

Grain Growers Meet Oliver

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adian combines in general, and the Canadian cement merger in particular. He declared that the operations of the latter were worse than those of a highwayman, because the latter took "chances and accepted his medicine. The cement merger was rubbing under the protection of the law.

C. Stinson, former reeve of Wallace, spoke appreciatively of Mr. Oliver's efforts in the past to remove the C. P. R. tax exemption on its lands in Western Canada.

C. Welsch, of the Woodworth Association, also spoke.

The Minister's Reply

Mr. Oliver, in reply to the delegation, said that the organizers of the monster delegation to Ottawa had builded better than they knew. The moral effect of the visit would be greater than its material effect. The government, he said, was doing all it could to put through the reciprocity agreement in the face of a virulent and determined obstruction. The opposition were abusing a privilege of Parliament.

With regard to the Hudson's Bay Railway, he asked the farmers to reconsider that the government had undertaken to build the road in the face of the opposition of several provinces, most of them with ocean ports. The government believed that the whole of Canada would be benefited by the railway. With regard to operation, that could not be decided until the experience gained in building the road was in possession of the government. Better rush the railway before beginning to divide on the question of operation, said Mr. Oliver.

Powerful Interests Opposed

Turning to the terminal elevator question, Mr. Oliver said that very powerful interests were opposed to government ownership, and the solution of a commission had been decided upon by the government as an experiment. When the bill came to the House from the Senate, where it had been discussed at length, he had asked the House to pass it without amendment, but Alex. Haggart, of Winnipeg, and other Western members, had refused his request, and had held up the bill. Thus the chance of having the bill in operation for this year's crop had been jeopardized. The West should deal with those members.

Not Free Trade Party

With regard to free trade, Mr. Oliver reminded the delegates that the Liberal party had not come into power on a platform of free trade, as in England. The Liberal platform of 1893 had had a plank of tariff reduction under certain conditions. Liberal speakers, no doubt, had individually advocated free trade. The Dominion government had to consider questions of finance and popular feeling just the same as had the town of Virden. Alexander MacKenzie, great and good man as he was, would have advanced the cause of free trade if in 1878 he had been willing to accept a tariff higher than 17½ per cent. Mr. MacKenzie had refused to consider such a tariff, consequently the Conservatives had come into power, and for a long term of years Canada had had a tariff of 35 per cent.

In conclusion, Mr. Oliver emphasized the point that if an election came this year, it would be fought on reciprocity. Friends of the agreement could not afford to divide on that issue. "Let us get this issue settled, and fight to-morrow about other issues," said Mr. Oliver.

Meeting at Brandon

At Brandon on Saturday the following resolution of the association, proposed by A. C. McPhail, Brandon, and seconded by William Ledingham, Forrest, was read to Mr. Oliver:

"That we, the members of the Brandon branch of the Manitoba Grain Growers' Association, reiterate our approval of the Federal government's action in arranging a reciprocal pact with the United States government, and regret that they could not have the duty on farm implements further reduced."

W. H. Johnston, ex-reeve of Elton, and president of the Brandon Grain Growers' Association, who was a member of the farmers' Ottawa delegation, said that he believed the Grain Growers'

Associations were to some extent responsible for the government's action in regard to the reciprocity agreement. If that were true in any degree, it was up to the Grain Growers' to stay with the government. He couldn't see how the farmers could be consistent in taking any other course. They ought to back up their own ideas and words or else get down and out. He was a Conservative on principle, although he had sometimes voted the other way. He was not a yellow dog nor a dyed-in-the-wool Tory.

A Change of Front

It was regrettable that the question had been taken into party politics, Mr. Johnston said. When the farmers were at Ottawa the Conservative leaders had not been antagonistic to the farmers' demands. When the farmers overflowed the treasury benches on that occasion Mr. Borden had said he had never seen those benches occupied by men in whom he had more confidence. Mr. Borden seemed now to have lost that confidence. For some time there had been no talk of reciprocity, but immediately the government took up the question in a practical way the Opposition had become antagonistic. It looked to him as if it were a political dodge in order to get into power.

Haultain Congratulated

He was glad that their own Western friend, Mr. Haultain, had taken a different stand upon the matter. The Saskatchewan Conservatives were to be congratulated upon having kept reciprocity out of party politics. He was sorry to note that the Eastern capitalists had come out so strongly in Opposition to reciprocity. The Eastern farmers had stood shoulder to shoulder with the Western farmers in making their demands upon the government. They had been agreed that what was good for one was good for both. He appreciated the fact that the government would have to fight a combination of parties and interests with money at their backs.

