usually associate that word with the idea of fighting, of war, or some other national crisis, because it is usually in some such period of excitement that Patriotism becomes noticeable. Any man can be brave in time of war, for then his judgment is clouded and his caution disappears, but in time of peace only a great man can be brave. Then his brain is calm, his judgment is clear and his caution exaggerates every danger. When any visible danger threatens your homes, you all stand forth to watch, to fight, yes, even to die. Those who wish to show their bravery, sigh for a war and seem to forget that there is a danger threatening us today more insidious than that from any foreign foe, demanding possibly far greater efforts to repel.

In Olden Times

In '76, the forefathers of the Americans fought and bled to drive King power from the American continent; in '61 their grandsons gave their lives to free their land from the curse of slavery. A blight has today spread over the entire continent worse than any of the others: money, power and industrial slavery.

Canada is to-day the last stand of liberty, the greatest hope of mankind. The U.S., that cradle of liberty, is in the thrall of the money curse. Their people are free only in name. They vote their taxes for roads, bridges and warships to enrich and protect those personifications of greed and graft, who sit in state at 25 Broadway, New York, and take toll of every man, woman and child in that country.

We today are in a like danger. The octopus is little by little enfolding us within his coils even here. The great corporations have met, made prices and divided the territory. Armour and the others, only a year ago, met in Winnipeg and like the triumvirate of ancient Rome, divided the world between them. There are but three railways in Canada and they have their agreements like those in the

States. So slow, so invidious has been the progress towards centralization, that few have noticed it and fewer still recognized it and called it by name. Yet these things are no less real because we create them ourselves and so accustom our necks to the conqueror's foot that we no longer feel it. This state of affairs is due to these two causes, the ignorance and the indifference of the people and the common acceptance of the theory that a man's business is his own, and no rightful concern of his fellows.

There is no need for anyone to be ignorant of the trend of progress. Newspapers have been cheapened to the minimum and no one need be without one or more, and every paper published devotes much of its space to a general survey and condemnation of the great corporations. To these are added speakers of a thousand and one different organizations, touring the country to rouse the people to a sense of their danger.

What is your Duty?

Notwithstanding this, there are numbers throughout the country lulled to

and agents' commission bring its cost to about half, but yet you must pay \$185 for it.

The Lumber Combine.

Do you know there is an association of lumber dealers, that fixes the price of every stick of timber you buy? There is. Most of the prices in Alberta are fixed in the offices of a Calgary lumber company. I was connected with this company last year, in a town where there were three lumber yards. When an independent yard started, a price list was sent us with instructions to persuade the owner that it would be to the advantage of everyone if he would adjust his prices to that scale. But this is not all. If a dealer is willing to be content with a reasonable profit in his business and disregards the prices of the association, there are less than half a dozen mills, which will sell him lumber at any price.

The lumber man will tell you, he does not make an excessive profit, but then perhaps he does not regard 40 per cent. as excessive. Perhaps some of you will remember how a Claresholm dealer at-

them graded it the same. Everyone offered the same price, 35 cents. I shipped it to the Grain Growers' Grain Company. I received a grade of No. 4 and a net price of 72½ cents on a carload of 1325 bushels, a net gain of 18½ cents per bushel and a saving on the car of \$443.14½. It is the same in live stock. The prices are fixed in advance and buyers from different companies never compete. North, along the Red Deer River are numbers of cattle ranches. Naturally a good many buyers go through. I was with a rancher two months last summer during the shipping season, and though there were buyers in the country representing three different concerns, only one would go to a man. If the owner went to another he was told the buyer was filled up. It is noteworthy that the buyer representing the largest of these concerns, is a member of our provincial parliament, for a central constituency.

Cement Prices Boosted

Have any of you noticed that the price of cement rose nearly 25 per cent. as soon as the merger was effected? It is our indifference that allows us to be thus exploited.

It is a combination that fixes our freight rates at an abnormally high figure. On that car of wheat I shipped, the C. P. R. received \$400.80, for one car mind you, to Fort William.

When a commission from Alberta was investigating inter-provincial trade with B. C., they protested against the excessive freight rates. The C. P. R. officials agreed, but told the Alberta producers that B.C. must buy Alberta products, so it made no difference. They said the same to a committee of B. C. fruit growers. The point to this is that when accused of excessive rates, the C. P. R. did not deny the charge.

No man can deny that excessive rates hurt him. It is not that the wheat buyer in Fort William pays you a price for your wheat and then pays the freight, but he pays you a price in Fort William regardless of where it came from. Your price is his price less the freight.

It is not that you alone are hurt by this. Every farmer in Canada is in the same boat. Every farmer buys his machinery from a combination; every farmer buys his lumber and supplies from a member of the association which fixes the price for the retailer.

Working Together.

It is not even Alberta farmers alone that are affected. Every railroad has its agreements with the others. The Canadian Manufacturers' Association comprises nearly every manufacturer in Canada. Every man who buys the products of any member of the C. M. A. pays tribute to the greed of the interests. Every man whose products or supplies are carried on any railway bears an additional burden in the form of excessive freight rates, and it is our own indifference that permits it all.

Not only in these ways, but in a less direct, but fully as pernicious a form of



Farm House of C. F. Middleton, Roblin, Man.

a sense of false security by good crops, high wages and a general feeling of prosperity. But I do not believe you are among them. Yet, while you are aware of the danger, many of you are content to suffer, or to think that although this is bad for the country at large, it does not hurt you. This is a mistake. You have not a right to rest content because an evil does not hurt you. Your duty to your country and your fellows, is a thousand times greater than your duty to yourself, great as that is.

But do you think these things do not affect you? If you do you are wrong. Everyone of you is wronged, but it is so smoothly done that you don't know it.

In the first place the great corporations raise the price of everything you buy. It is combination and agreement of capital that allows the lumber manufacturers to charge you \$185 for a binder that costs less than a quarter to build. Freight

tempted to run a yard on a fair basis. You may also remember how bitter was the opposition. Finally he gave in; he assured me himself that he got a pretty good thing for giving it up. Perhaps some of you do not know that the secret society organized rather recently, the order of "Hoo, Hoo," is merely an organization of lumbermen and dealers to weld independent mills and dealers into line.

Farmers' Company Reliable.

Not only does this system raise unduly the price of the articles you buy but it lowers the price of everything you have to sell. A combination of dealers in Winnipeg fixes the price you may get for your wheat. Not very long ago the price of wheat was sent to but one elevator in a town and the manager of that one told the others. Last year I had some wheat to sell. I took part of it to every elevator in Claresholm. Everyone of

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