

The Brain Growers' Guide

Winnipeg, Wednesday, August 16th, 1911

TERMS OF THE AGREEMENT

Inquiries are coming every day from the readers of The Guide, asking for information concerning the reciprocity agreement. Our readers want to know how much reduction there will be on agricultural implements and on various other things, and also to know exactly what articles are affected by the agreement. For this reason we republish in this issue the full text of the agreement showing the present duty charged by Canada and the United States on each item, and also what the duty will be when the agreement is ratified. The agreement has already been ratified by the United States Congress, and has been signed by President Taft. The moment it has been passed by the Canadian Parliament and receives the signature of the governor-general it will be effective. We commend the agreement to our readers for careful study. They should consider every item and then decide the matter according to their own intelligence without the slightest regard to their political party. If, after careful study, any man believes that this reciprocity agreement, as an economic measure, pure and simple, will not be for the best interests of Canada, then he should not support it. The only way to arrive at a decision is to first clear the mind of any political bias. In these pages, from time to time, we have carefully analyzed the reciprocity agreement in every one of its numerous phases since it was first announced in the House of Commons on January 26. We have endeavored to throw all possible light upon the subject and give our readers the benefit of any information we have secured upon it. We have published the speeches of the ablest men in Canada upon the subject, both for and against the agreement, in order that our readers may be fully informed upon the question before them. We have given our readers themselves full opportunity to express their views upon the agreement in our correspondence columns. We have given preference to the letters opposed to the agreement because fully ninety per cent. of the letters we received were heartily in favor of it, and we desired that all its weak spots might be shown up. From the day that reciprocity was announced in the House of Commons the organized farmers of the West have favored it very strongly. They recognized that the widest possible markets were necessary for the development of the agricultural industry in the West, as in all Canada. The more the Western farmers have studied the agreement the more strongly they have favored it. This is the first important federal legislation since 1866 in the interests of the farmers of Canada. We are publishing in this issue, alongside of the agreement, an article by E. C. Drury, of Barrie, Ont., secretary of the Canadian Council of Agriculture. Mr. Drury's article was contributed to the Farmers' Magazine, and we are reproducing it to show that reciprocity will benefit the farmers of Ontario as it will the farmers of all Canada. Mr. Drury is an authority upon agriculture. The government, although it came into power in 1896 pledged to reciprocity and low tariff, had not lived up to its pledge, and there is no indication that it would have done so had not the farmers risen in their might and demanded it. The reciprocity agreement was wrested from the Canadian government by the organized farmers of Canada and its ratification will be the greatest triumph of the farmers' cause in the history of Canada. The agricultural industry of Canada can never benefit through protection until the home market is able to consume practically all the natural produce.

That time will never come until the farmers are so handicapped by protection of what they have to buy that farming will be unprofitable. As Mr. Drury truly said, "protection can only help the farmers by ruining them." Protection has been a delusion and a fraud, and has been a millstone upon the necks of the Canadian people. For a generation past the farmers of Canada have been persuaded to support the protectionist policy to "build up Canada." To delude them still further a protective tariff was placed upon farm products, the result being that the farmer was handicapped both in his buying and his selling. The reciprocity agreement, when ratified, will remove the protection from the agricultural industry, that is, it will remove what is called "protection." The farming industry will benefit enormously by having the tariff wall taken down and having free entry into the broad American markets. But the greater benefit will come from the fact that the farmers' eyes will be completely opened to the protectionist fraud that has been practised upon them. They will see at once that it is the selfish policy designed to give special privilege to a few thousand individuals engaged in the manufacturing industry. With this fact before them, the farmers, and the laboring people of Canada, will never again subscribe to any protectionist policy, and will refuse to pay 25 per cent. more for everything merely for the enrichment of these people. The common people of Canada are willing to pay their share towards the running expenses of the nation, but no more. The citadel of protection must come down before the common people can have a square deal. The ratification of the reciprocity agreement sounds the death knell of protectionism in Canada. Free agricultural implements, free trade with Great Britain, and lower tariff all round, must follow very shortly. We are thoroughly convinced that the reciprocity agreement is a splendid measure of economic justice, but we do not wish to force our opinions upon any person. We welcome discussion of this subject, as it is the great question before the people today. If any of our readers wish to set forth arguments either for or against the agreement, from an economic standpoint, we will be glad to publish such letters.

