

Reciprocity Debate

(By The Guide Special Correspondent)

(Press Gallery, Ottawa, April 21, 1911)

The reciprocity debate which began on January 26, nearly three months ago, still drags wearily on. To-night William Wright, of Muskoka, is talking, and from the fact that he is on the opposition side, it is supposed that he is speaking against the agreement, but no one is listening to him and so no one knows for certain. There are just sufficient members in the House to form a quorum, and these are merely talking or sleeping. Everyone is tired of the debate, especially those who have had their say, and, with the exception of a few members who have prepared speeches and are waiting for an opportunity to get them printed in Hansard so that they may be able to send copies to people at home, everybody would be glad to see the debate brought to a close.

The Liberal members in caucus on Wednesday decided to quit talking after three or four more members, who have had their speeches ready, have delivered themselves, but the Conservatives alone may continue the discussion for some weeks yet. Whether they will do so, however, they have not at present determined. When the Conservative members from the East returned from the Easter holidays at the beginning of the week they brought word that they could "sweep the country" on the anti reciprocity platform, and there is a strong inclination on the part of a large section of the party to back business and compel the government to bring on an election before the reciprocity agreement can be passed. They believe, it appears, that they would be much more successful in persuading the people against reciprocity before it goes into force than afterwards, and so they are anxious for an election.

The debate was resumed when the House met after the Easter holidays on Wednesday by Thos. MacNutt, member for Saltcoats, Saskatchewan, who made an able and interesting speech showing the advantages of reciprocity from the standpoint of the Western farmer. Mr. MacNutt also took up the cudgels on behalf of the Grain Growers' Associations, making an effective reply to the derogatory remarks made by Col. Hughes and other speakers, and showing that far from being a part of the Grit machine as had been charged, the leaders of the associations, as well as the rank and file, were men who had supported both political parties, but who were united in demanding the removal of the burdens imposed upon them by an unjust tariff, and the opening up of the United States market for the disposal of their products. Mr. MacNutt said he had received a large number of resolutions favoring reciprocity, and he recognized the names of the movers and seconders in many cases as being those of Conservatives who had opposed him at the last election. He read a letter from a gentleman who he said took a very decided stand at the last election against himself, in which the writer said:

"You may take it as absolutely certain that reciprocity will carry in Saltcoats riding and generally in the West. I suppose you do not want telling this, but—as an independent—it comes my way differently to the way you get your information. Old-fashioned Conservatives hate like the devil to vote for anything introduced by Laurier, but they are going to gulp Laurier and vote for reciprocity."

Not Party Question

Mr. MacNutt gave other instances to prove that reciprocity was not regarded as a party question by the farmers of the West, and said he did not see why anyone could object to an additional market being obtained for farm products. If the United States market was not satisfactory, it need not be taken advantage of, but as a farmer he believed that it would be a great advantage to the people of the West. It would encourage greater production of certain products which were not now produced to a great extent, but which could be very advantageously produced in the Canadian West. He referred particularly to barley and potatoes, speaking of the usefulness of these crops for cleaning the land, and gave prices of No. 3 barley at Winnipeg and Minneapolis on one day in each week of 1910, which showed that the price ranged from 10½ to 35½ cents higher in Minneapolis for the same grade of barley. He also gave the prices of No. 1 Northern

wheat at Winnipeg and Minneapolis, which showed that in every case the Minneapolis price was higher, the smallest difference being 3¼ cents, and the highest 19 cents, and the grading standard was considerably higher on the Canadian side.

Speaking of horses, Mr. MacNutt said he was a horse raiser in a small way himself, but, as he was in favor of removing the protection from agricultural implements, he could not consistently ask for protection on horses. Personally he was quite prepared to accept the market price under free trade conditions. He did not think the price would be reduced, except on cheap horses, and they must consider the interests of the new settlers who came into the country and who needed cheap horses in order to start farming. He called the attention of the department of agriculture, however, to the fact that practically every case of glanders in the West could be traced to American importations, and he hoped the department would be very careful in the inspection of all horses coming across the line.

