

The Grain Growers' Guide

Winnipeg, Wednesday, September 24th, 1913

THE WILSON TARIFF

The Wilson Tariff bill has passed the Senate at Washington and is now in conference between the two Houses. In this bill many reductions are being made for the benefit of the American people. Some of these reductions will also benefit the Canadian farmers and manufacturers. On page 20 of this issue will be seen the present standing of the Wilson tariff bill. No doubt it will be through its final stages and signed by the president before another week. It will then be time enough to consider its effect upon Canada. But it looks now as though the Dominion Government would be called upon at the next session of Parliament to put wheat and wheat flour on the free list, and thus secure the free entry of Canadian wheat into the American market. It looks also as though the government would be called upon to put agricultural implements on the free list and thus confer another boon upon the farmers of Canada.

MANUFACTURERS EVADE ISSUE

Readers of The Guide have become very familiar with the patriotic declarations of protectionist manufacturers throughout Canada, and of their "unswerving loyalty to the Empire" and their "devotion to the flag." Last year it will be remembered that when the Canadian Manufacturers' Association held its annual convention in Ottawa we sent a telegram to the president, asking if the Manufacturers were willing to join hands with the Grain Growers in asking the Ottawa government to reduce the tariff on British imports, and thus give a tangible proof of their much vaunted loyalty and also of their desire to bind Canada closer to Great Britain. It will also be remembered that when our telegram was read before the association at Ottawa it was greeted with roars of laughter. The reply was sent back that there was not time to consider such a proposition during the closing hours of the convention, but they would be glad to hold a conference with the Grain Growers upon any subject. The Manufacturers again met in annual convention at Halifax last week, on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday, and on Monday night we sent the following telegram to the president, in order that the convention might have plenty of time to consider it.

Winnipeg, Sept. 15, 1913.

Robert S. Gourlay,
Pres., Canadian Manufacturers' Assn.,
Manufacturers' Convention,
Halifax, N.S.:

After one year's consideration, is the Canadian Manufacturers' Association now willing to join hands with the Western Grain Growers in urging the government to reduce the tariff upon British imports to one-half that charged upon foreign imports, to be followed by free trade with Great Britain in four years? By such an action the Manufacturers of Canada will show that their patriotism is deep and abiding. Nothing would do more to strengthen the ties between Canada and Great Britain. Please bring this message before your Association and wire if your members are prepared to join the Grain Growers in this great patriotic scheme.

(Sgd.) THE GRAIN GROWERS' GUIDE.

We have no report as to whether the Manufacturers laughed this time or not, but they sent us the following reply:

Halifax, N.S., Sept. 18, 1913.

The Grain Growers' Guide,
Winnipeg, Man.:

The Canadian Manufacturers' Association, through its accredited representatives, is always willing to confer with Grain Growers' Associations, or any other organization, on matters of mutual concern. Three years ago we made advances in this direction to the Grain Growers' Associations of the West, and sent one of our secretaries to Winnipeg to ex-

tend the invitation personally to them. At that time there were, in our opinion, broad issues before the public, regarding which a better understanding as between the farmers of the West and the manufacturers generally was desirable. The Grain Growers did not find it convenient to meet us then, and, should they desire to do so now, no doubt we shall hear from them through the proper channel.

(Sgd.) R. S. GOURLAY.

Mr. Gourlay is in error as to the object of the visit of the Manufacturers' secretary to Winnipeg three years ago. It was on the occasion of the big delegation which went to the "Siege of Ottawa" in December, 1910. A few days prior to the departure of the delegation one of the Manufacturers' secretaries came to Winnipeg and extended an invitation to the Grain Growers to become the guests of the manufacturers upon a visit to some of the larger industrial plants of Ontario. The Grain Growers appreciated this invitation but were forced to decline it because arrangements had already been made for the special train from the West and the meeting with the Ontario farmers in the East, and there was no opportunity to accept the Manufacturers' invitation. The Manufacturers' representative made no mention of any conference upon any matter of mutual interest to farmers and manufacturers, though we cannot say what the intention of the manufacturers was in this respect had the Grain Growers been able to accept their hospitality. As it stands at present, however, the Manufacturers have never made any proposition to the Grain Growers for a conference.