THE BRITISH REVOLUTION

Thursday, August 10, 1911, was a red letter day in the history of the civilized world. It marked the greatest democratic advancement in Great Britain since the passage of the Reform Bill of 1832. A bitter struggle of two years' duration was concluded when the House of Lords "drank the hemlock" and passed the veto bill, which removed from that body the autocratic powers which it has enjoyed for centuries. Thus, at the fountain head of the world's greatest empire, slow-going, patient, but determined old Britain, mistress of the seas, has at last conquered herself. Hereditary privilege has given way to the power of the people. On the historic island where years ago monarchs and nobles exercised autocratic sway, democracy is now completely in the ascendant. On November 30, 1909, the fateful struggle was precipitated, when in the House of Lords, Lord Lansdowne announced that the Lords would reject the famous Lloyd-George budget which proposed to tax lightly the wealthy land owners of Britain. An onlooker at the time said: "There goes the British constitution into the melting pot." In two successive appeals to the country since that time the government has been sustained. The Lords were compelled to pass the budget. Recently they

rejected the veto bill passed by the Commons. This bill completely removes from the House of Lords the veto power upon financial measures, and prohibits them from delaying any other measures for more than two years. The Lords rejected this bill and returned it to the Commons, and as an alternative began to discuss their own reorganization. The government at once approached King George and secured from him the promise to create sufficient new peers to ensure the passage of the veto bill, when it was next sent to the Upper House. Rather than submit to the wholesale creation of peers the House of Lords bowed to the inevitable and passed the bill on Thursday last. The crisis through which Britain has just passed marks several important features. It reveals Premier Asquith as a man of iron will, remarkable foresight, and of democratic instincts, the real ruler of Britain. King George, in agreeing to the creation of new peers, demonstrated his fitness to reign as a constitutional monarch, who rules not by divine right but by the will of the people, and who is subject to the advice of the government of the country. King George had it in his power to precipitate a struggle which would have made the very throne totter on its foundations. He chose wisely and well, and has shown clearly that a limited monarchy is the most democratic system of government now in existence. The crisis in Britain is a lesson for all civilized peoples. It is the most striking manifestation of the revolt against privilege which is the spirit of the age. Nowhere will the example produce better results than in Canada, where today there is a struggle between privilege and democracy. The triumph in Britain will encourage the Canadian people to continue in their fight for justice, cheered by the knowledge that the power is theirs if they care to use it. Profiting by Britain's example, ten years hence the citadel of privilege in Canada will be in ruins.

ABUSE OF FRANKING PRIVILEGE

Every member of the House of Commons, while Parliament is in session, enjoys the privilege of sending or receiving anything he likes through the mail, without paying postage. The granting of this privilege is only just and right, because the members receive a great number of letters from their constituents necessitating a heavy correspondence, and it would not be just to expect them to pay the heavy postage bill out of their own pockets. Government documents and publications are also sent through the mails, which is fair to everybody. But the members abuse the franking privilege shamefully. They have a rubber stamp made of their initials, which, placed upon any parcel or letter, sends it free through the mail. When a member makes a long and tiresome speech in the House of Commons that nobody listens to, and is never reported in the papers, he sends copies of Hansard containing his speech to his constituents. The persons who can legitimately complain of this are the people who are expected to read these speeches. Beyond this the members use their franking privilege to send barrels and wagon loads of rubbish through the mails, thereby robbing the post office department of a very large revenue. Particularly is this so at election time. As soon as the election approaches both party machines begin to prepare their campaign literature. This literature of course is prepared at Ottawa, where the largest campaign funds are available. It is stacked in the House of Commons corridors in piles as big as a homesteader's shack on the prairie.