

The Grain Growers' Guide

Winnipeg, Wednesday, January 25th, 1911

MR. MEIGHEN'S RESOLUTION

The attention of the House of Commons last week was drawn to the tariff on agricultural implements by Arthur Meighen, the member from Portage la Prairie, who moved the following resolution:

That in the opinion of this House a substantial reduction in the import duties on agricultural implements is now due the agriculturists of Canada and is in just accord with the true needs of a protective tariff.

This resolution is rather a peculiar one in that it contradicts itself by expressing belief in protection and at the same time asking for a reduction in the tariff. Mr. Meighen should know that protection is not favored in Western Canada. His address showed that he had given considerable attention to his subject, and the figures he presented were sufficient to convince any open minded person that the tariff on agricultural implements should not only be reduced but, as Mr. Herron said, should be wiped out altogether. Mr. Meighen is a young man with an opportunity before him and it is to be hoped that he will not allow himself to be led astray by any foolish notions of party loyalty. His study of the tariff has convinced him of its iniquity, as proven by his remarks. If Mr. Meighen had left the last few words off the end of his resolution it would be difficult to see how any member of the House of Commons could refuse to support it. Mr. Knowles has declared himself a free trader. There are other supporters of the government from the West who are also avowed free traders. It would seem that if these men on both sides of the House are in earnest they could very easily force the tariff into a front place in the present parliament. However, it is expected that the reciprocity arrangements may be announced in the House of Commons some day this week and then there will be an opportunity to see how much benefit the people of two great countries are to receive as a result of the negotiations of their governments. It is unfortunate that the chief effort of both Mr. Meighen and Mr. Knowles should have been to demonstrate that their particular party was superior to the other. Such action is child's play. Both the present and the former government have been protectionist to the limit of the people's endurance. Each government seemed more concerned with furthering the interests of special privilege than in protecting the rights of the people. The present government has to its credit the great betrayal of 1897 and which is day by day being brought home to them. But, in Heaven's name, don't ask the people of Canada to stand by and listen to an argument on the merits of the tariff policies of the two parties. Surely the people haven't deserved this. Why can't Messrs. Meighen and Knowles and Lake and Herron stand together and let the old parties look after themselves? Let us throw aside the skeletons of the past and get at something new and democratic. Mr. Meighen has made a good start and if he will drop the "traditions of the great Liberal Conservative party," of which Canada has had enough, he will perform valuable service for his constituents.

If Sir Wilfrid Laurier and Sir Richard Cartwright would deliver some of their old tariff addresses in parliament today they would be surprised at the support they would receive.

CANADIAN MANUFACTURERS AND PATRIOTISM

Is it not time that the Grain Growers and farmers of the Dominion should send out an appeal to the manufacturers to put into practice a little of the patriotism and self-sacrifice which they are so fond of recommending to the farmers? Canadians should be willing, they tell us, to give up something of their own advantage in order to contribute to the "well-rounded development" of the country. They should rest contented with smaller returns from their labor in order to further the progress and prosperity of the country as a whole. It is doubtful whether anyone has ever yet seen in any report of any of the great manufacturing corporations, of which so many have recently come into existence, that the manufacturers themselves are acting on this heroic advice. Nothing would more contribute to the "well-rounded development" of Canada than that the makers of agricultural implements, the manufacturers of cotton and woollen clothing, and of household furnishings and necessities, should be content with a small margin of profit and should sell all these goods at the lowest possible prices to the men and women who are doing the hard pioneer work of opening out the country. It cannot be said that a new country is showing a well-rounded development when great overcrowded cities are growing up in the midst of rural areas with the sparsest possible population—when the rural population of the older provinces is decreasing, actually as well as relatively—and when the fiscal system of the country tends to throw all the prizes to the towns, and to put every inducement in the way of young men of ambition and ability to quit the farm for the factory. The basis of all civilization is agriculture, and the only true way to obtain a well-rounded development of a new country is to encourage the farmer—or at any rate scrupulously refrain from discouraging him. Surely if the manufacturers, with all their ardent patriotism, could be brought to see this, they would be willing to bear a greater proportion of the taxation of the country than is now thrown on them by the low duties on raw materials and the greatly extended and enlarged free list; and to reduce their profits to just enough to afford a fair livelihood and a minimum return on capital invested. They would strain every nerve to put out goods of the best quality at the lowest feasible price, that the farmers might enjoy all comforts possible in their remote and lonely homes. Acting on this policy, they would have nothing to fear from the competition of either Great Britain or the United States. They would, therefore, be indifferent to the maintenance of a high tariff and would be able to cease supporting political parties out of their gains, thus reducing their expenses. The manufacturers are so eager to help the farmer by pointing out his duties and his shortcomings, that the farmer in return might come to the aid of the manufacturer, teach him how to put his patriotism into action, and persuade him also to a little self-sacrifice for the sake of that great ideal—"a well-rounded development of the Dominion."

Soon the snow will be leaving and the farmers will be called to the land to make preparation to feed the hungry of the earth. Now is the time to lay the plans for the organization work for next winter. It is by looking ahead that the farmers' organizations accomplish their work.

OUR ADVERTISING PAGES

It is not customary in journalism to discuss the commercial side of the business in the editorial columns. The case of The Guide, however, is decidedly different to that of the majority of journals in Canada that are conducted from the commercial standpoint, or as the organ of political parties, or of special privilege. Possibly even The Guide might be placed in the class of commercial journals, though not in the sense that it is being published for the benefit of the dividends to be paid to its shareholders. The Guide was established and is being conducted for the purpose of conveying to its readers unbiased news and views upon all important subjects. Such a policy as has been pursued by The Guide has made it very popular among Western farmers and has brought a large circulation. In fact, there is probably not another example in Canada of a paper being received by such popular favor. The readers of The Guide feel that it is their own paper and that it is being published to protect their interests against other combined interests that have in past years preyed upon them. The readers of The Guide are undoubtedly the most intelligent class of farmers in Western Canada. Otherwise they would not be interested in the questions that The Guide deals with. These Western farmers are large purchasers of all the necessities that go to make life upon the prairies tolerable, and also the little luxuries that bring happiness and contentment. For this reason it is of immense advantage to all dealers in these commodities to advertise their goods in the pages of The Guide. We consider the advertising pages of The Guide as being of almost as great value to our readers as our news and editorial pages. Perhaps of greater value because the farmer can live without reading, but he cannot live without buying. The advertising pages are of course the only part of our business which brings in any substantial revenue, as our subscription price of one dollar a year does not furnish one-quarter of the necessary revenue for producing the paper. It has been the policy of The Guide since its inception to censor its advertising with the utmost care for the protection of its readers. There are enterprises being started every day in Canada that have as their aim the exploitation of the public without giving value in return. We feel it our duty to protect our readers from the rapacity of this class of human vultures. It is at times difficult to discriminate between the legitimate and the fake concerns that offer us their advertising patronage. Our advertising pages are the only thing we have to sell, and after the sale is completed there still remains the fact that we are to a certain extent an umpire of the relations between our advertising patrons and our readers. We do not give a guarantee of the integrity of every firm that advertises in our pages, nor do we guarantee to reimburse our readers for any losses they may have sustained through dealings with our advertisers. But we do make every effort possible to see that our advertising patrons will give our readers a square deal, and we also assist our readers in every way to protect themselves in case of unfair dealings on the part of our advertisers. We believe that the advertising pages of The Guide are as clean, as safe and as reliable as any that can be found in Canada. We have refused to publish advertisements during the past two years that would have netted us an income of thousands of dollars. In refusing this advertising we are not positive that it was of an illegitimate nature, but