

when wheat sells at from 30s. to 35s. per quarter in Liverpool prices are low here, and when it sells from 45s. to 50s. there it is correspondingly high here. But the number is very small now who believe that any other circumstance has anything to do with our grain figures. That all farmers do not see this and clamor for a change is probably due in a great measure to the fact that import duties, while they do no good to the farmer in his grain prices, cannot be said to do him any harm. The tariff on grain is simply an ornamented piece of legislation, as the foreign and not the home market fixes the price of Canadian grain, and as we do not require to import any, it cannot be felt as a burden on any one.

While the Government are by no means willing to part with the imaginary protection to the farmer, they are still less inclined to abolish the import duties on milling products. The millers throughout the Dominion would not object to the wheat duty being abolished, as at times the power of purchasing in United States instead of home markets might be an advantage, and if our railways entered into a keen competition for the carrying of United States grain, the advantage might increase to be of material value to them. But with import duties off wheat, they want import duties on flour; and that is a state of things not likely to be tolerated even by a government pursuing a free trade policy, and not for a moment to be entertained by the present administration.

The motion of the Hon. Peter Mitchell met only the fate to be expected under the present composition of the House, although the vote on it was not a strict party one. In Canada we have not the chance of advocating as they have in Great Britain, the abolition of grain and flour duties as taxes upon the bread of the laborer. Such duties in no way effect the price of the laborer's loaf, and tariff supporters are careful to take advantage of this fact, while to please the farmer, they endeavor to show that it does raise the price thereof, and the farmer is the gainer thereby. It is really wonderful what perversion of logic is necessary in the process of political tinkering, and how smilingly the absurd stuff is swallowed by those who might be expected to have greater powers of perception. But then the business of the politician and that of the showman are similar in many respects, and Barnum has said

that humbugs always paid much better than realities in his line.

COMMERCIAL REPRESENTATION.

It seems that all classes of the Manitoba people, with the exception of the commercial class, are interested in the bill for the redistribution of seats in the Local Legislature, now being rushed through at the far end of the session by Mr. Norquay and his supporters, and the interests of everything but trade have been more or less considered and discussed.

It seems that our legislators are to be increased from thirty one to thirty-five, and should the next house be as hopeful a collection as the present one, the increase will not be for the benefit of the province. Mr. Norquay laid down the principle in introducing the measure, that "regard had to be paid and was paid to long existing divisions", and in carrying out this principle the increase in membership of the house is distributed over constituencies of no trade importance, and as has been formerly the case, a few fossilized holes of constituencies in the Red River valley and outside of the city of Winnipeg can claim greater representation than half a dozen of the most progressive counties of the province. Yet the Minister of Agriculture has the cheek and impudence to inform the House that in the measure representation had been based upon population, a statement which requires only a knowledge of the elements of arithmetic to prove its absurdity. There can be but one opinion among unbiased people about the whole business, and that is that it is a fraud of the most glaring type, and its every clause has been framed with a complete disregard for the representation of the people, and with only one aim in view and that the strengthening of the chances of a return of the present administration to power. That Mr. Norquay and his friends will succeed in making their return to power pretty certain is a settled fact. The majority at their command in the House, are prepared to obey their commands, and echo in the most subservient and Poll-parrot-like manner their "me too" to the most flagrant outrages of justice. But there is even a worse feature than this in the whole matter, and that is that this throttling of the majority of the people to give power to a fossilized minority is applauded by many outside of the House as a piece of commendable political sharp

practice. The standard of political morals has become so low in this, and doubtless in other provinces of the Dominion, that politicians are considered entitled to such latitude in party management, and with a majority of our electors the most unscrupulous stifling of justice is all fair and legitimate, provided it is only used on the side of the party who expresses the opinion.

But to come to the commercial aspect of the redistribution, or rather the gerrymander bill. There is no attempt to give even one out of the four new members to a constituency, where a commercial representative could be elected, although the commercial interests have certainly made much greater progress during the past five years than those of agriculture. Nor is there even an attempt at grouping of some of the new towns of the province in such a manner, as to allow of some kind of trade representation in the new House. Only in the city of Winnipeg is there any opportunity of securing representatives of that kind, and we find that this city containing one-fourth of the population of the province, and almost as large a proportion of the assessable property, is allowed two out of the thirty-five representatives. Commerce therefore can have in the next Manitoba Legislature only a little less than one-seventeenth of the membership of that body, although those connected with trade, number at least two-fifths of the population of the province, and represent an equally large share of its assessable property. During the past two sessions of the Local Legislature men in trade felt keenly the want of commercial representatives there, and quite a few deputations from trading interests have had to go and beg from a Legislature containing scarcely a member who has any common interest with traders, relief from unpardonable injustice inflicted upon them, and we might add they had as a rule to plead in vain. Still now when trade representation is ignored in a redistribution measure, men engaged in it let all go by default, and ensconce themselves behind their old party prejudices. Some prominent business men in this city are afraid to press for increased commercial representation, for fear of increasing grit or tory representation, as the case may be, thus placing their prejudices before their real interests. Such men are fit subjects for pity, we will not say contempt.