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storms coming
in time for
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Freight Rates Increase Argument

Re-Classification Jokers—Minimum Weights—Effects on Machinery Business

No little stir has been created over all Western Canada on account of the request of the railways for a 15 per cent increase in freight rates and on account of certain reclassifications and changes in shipping requirements which they have put into effect by the proposed "Classification No. 17" just issued. The Railway Commission finished its western hearings on these matters a week ago and a tremendous amount of evidence was piled up on the various questions before the commission at Win-

At the present time all the railways issue uniform freight tariffs through the Canadian Freight Association at Montreal, of which G. C. Ransom is chairman. Mr. Ransom is an expert in freight classification (for the railways) and has certainly made some job of the new classification just issued. Three important points came up: First, the right of shippers to need free mixing privileges in connection with certain commodities for shipment direct from eastern factories to retailers throughout Western Canada. In effect this would mean a cutting out of a considerable amount of the wholesale trade and the wholesalers in Alberta put up such an effectual kick on this new rule that the commission has decided it will not go into effect.

The second point was the raising of many lines of goods to one of higher class and the raising of minimum carload weights on many lines of commodities to such an extent as to make these very much more expensive to western consumers. The third, and the most important contention of all, was the open demand of all the railways for the 15 per cent freight increase. The plumbers of Winnipeg, the Retail Lumbermen's Association, the Winnipeg Implement Association, the Board of Trade, the Retailers, the Canadian Council of Agriculture, the Automobile Men, the Brewers, the Manufacturers, and the Manitoba government, were all represented, some of them by counsel before the commission.

Extra on Binders by New Classification

P. J. Hedson, of the Deere Plow Co. for the Winnipeg Implement Assn., said that under the proposed classification it would cost \$3.47 more to land a binder in Winnipeg, and \$6.93 to land the same binder in Calgary, than under the present classification, a cost which the farmer must pay at a time when not only his own country, but the world is calling upon him to do his utmost to help win the war by raising bigger and better crops. Agricultural implements were raised from 6th to 5th class to secure uniformity with binder twine, the railways state, whereas Mr. Hedson contended binder twine should be lowered from 5th to 6th. It is held to belong in the implement list by the Interstate Commerce Commission, is put up in small and convenient bundles and is liable to little damage in transit. It is proposed to advance the minimum carload weights on agricultural implements from 20,000 to 24,000 lbs. and on binder twine from 24,000 to 30,000 lbs. In the U.S. today, the minimum weight for agricultural implements as determined by the Interstate Commerce Commission is 20,000 lbs. Mr. Hedson contended it is not a question of the capacity of freight cars, but business necessity which demands that the present carload minimum weights on agricultural implements, binder twine, etc., be maintained and that as a matter of fact the freight car rating on agricultural implements, etc., shipped from manufacturers to the large wholesale implement houses already is far above the present minimum weight of 20,000 lbs. This statement was made as pertaining to shipments from the factories to distributing houses in such centres as Winnipeg, Regina, Saskatoon, Calgary and Edmonton. The numerous shipments received by one of the larger implement houses in Winnipeg shows the following, insofar as carloads of implements received by it during the past year are concerned. These figures pertain to all cars:

11% carried from 30,000 to 32,500 lbs.
5% carried from 32,500 to 35,000 lbs.
2% carried from 35,000 to 37,500 lbs.
1% carried from 37,500 to 40,000 lbs.

Thus it will be seen the wholesale implement dealers have been assisting the railways by loading to capacity. Certain implements, however, could not possibly be loaded to even 20,000 lbs. This applies to 6 ft. binders, of which only 12 can be loaded in a car, and 12 of these will not weight 20,000 lbs. It also applies to feed grinders and straw cutters, which cannot be loaded to 20,000 lbs. without a deck in the car. Hence the kick in raising this to 24,000 lbs.