Reduce Implement Duty

The amount of the reduction in the duty on agricultural implements was not satisfactory to Mr. MacNutt, and, while he did not advocate that the duty should be entirely removed at the present time, he said he thought it should be further reduced, believing that it would then produce a larger revenue. Figures which he quoted from the catalog of the Royal Agricultural Society of England, showed that the Canadian made implements were sold at a lower price than the United States machines in England, the Massey Harris 5 foot cut binder with sheaf carrier being quoted at £31, and the Deering Ideal 5 foot cut with sheaf carrier at £31-10-0, while the Massey Harris 6 foot cut was £32, and the Walter A. Woods, £32-10-0. In the Canadian West, however, the two machines were sold to the farmers at exactly the same price, and the dealer could buy the Canadian made machine at Winnipeg only 50 cents cheaper than the American machine after the duty had been paid. Referring to a statement that binder twine and cream separators had become dearer after the duties were taken off, Mr. MacNutt said he knew that when there was a duty on binder twine he paid 16 and 17 cents a pound for twine, though he could now get a much better twine for 9 or 10 cents. He also knew that a cream separator which in 1897 cost \$110 could now be bought for less than \$80, and there could be no doubt that the removal of the duty from other manufactured articles would cause a reduction in price. They could look forward he hoped to further reductions in the implement duties later on, and, in the meantime, if the farmers were given better markets they could make more money, which would be a stimulus to them to increase their production, and they would then be better able to stand paying for what they had to purchase.

Opposed Reciprocity

E. A. Lancaster, of Lincoln and Niagara (Conservative), opposed reciprocity, and said the agreement would destroy, or at least seriously injure, the industry of growing tender or semi-tropical fruits in his constituency. He pointed out that the fruit growers of the Niagara district were under a disadvantage in competing with their American rivals, because owing to a duty of 20 per cent, they had to pay \$34 a thousand for fruit baskets, whereas the American fruit growers could buy them for \$22 a thousand. He knew one man who was paying \$450 a year more for baskets than he would have to pay under free trade. In addition they had to pay from 15 to 40 per cent on every article they used, and the fruit growers used and wore out more machinery in one year upon 25 acres than the farmer in the West used in 10 years on 640 acres.

At the close of his speech, which lasted nearly four hours, Mr. Lancaster said it was the longest he had ever delivered in the House, but he was going to oppose reciprocity tooth and nail and as long as he did not have his jaw he would say something more or less about it. Dr. J. W. Edwards, of Frontenac (Conservative) also spoke against reciprocity,

following upon the lines of other opposition speakers.

Hops Dairy Industry

James A. Robb, of Huntington, Quebec (Liberal), voiced the opinions of the farmers of Quebec in favor of reciprocity. He spoke chiefly of the effect on the dairy industry, and said that, in spite of the present duties, the farmers who sent their cream to the United States markets netted from 10 to 20 cents per 100 pounds of milk more than they could get at Montreal. With free trade in dairy products, he said, Canadian farmers would get from 35 to 30 cents per 100 lbs. more for their milk. At 30 cents per 100, and taking 4,000 pounds as the average annual production per cow, which was a low estimate, this would mean that with access to the United States market the return of the Quebec farmer would be \$15.00 more per cow, or \$312 more profit per year on a herd of 20 cows, which would mean over \$13,000,000 a year to the farmers of Quebec. The farmers of Quebec also knew the value of the American market for horses. Last year the average duty collected on horses shipped into the United States was \$35.90, and the Quebec farmer knew that the Americans who were every day trotting up and down the concessions looking for horses would probably not give him all that \$35, but a fair share of it.

