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## The Ruling on Express Rates

In announcing the ruling of the Board of Railway Commissioners reducing express charges in western Canada by twenty per cent., the recently appointed chairman of the Board, H. L. Drayton, reported as follows:

"In my view the express rates charged by the defendant companies in the prairie provinces and in British Columbia are unreasonable. Reductions which have been made, and they are many, as shown by the companies' tariffs, are reductions which only little affect the manner in which the bulk of the tariff is moving, or are perhaps compensated by additions which have been made to the rates, presumably in the levelling process, in establishing a mileage basis of standard rates, as provided by the judgment. I am of the opinion that an approximately average reduction of twenty per cent. should be made by the companies in the standard maximum tariff for traffic classified as merchandise to apply only to the prairie provinces and to British Columbia."

### DIFFERENCE DEFINED

After defining the difference between freight and express traffic the judgment continues:

"Both Mr. Hanna, of the Canadian Northern, and Mr. Stout, of the Dominion Express, urged very strongly that the proposal of a twenty per cent. decrease was entirely too radical, not called for by the conditions of business, and unduly oppressive."

"In my view no smaller reduction should be considered. The express business is a matter of railway operation in this country, and the capitalization and bonded indebtedness of the different express companies have been created under such circumstances as to require no consideration in striking a rate. I can add nothing useful to what the late chief commissioner under this head said in his exhaustive judgment. The test of the rate is largely its reasonableness, in view of the service supplied, and in directing the reduction now made by this judgment, the board, I think, would be but adopting a rate basis at the present time, and in the light of the different aspects of revenue and operation now presented certainly as reasonable from the standpoint of the carrier as from that of the shipper."

## Oppose Increase in Tariff

Should the Dominion Government act on the request of the British Columbia Fruit Growers' Association and move to increase the duty on fruit imported from the United States it is evident that the proposal will be vigorously fought by the people of the prairie provinces. This was shown by the discussion which took place in the House of Commons, when Hon. Martin Burrell introduced his resolution to amend the Inspection and Sales Act as it relates to foreign fruit, and designed to compel foreign growers competing in the Canadian markets to conform with Canadian regulations regarding the marking of boxes, inspection, and similar points.

Mr. Burrell said that the proposed amendment had been prompted by representatives from fruit growers all over Canada, and was designed to place Canadian fruit growers and United States growers on an equal basis.

Mr. Knowles of Moose Jaw saw in the proposed amendment an underhand attempt on the part of the government to increase the protection of the British Col-

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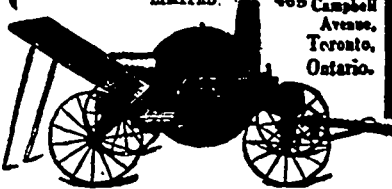
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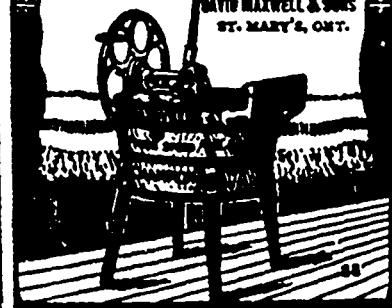
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