Country Dealer and Farms Suffer

But it is in regard to shipments from the wholesale implement houses to country dealers that the greatest hardship would be worked. Heavy loading here is regulated and held down by the inability of these dealers to receive, handle, store, and sell goods in large carloads. Therefore purchases must necessarily be smaller at first. The dealer has not sufficient finances and commercial interests demand that the minimum weights be kept down in cases of the local shipments. The dealer in the Canadian west who can afford to purchase in the spring enough binders, mowers, rakes, and wagons, or other goods which are not sold until harvest, in order to enable him to bring in a carload in the spring when he is bringing forward his plows, drills, harrows, etc., are very few and far between. The following figures from the records of one of the larger implement houses in Winnipeg show the various kinds of cars shipped out by that house to country dealers:

8% contained under 10,000 lbs.
11% contained from 10,000 to 12,500 lbs.
14% contained from 12,500 to 15,000 lbs.
8% contained from 15,000 to 17,500 lbs.
12% contained from 17,500 to 20,000 lbs.
4% contained from 20,000 to 22,500 lbs.
15% contained from 22,500 to 25,000 lbs.
9% contained from 25,000 to 27,500 lbs.
5% contained from 27,500 to 30,000 lbs.
8% contained from 30,000 to 32,500 lbs.
3% contained over 32,500 lbs.

Thus 52 per cent. of the total number of cars shipped by this wholesale implement house in Winnipeg did not contain over 20,000 lbs. and even at the above figures there were quite a lot of consolidated shipments made to dealers. Nevertheless, in spite of this the railways are demanding that the minimum be raised from 20,000 to 24,000 lbs.

Effect on Repair Business

Mr. Hedson also showed the railways proposed to interfere seriously with their repair business. The new classification gives 5th class on most of the goods handled by the implement dealer, but in many cases if extra plow shares or bottoms are included with the car the minimum weight is increased to 30,000 lbs. and if extra plow parts are included the minimum is increased to 36,000 lbs. Regarding repairs, it is very interesting to note that there never has been before in the Canadian west such a demand for repairs for old implements which have been in use as far back as ten, twelve and even fifteen years as this season. The enormous prices are forcing many to repair their old implements and get the greatest possible use out of them.

A representative of the J. I. Case Company showed that the proposed raising of the minimum car weights would be very oppressive on shipments of small tractors and small threshing machine uniform freight tariffs through the proposed minimum weights. For instance a tractor shipped to Waukegan, Minn. The tractor weighed 3,500 lbs., the plow 275 lbs. The rate with a 30,000 lbs. minimum was \$14.00. The new rate would be \$61.80. It would approximately mean an increase of 45 per cent. which the farmer would have to pay. He thought the minimum weight ought to be reduced from 20,000 to 18,000 lbs.

What Some Automobile Men Suffer

The automobile men represented by A. R. Leonard of the Cadillac Sales Company, showed that the proposed new regulations would mean at the very minimum on almost any car an increase of 15 per cent. and on many cars an increase of 40, 50 and more per cent.

For instance, over 8 ft. high crease from 0 to 100. On the same 8 ft. high, \$160.00 to \$220.00 per cent. Agn car, not over from \$192.00 to 15 per cent. wh over 8 ft. high \$192.00 to \$270.00, an incre may say—why car and the lo facts of the a that these cars able, and the per to agree to the higher rate the automobile where they got rates were con be constantly c must, at a stat would be fluc according to them by the

Reason Given

Around the a increase centre before the com Pacific was not the Canadian—represented by Judge Phippen, by General P. Hinton. It is the C.P.R. pres peg. The main crease was adv and most of t mates given in vice-president o Railway Comm was contended in 1918 at the gaining of Jus cost to operate same degree of last twelve mo nately \$6,000,0 of coal a year a is \$5.79. Labor \$550,000. The C.N.R. had gon since 1912. Du advances were, 80 per cent, b castings 65 per ances 40 per e that cost \$25,00 \$42,000 nine m that cost \$950. flat cars would Today the C.N. from Port Arth the Rockies on strike. It was manufacturers, and others, who vanced as time ings were base legislation, and be an increas Grand Trunk t position as the t increase in rat enough and bot ably have to go their assistance were granted, mitted that they do so. The mai increase were McKenzie, for t Agriculture, by Manitoba gover nipeg Board of The reply pro of the Canadian and Isaac Fith government is a issue.

Property valu been taken from provisional prov is also consider of the grand dck about \$210,000 the benefit of th that the value of by "the members House minutes addition, Nichol deposit in the 1 000,000, placed t a provision for a of his deposit o former Car ton \$65,000,000