



Part of the Farmers' Deputation before Leaving the House after the Presentation of their Memorial to the Government

This illustration gives an inadequate idea of the size of the deputation. Part of the members had already left and some were still in the House when this photo was taken. Sir Wilfrid Laurier may be seen in the centre of the group. To the Premier's right is Mr. McCreag, President of the Canadian Council of Agriculture.

associations were in joint session it would be better to defer further action until they presented their report, for the Ontario delegates at least were ready to stand by any decision reached by their officers. This brought down the house. Cheer followed cheer. The western men showed that they were ready to do the same. A few minutes later Jams McEwing, of Wellington County, announced that the executive committee had heard that the meeting in the Opera House was obstreperous and that he had been sent over to comb down the Ontario delegates if they were not behaving. This caused renewed enthusiasm which culminated in wild cheering when Mr. McEwing further announced that before he left the meeting of the executive committee it had been found that the officers of the various associations were unanimous on all essential points and ready for joint action. From that moment the utmost harmony prevailed and everything went with a swing. Perfect unanimity was evident throughout the remainder of the two days of the proceedings. The eastern men soon found many former friends and neighbors among the delegates from the west which intensified the general feeling of enthusiasm.

In the afternoon the officers of the joint associations presented their reports. The various resolutions that it was proposed to lay before the government on the following morning were submitted to the mass meeting, discussed, voted on and carried unanimously. Finally, when after spending some four hours in session, the chief resolution of all, that dealing with the tariff, was introduced and explained and it was found that it contained all the desires of both the east and the west and that every delegate present was ready to support it in its entirety, the enthusiasm of the delegates broke out once more and the

several hundreds present again gave wild cheers of delight.

What the Farmers Asked For

1—Better trade relations between Canada and the United States and with Great Britain, especially in farm products.

2—The immediate construction by the Government of the Hudson Bay Railway and its operation by the Government.

3—The acquiring of control by the Government of the terminal grain elevators at Fort William and Port Arthur and the establishment of similar elevators on the Pacific Coast, and later at Hudson Bay.

4—Amendments to the Railway Act which will make it easier for farmers to obtain compensation for stock killed, a more uniform regulation of rates in different districts and that will prevent railway companies from watering their capital stock and then charging rates that will enable them to pay dividends on the watered stock.

5—That cheap and efficient machinery for the incorporation of cooperative societies be provided at the present session of parliament.

6—That the new Bank Act be so worded as to permit the Act to be amended at any time and in any particular.

7—That the Government take steps to establish a chilled meat trade and thereby prevent the control of such a trade ever passing into the hands of private parties.

Emphasis was laid most on the first five requests and especially on the first three.

The delegates pledged themselves to promote on their return home the formation of farmers' organizations in every province of Canada. They expressed their willingness to submit to direct taxation, if necessary, to make good any decrease in the national revenue that might result from a lowering of the tariff between Canada and the United States.

The causes which led to holding this monster demonstration are interesting. For many years the more independent farmers of Ontario have been expressing the view, through the Dominion Grange, that our tariff regulations impose a very unfair burden on our farming population. They contended this before the tariff commission some five years ago and each year since they have passed resolutions to the same effect. Their stand has been that it was not fair to force them to buy their raw materials, such as farm implements and household necessities in a protected market with its enhanced prices while they were compelled to sell their surplus farm products in Great Britain where they had to meet the competition of the world.

In the west, the farmers have suffered from the same causes. In addition they have felt the oppression of the railways and of the elevator trust to such an extent that some years ago they formed several provincial grain growers' associations, comprising some 30,000 western farmers, through which they have conducted a wonderfully successful campaign to protect their interests and gain their rights. They have fought independent of party and have forced their governments to break the elevator and Bell Telephone trusts and to gain important concessions from the railways.

A year ago the Dominion Grange sent its Master, Mr. E. C. Drury, of Crown Hill, to the west to attend a conference of the officers of the Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba Grain Growers' Associations. At this conference the Canadian Council of Agriculture was formed to represent the farmers in all the provinces. Mr. D. W. McCuag, of Portage la Prairie, Man., was appointed president and Mr. E. C. Drury, secretary.

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