



Members of the Farmers' Parliament, the Canadian Council of Agriculture, as they met in Regina, Sask., last spring.

Included in this group are many men who have played a foremost part in the development of the organized farmers' movement in Canada. Every man in the group is a leader in his province, and well known in other provinces also. Among those who are the most familiar to the farmers of Ontario, either personally or by reputation, are the following: No. 1, T. A. Cressy, Winnipeg, President, Grain Growers' Grain Co.; No. 2, H. W. Wood, Alberta, President the United Farmers of Alberta and of Canadian Council of Agriculture; No. 3, Roderick McKenzie, for many years the Secretary of the Manitoba Grain Growers' Association, and now the secretary of the Canadian Council of Agriculture; No. 4, A. Maharz, President of the Saskatchewan Cooperative Elevator Co., Ltd.; No. 5, R. C. Sanders, Winnipeg, Man., President, Manitoba Grain Growers' Association; No. 6, C. Rice-Jones, Calgary, President Alberta Farmers' Cooperative Elevator Co., Ltd.; No. 7, Hon. Geo. Langley, M.L.A., Regina, Vice-President Saskatchewan Cooperative Elevator Co.; No. 8, G. F. Chipman, Winnipeg, Editor Grain Growers' Guide; No. 9, J. H. Musselman, Regina, Secretary Saskatchewan Grain Growers' Association; No. 10, C. W. Garney, Paris, Ont., Manager United Farmers' Cooperative Company, Limited. First man in front row on left is Fred W. Riddell, Manager Saskatchewan Cooperative Elevator Company, Regina; second from right in second row is John Kennedy, Vice-President of the Grain Growers' Grain Company, who is shortly to address the nine district conventions of the U.F.O. that are to be held in Ontario. Many of the Western men went west from Ontario years ago and have prospered in the West.

The U.F.O. and the Reciprocity Agreement

Why the Farmers Supported it and Why They Support it Now—A Review of the Situation—By E. C. Drury, B.S.A., Barrie, Ont.

THAT men living on two halves of a continent, which, by reason of climate, natural resources and density of population, are naturally supplementary to each other, should find it to their advantage to trade, to exchange the products of their various labors with all possible freedom, seems to be an obvious truth. Particularly is this true when by reason of the fact that they are of the same blood, language, institutions and ideals, there are no natural obstacles to business in the way of speaking tongues unintelligible to each other, or of racial antipathy, and their wants are the same.

We can readily see that, even with absolute free trade between the United States and Mexico, for example, there could never be a very great volume of trade.

Between the United States and Canada, however, the case is entirely different. The two peoples are identical. You cannot pick out a Canadian travelling in the United States, or an American travelling in Canada. They mingle freely, they intermarry, their ideals and institutions are almost identical. Most of all, their wants are the same, and to satisfy these wants, the entire continent must be drawn upon. Every trading house of importance in Canada or the United States has its great connections in the other country. An immense volume of profitable business is done, and there is not the slightest doubt that a great deal more would be done but for one great obstacle—an imaginary line drawn across the continent from east to west, dotted with American and Canadian customs houses and guarded by an army of customs officers, which makes it more difficult and expensive to send goods from one country to the other than to send them to the Atlantic.

The Irksome Tariff

This condition has always been irksome to such individuals as were brought directly into contact with it—witness the dressy rooms in border stores, where customers may have means to conceal purchased

goods on their persons. If they had but the wit to perceive it, it is equally disadvantageous to all honest people of both countries. Particularly, however, it has been disadvantageous to Canadians, because Canada is a very much smaller nation than the United States. Why this is so will be readily understood by means of a simple illustration. If by some means, trade were rendered difficult between Toronto and Weston, for example, it would be disadvantageous to the people of Toronto. It is true, but to such a small degree that very few people in Toronto would notice the difference, but it would be ruinous to Weston. Thus Canada, the smaller of the two nations, has always wanted more freedom of trade with the United States, reciprocity, much more badly than has the United States. This being the case, it is not surprising to find that, at least until 1911, the history of Canada has been one long series of efforts by Canadian statesmen to obtain better reciprocal trade relations with the United States, that the period of the old Reciprocity Treaty was a time of unexampled prosperity for Canada and that ever since that time till 1911 the eyes of the people of Canada have been turned longingly to the United States as their best market.