Influence of Money

The speaker said he was aware that a lot of people could be bought by five dollar bills. That was where the trouble was going to come. If bribery could be prevented the government would be all right. He knew that a number of Conservatives were trying to whip the boys into line, but as far as he was concerned they would never whip him into line against reciprocity. He would stand by those who had dealt fairly with him. It was all rot to say that the present prosperity of Canada was due to the National policy. The price of wheat had most to do with Canadian prosperity. Let the price of wheat drop to 60 cents a bushel and where would Canada and the farmers be then?

Good for All

John Webster, Forrest, believed that reciprocity would be good not only for the farmer, but for the community at large. When the farmer was prosperous the country was prosperous. He was persuaded that very few Canadians would oppose reciprocity if it were not for party politics.

J. P. Powers expressed himself strongly at the defection of their member in the House of Commons. If the people would only vote the way they felt there would be a majority of nine to one in favor of reciprocity. Canadians were a people selling foodstuffs to the world. If the Dominion government carried through reciprocity it would do well.

Mr. Oliver Speaks

Mr. Oliver noticed that there was both commendation and criticism in the resolution. The cardinal principle of progressive politics was that somebody had to go ahead of some one else. The government did not complain of criticism. Surely the proposed reciprocity agreement was sufficiently important to warrant all progressive people concentrating their attention upon it for the time being and reaching a decision on the one point. When that had been settled they could proceed to deal with other matters, which by comparison, had no standing of importance with the main question of reciprocity. An effort would be made to get the people who were united on reciprocity, to divide upon other questions. It was the old, old policy of "Divide and Rule." Most of the conquerors of the world had achieved their success that way.

If reciprocity was to be carried through

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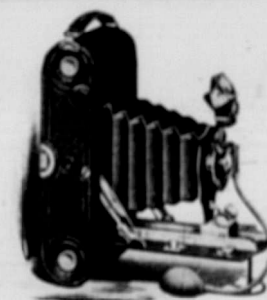
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it must be by the union of all the forces favorable to reciprocity, because those who were opposed to it were united without distinction of station, condition, interest or previous animosity, said Mr. Oliver. "It was not a fight with flowers or rose water. It was a fight as to whether the people should rule or whether their special interests should control the country. If the pact was not to be carried through without an election then upon the individual voter would rest the responsibility, because in Canada the people were the government. Reciprocity was not a party question. Its far-reaching influence had already caused a different line-up. All he asked was that every man should study the question on its merits and apart from party allegiance. If he considered it were not good for the country he did not want him to vote for reciprocity, but if a man did consider it would be a good thing for the country he asked him to vote for it as a patriotic citizen of Canada.

Winnipeg Board of Trade will take the matter up with the railway commission.

DAUPHIN FARMERS TO MEET BORDEN

Dauphin, June 10.—The Grain Growers of this district are planning a monster gathering of farmers to meet R. L. Borden and party here on July 6. The purpose of the gathering is to impress the leader of the Opposition with the strong desire of the farmers for reciprocity. It is expected that 3,000 will be present.

Oakville Farmer's Loss

Oakville, Man., June 12.—All of Fred Metcalfe's barns and other outbuildings were burned at noon today. The fire started from a burning straw stack. None of the horses were destroyed, but all of his hay and some grain was burned.

RECIPROCITY MEETING AT WINNIPEG

An enthusiastic meeting in support of reciprocity was held at the Winnipeg Theatre on Monday evening, addresses being delivered by Hon. Frank Oliver, Dr. M. Clark, M.P., and T. C. Norris, M.P.P. Dr. Clark's free trade speech particularly delighted the large audience, and it was evident that there were a large number present who were prepared to support absolute free trade and direct taxation. Mr. Oliver, who followed Dr. Clark, was given an enthusiastic reception, and delivered an able speech in support of the reciprocity agreement. It was noticeable, however, that when the minister of the interior apologized for the government not having gone much further towards free trade, claiming that while they might have been wrong in theory they had been right in actual practice, he failed to evoke any applause.

T. C. Norris made a convincing speech on reciprocity, describing the conditions prevailing along the international boundary line to show how the farmers would benefit by the removal of the tariff wall, and at the close a resolution proposed by Mr. E. D. Martin and seconded by Mr. T. D. Robinson was unanimously passed approving of the agreement.

Mr. J. H. Ashdown occupied the chair and it was noticed that Mr. D. C. Cameron, the mover of the anti-reciprocity resolution of the Winnipeg Board of Trade was upon the platform.

BRANCH LINES CLOSED

As a result of an order by the railway commission prohibiting the operation of branches before they are handed over to the railway companies by the contractors and inspected by the government engineers, 1000 miles of new lines in the West have been closed to traffic. A large quantity of freight, some of which was en route, has had to be refused by the railway companies in consequence, and there are many complaints of hardship by shippers and stockholders in the territory served by the new lines. The

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