The statement that was made shortly after the announcement of the reciprocity agreement, that the Oliver Plow Co. had, as a result of the proposed reduction in the agricultural implement duties, abandoned its plans for the erection of a plant at Hamilton, Ont., was proved to be without foundation by a letter read in the House of Commons on Thursday, by Hon. Wm. Pugsley. The matter was raised by a question as to certain dredging operations which are being carried out by the government in Burlington Bay in the vicinity of the works of the International Harvester Co. and the Oliver Chilled Plow Co. The letter showed not only that the Oliver Company is proceeding with the erection of the plant, but that it proposes to manufacture at Hamilton for the export trade. The letter was in part as follows:

"Our product in Canada is marketed by the International Harvester Company of Canada, Ltd. The plans of the Harvester Company for shipping this product to several lake carriers, who will also be benefited by the completion of the proposed channel. It is estimated that this season's business of the International Harvester Company will require the services of 50 boats—equivalent to 2,000 carloads—for their outbound traffic. Our northwest business during this shipping season will amount approximately to 900 cars, which, at the same ratio, will require 22 boats. Next season this amount will be increased to about 45 boats. This estimate of the size of our plant upon the assumption that the facilities for water shipment in accordance with the plans which have been submitted to you, can be obtained. It is our expectation and desire upon the completion of these plans to transfer a portion of our large export business from South Bend to the Canadian works, thus augmenting the volume of traffic already mentioned. We have orders on hand at this time for some 30,000 ploughs to be shipped during the present navigation season, and these shipments will be during the latter part of April. Until such time as proper arrangements can be made for water shipments we will be obliged to make shipments by rail.

It may be of interest to you to know that there has thus far been spent upon the plant over \$500,000, that a like investment will be added during the coming year, and that the value of the completed plant, according to plans already under way, will be in the neighborhood of \$1,500,000. With assurance of our appreciation of the service already rendered our company, and the courtesies extended to the writer on the occasion of his recent visit to Ottawa, I am,

Yours very truly,

R. J. SMART,

Works Manager.

THE GRAIN BILL

(By The Guide Correspondent)

Ottawa, April 21.—The consideration of the report of the committee on the grain bill will be taken up by the Senate on Thursday, May 2. The bill to incorporate the Grain Growers' Grain Co. was on the order paper of the private bills committee of the House of Commons, on

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Friday, but was not reached, and it will probably be considered on Friday, May 5.

RECIPROCITY PASSES U.S. HOUSE

Washington, April 21.—President Taft's Canadian reciprocity agreement, supported by all but a handful of Democrats and opposed by a majority of the Republicans, passed the House of Representatives this evening by a vote of 265 to 89. With nearly 200 Democrats in control and their action endorsed by a large body of the Republicans, the bill to put the agreement in force was adopted with no amendments and in almost the identical form in which it passed the House in the last session preceding this session.

The bill seeks to put into effect the formal agreement reached between President Taft and members of the Canadian cabinet for a reduction of the tariff rates on many articles and free trade in many others, across the Canadian border. Added to it by the Democratic leaders is a section which authorizes and requests President Taft to make further efforts to secure still freer trade relations with Canada, in the form of additional reciprocal relations.

Six Day Fight

The passage of the bill marked the close of a fight that had raged in the House for six days. During that time the safety of the measure was at no time threatened, but the Democratic and Republican leaders working for its passage conceded all the opportunity desired by its opponents for debate and protest against it. Following the same policy, amendments were admitted in the House today for almost every section of the bill, and in each case they were rejected by an overwhelming vote, given by the friends of the measure on both sides of the House, on the theory that any amendment would nullify it.

Ten Democrats voted against the bill on passage while 197 Democrats voted for it.

As in the last congress a majority of the Republicans were against it, the party vote being 67 for and 78 opposed.

Representative Berger, of Wisconsin, the Socialist member, voted for it, and Representative Atkin, of New York, who ranks as an independent, voted against it.

Amendments Proposed

The attempt to amend the agreement began with the final reading of the bill at 3 o'clock. The threats of Republicans opposed to the measure to make the Democrats vote against the amendments for free meat, free lumber, and free agricultural machinery were carried out, but as their party leaders declared that any amendment would defeat the whole trade agreement, they cheerfully voted these amendments down. Attempts to put fresh and canned meats on the free list section of the reciprocity bill were made by Represent-