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Manitoba

This section of The Guide is conducted officially for the Manitoba Grain Growers' Association by R. C. Henders, President.

BIG RALLY AT SPRINGHILL

The Springhill Branch of the Grain Growers' Association held a very successful social and concert on the evening of May 16. Notwithstanding the fact that many of the farmers were still busy seeding, the Methodist Church, in which the meeting was held, was filled to its utmost capacity, upwards of 200 being present. Addresses were delivered by Rev. Mr. Reid on "Direct Legislation"; Mr. Burland, manager of the Home Bank, Neepawa, on the "Home Bank and its relation to the community"; Mrs. Thomas, Winnipeg, President Political Equality League, on "Woman Suffrage," and R. McKenzie, secretary Central Association, on the "Grain Growers' Organization."

After defining the principles underlying the Initiative and Referendum and how it gives the people more power in the formation of legislation, relieving the government and legislature of much of the responsibility imposed upon them by our present form of government, Mr. Reid added, "No honest member of government or member of parliament would object to take the people into their confidence and sharing with them the responsibility of passing legislation. Only grafters and dishonest politicians fear to take the people into their confidence."

Mr. Burland, after describing the functions of a bank, explained what the Home Bank endeavored to do for the farmers in the community. The applause which his statement received from the audience, many of whom are customers of the Home Bank, indicates how the people of Springhill appreciate Mr. Burland's efforts on their behalf.

Mr. McKenzie devoted his remarks to the necessity of farmers organizing and "farm economics." He pointed

out the unrest there is among the Manitoba farmers as indicated by the number of farm sales that were held throughout the winter, notwithstanding the fact that according to the Provincial Government reports we had in 1912 the largest crop ever harvested in Manitoba, the average yield being only exceeded since 1885 on occasions. Taking the government estimate of the grain crop, and valuing wheat at 70c a bushel, oats at 28c, barley at 40c, flax at \$1.00, potatoes at 25c, dairying products at the government valuation, and allowing for an estimated amount realized on the sale of stock, every Manitoba farmer would receive an average of \$2,500.00 out of last year's crop. This amount, if the economic conditions were as they should be, should place farmers on easy street. The cause of the unrest, said Mr. McKenzie, is that the farmer cannot exchange enough of the commodities required on the farm to make his home and family comfortable, for the product which his labor brings him. In other words the farmer has to exchange too much of the grain and farm products he raises for the commodities he has to buy.

If a farmer imports a suit of clothes invoiced to him at \$10.00, that means that he would have to exchange 13 1/3 bus. of wheat at 75c a bushel, for the suit of clothes. But the custom officer interferes and says, you will have to pay \$3.00 duty on that suit of clothes, compelling the farmer to contribute 4 bushels more before he can get his suit. That is to say the purchasing power of his wheat in this case is reduced one-third. But the farmers do not import their goods direct, they get them in the ordinary course of business, and by the time the goods pass through the hands of the wholesaler,

the jobber and retailer, the burden of protection is very much enhanced. Importers and merchants add a percentage for profit to the cost of their goods delivered in their warehouse. Suppose a Neepawa farmer sells a carload of wheat containing 1,000 bushels at 75c a bushel, he gets \$750.00. At present cost of transportation he has to give \$250.00 for transporting that car of wheat to Liverpool. (To say nothing of cost of insurance, storage, interest and dealer's profit). That is to say he has to give the transportation companies 33 1/3 bushels to carry the 1,000 bushels to Liverpool. The importer imports goods in quantities, hands them over to the jobber in broken lots, and the jobber to the retailer in smaller quantities. Wheat exported is not paid for in cash by the importing country, but goods are given in exchange. The Canadian importer gets a bill of exchange for this carload of wheat which in Britain is worth \$1,000, and with this bill of exchange buys an assortment of goods, clothing, woollens, cutlery, hardware, granite ware, crockery, and the thousand other things that a farmer needs on his farm. As soon as he lands his goods he is met by a customs officer at the port of landing who compels him to pay 25 per cent. of the value of the goods, or \$250.00 before he gets possession of them. Of course, the importer adds this to the cost of his imports and passes it on. Say he sells his goods to the jobber at 10 per cent. profit, he adds 10 per cent. to the \$250 duty, and passes it on to the jobber at \$275. The jobber adds his 15 per cent. profit or \$41.25 and passes it on to the retailer. The retailer in his turn adds 25 per cent. profit, which is \$78.06, and passes it on to the consumer at \$395.31. That is the \$250.00 duty that the importer paid amounts to \$395.31 before it reaches the consumer.

The farmer has to dispose of an additional 526 bushels of wheat before he can buy the goods exchanged for his car of wheat. That is the price he pays for Protection. Unquestionably the excessive freight rates are a burden, and should be reduced. But you will note that the freight rate does not

burden the western farmers nearly as much as Protection does. We cannot do without transportation, but we can do without Protection. Transportation charges can be reduced, but cannot be cut out. Protection can be cut out, and should be, and western farmers should make up their minds that it will be.

The speeches were interspersed with songs by Alex. Parks, Miss White, Mr. Down, Miss Bullock, Miss Kerr and Mrs. Parks. The song of the evening was entitled "Vote for the Farmers" sung to the tune of "Marching through Georgia" by Miss McCord, with a chorus of male voices.

At a meeting composed of the Pine Creek and Edrans Grain Growers and the Edrans and Firdale Royal Templars, it was decided to hold the Pine Creek Grain Growers' fourth annual picnic on sec. 20, 12, 12 on June 24, or if that day is wet on the 26th. It was decided to have President Henders, of the Grain Growers, and Rev. J. L. Gordon, of Winnipeg, to address the meeting from 2 o'clock until 3, when the sports begin. There will be a baseball tournament and races of all kinds. The ladies are requested to bring their baskets as it is a basket picnic. We are endeavoring to make this the picnic of the year. We had 700 last year; we want 1,000 this year.

JOSHIAH BENNETT, Chairman.
MR. McLEOD, Sec'y, Edrans.

Albert McGregor, of Winchester branch, writes that they are arranging for a joint meeting at Arden of the different branches of north, south, east and west of Arden for some day about the middle of June, and are making application for speakers from Central Association.

The Grain Growers at Desford are holding a concert on the evening of June 17 at which the secretary of the Central Association is expected to give an address.

On account of the C.P.R. not being in a position to supply transportation for the Shoal Lake picnic on July 2, the date has been changed to July 9.

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