In Old Reciprocity Times

Going away back into the last century, we find that in 1846 a serious effort was begun by Canadian statesmen to obtain free trade with the United States, particularly for natural products. It is interesting and instructive to note that this effort was made primarily and was given the support of England to allay annexationist sentiment in Canada. In 1854 the effort was successful, and for 12 years, until 1866, when the treaty was abrogated by the Americans, Canada enjoyed abounding prosperity. In 1866, when the treaty was abrogated, there was widespread regret in Canada.

The Mackenzie Reciprocity Defeat

In 1874, the government of Sir Alexander Mackenzie made a sincere effort to obtain Reciprocity along

broad lines. It was frustrated, however by American after-the-war sentiment and in 1878, through the influence of the protectionist manufacturers, the Mackenzie administration suffered defeat. Between 1878 and 1898 efforts were made both by Sir John MacDonald and Sir Wilfrid Laurier to obtain reciprocity with the United States, but always the protected manufacturers of Canada, now grown strong and brazen in their hold on Canadian politics, were able to prevent any offer except such as would be unacceptable to the Americans, viz.: free trade in natural products, but not in manufactured. No further efforts were made by Canada after 1898 and for 12 years the issue of reciprocity was dead.

New Conditions Arise.

In 1910, however, two new forces appeared, on both sides of the line. In the United States the high cost of living was bearing heavily, particularly on the great eastern cities of the United States. They desired more abundant sources of foodstuffs, and were looking hungrily to the agricultural products of Canada to supply their needs. Under pressure of this need, President Taft made tentative offers of Reciprocal Free Trade to Canada, on the other hand, another new force appeared. This was a Dominion-wide movement of farmers, under the Canadian Council of Agriculture, organized that year at Prince Albert, of which the writer had the honor to be the first secretary. This movement was most strongly supported in the west, but received abundant support in the east also from Ontario to Nova Scotia. Under its auspices a great convention was held in Ottawa in December, 1910. At this convention resolutions were passed, demanding, among other things, that the government take advantage of the American offer, and endeavor to secure Reciprocity with the United States. A great delegation of a thousand farmers from all over Canada marched in a long column, up Parliament Hill and filled the Commons chamber to overflowing, as they pressed their demands on parliament and Mr. Laurier, the Prime Minister.

A New Power in Politics

Canadian politicians, who for thirty years, had been under the thumb of

the Manufacturers' Association, sat up and began to take notice. Here was a powerful new force, whose strength they could not accurately gauge. Clearly something had to be done. With the acquiescence of Mr. Borden and of Parliament, then in session, Mr. Laurier sent representatives to Washington to take the matter up. Now there is not the slightest doubt in my mind that in this effort Mr. Laurier was insincere. Since their accession to power in 1896 the Liberal party in parliament had brazenly scrapped their former avowed Free Trade principles and were living on terms of the greatest amity with the Power behind the Throne in Canadian politics—the Manufacturers' Association. The men sent to Washington by Mr. Laurier to represent Canada in the negotiations, Mr. Fielding and Mr. Patterson, were protectionists, the last named particularly. The offer made to the United States—free trade in natural products, but not in manufactured—was one which had been repeatedly turned down by the United States in the past, and which there was no reason to believe, would be accepted now. It was the intention of Mr. Laurier, as I believe, to placate the farmers by a seeming effort to get what they had demanded, and at the same time to avoid a break with the manufacturers. But, to the surprise of everyone, due to the influence in the United States which I have mentioned, the Canadian representatives came back from Washington with the impossible, the thing Canada had sought vainly for a generation, an offer of Free Trade in natural products without the old American condition of free interchange of manufactures.

It Seemed Too Good

The result of the negotiations was loudly acclaimed by the Liberals. The Opposition, under Mr. Borden, didn't know what to do with it. I remember, about this time, meeting on the train, a certain prominent Conservative M. P., since translated to the more tranquil atmosphere of the bench. I asked him what he thought of the result of the negotiations. He told me he thought it was just what was needed, a splendid thing for Canada. A month later I sat in a meeting and heard this same gentleman work himself into a frenzy compared to which