The only reason the Manufacturers are proposing a conference now is in order to evade the issue which has been put so plainly before them and which places them in such an awkward position in view of their much vaunted loyalty. We confess it is distasteful for us to couch a message to the Manufacturers in such terms as the telegram which we sent to them last week, but in view of their patriotic utterances we felt that they would understand the message better if it appealed to them in the language that falls most readily from their own lips. The chief idea of the Manufacturers in urging a conference is in order to secure delay. None of them is in favor of lowering the tariff on British imports one jot, and if the suggested conference was held there is no doubt but that the Manufacturers would urge the appointment of a tariff commission to make a "complete investigation of the tariff question." This tariff commission they figure would require two or three years to make its investigation. That would be still further delay. After the commission presented its report to the government, of course the government would require another year or two to decide upon its course of action. President Gourlay, in his annual address last week at Halifax, said that the tariff was satisfactory to the manufacturers except the woollen and iron schedules. The complaint in regard to these was, of course, that they were too low. The Manufacturers' Association is opposed to any tariff reduction in any schedule, no matter how great the profits being made or extortion practiced by protected industries.

The suggestion of the Manufacturers for a conference with the Grain Growers is a bluff pure and simple. We should be more than glad to see the leading officers of the organized farmers hold a public conference with the Manufacturers' officials, where each side will present their case, and we will venture to predict that the result will be that when the conference was ended the Manufacturers would not have a single argument upon which to base their demand

for protection. If the Manufacturers really desire a conference they might have shown their good faith by suggesting that at least some reduction could be made in the tariff on British imports. As it stands now the Manufacturers are relying upon their financial resources to hold both political parties in check and prevent them making any radical reduction of the tariff. In the past the Manufacturers have done all their bargaining with the politicians, henceforth they will find that they have to reckon with the common people. It is now a struggle to see whether the Manufacturers' dollars are more influential than the ballots of the common people.

SCOTTISH CO-OPERATORS' TRIUMPH

Readers of The Guide who are endeavoring to improve conditions in this country by the application of the co-operative principle will be interested in the article which appears in this issue describing the struggle of co-operators in Scotland against the efforts of private traders' organizations to ruin and destroy the co-operative movement. Needless to say, co-operation has triumphed over all its opponents and there are today many thousands of homes throughout the British Isles where comforts are enjoyed which would have been unattainable but for the valiant fight waged against selfishness and greed by co-operators of twenty and thirty years ago. Persecution, instead of destroying co-operation, only served to stimulate and strengthen the movement. When a leading soap manufacturer refused to supply co-operative stores with his product, the Scottish Co-operative Wholesale Society established its own soap factory; when the meat dealers established a boycott of co-operative butcher shops, the co-operators imported their own supplies from Canada and the United States; when employers of labor discharged employees who dealt at co-operative stores a co-operative laundry was established to give them employment, and today co-operators can supply practically all their wants from their own factories and private manufacturers are only too anxious to get a portion of their trade. In Great Britain, fortunately, co-operation was firmly established before its opponents organized their forces, and the various societies, wholesale, retail and productive, were able to join together for their mutual defence. In this country, the opposition was in the field first so far as any effective organization was concerned, and has prevented the establishment of a great many co-operative stores by influencing members of Parliament and securing the defeat of co-operative legislation every time it has come before the Dominion Parliament. Co-operators, however, have found ways to organize under provincial law in most of the provinces, and the foundations have now been laid for a system of co-operation in Canada which no selfish opposition will be able to overcome and which will undoubtedly be a means of improving the home life and the business conditions of farmers and other workers throughout the country.

Since Illinois has given almost full suffrage to the 1,600,000 women within that State, other leading States, such as New York and Pennsylvania, find that they will have to follow suit or suffer the loss of prestige and power in the nation-wide elections. There are now between three and four million women voters in the United States—enough to swing any presidential election, if the women cared to do so.