

The Tariff Commission

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sumers after adding freight and selling charges, and with our province and British Columbia supplied entirely with United States hams and bacon, I fear it would be a serious blow for the farmers of Manitoba with their abundance of cheap grain that is grown here every year.

There is no doubt but Manitoba and the Territories require even a greater protection than Ontario does, owing to our close proximity to western United States markets. I strongly urge the maintenance of the present tariff on hogs and hog products, as the Canadian packers are absolutely incompetent to compete with the American packers. A reduction in the tariff would certainly mean that our farmers could not raise hogs and compete with the American farmer. I notice that some farmers' organizations throughout the province have passed resolutions briefly saying, they want all duties removed. Evidently, the farmers who have voted in favor of resolutions of this kind, were doing so directly against their own interest. I can only think, where they have done so, that they have been thinking entirely of the article that they have to buy and not taking into consideration the articles they have to sell, as if there are any class of people in the country who require protection on what they produce, it is the farmers of Manitoba and the Territories. I regret the willingness of many gentlemen to offer opinions upon matters which they have no close knowledge.

I hope the government will see their way clear to simply leave this question alone altogether, so that farmers may not be, in any way, disturbed at a time when it is all important they should view with favor the continued production of hogs.

Thomas Stone, of Stone & Co., pork packers of Calgary, was heard also in regard to the packing industry. Mr. Stone pointed out that in the west there was the keenest competition among the pork packers and nothing in the shape of a combine existed.

Thos. Cowan, of Winnipeg, argued that the maintenance of the duties assisted both the farmer and the packer. Mr. Cowan said the Canadian packer with honest methods could not compete with United States packer, who resorted to abominable adulteration. Mr. Cowan proceeded to expose this adulteration and asked if the Canadian public should not be protected from such filthy product.

R. A. Culver next spoke. He declared some of the farmer delegates were agitators and professional politicians. These delegates had decried the country and declared it to be poverty-stricken. This the speaker declared was false. The speaker declared that the farmer of Manitoba had not only this year but for the past five years in his experience received more for his wheat than the farmer of Dakota and other states across the line. He hoped the commissioners would not accept the views of the Farmers' Institute delegates as representative of the farmers of Manitoba. Several of the Farmers' Institute delegates were salaried agitators who were forced to keep up agitation to retain their salaries. Mr. Culver said he was a farmer and had all his interests in farming in Manitoba. He happened to be an expert in wheat and therefore found employment in winter buying wheat.

At half-past eleven o'clock, or near that hour, the commissioners intimated that it was imperative that the inquiry should be brought to a close. There were then twenty or thirty farmers' delegates desirous of being heard. It was agreed that those of them who had any new evidence to add should put it in documentary form and forward it

to the commissioners at Ottawa, where it would be received as if given at the sessions of the inquiry. Several memorials in the hands of delegates who had not been heard were put in as evidence.

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who will study the matter carefully and free from prejudice. When, however, they say, as they, or at least some of them did, that "the duty on wheat and flour is of no value to the farmers of Manitoba," they represented what was not true. Everyone who is at all familiar with the commercial situation here knows better than that. Considered aside from the protective policy as a whole, the farmers of Manitoba have benefitted very materially from the duty on wheat and flour. We may admire the apparent consistency of the free trade section of the farmers who appeared before the commission, in making this declaration, but in doing so they overstepped the bounds of discretion, and rather weakened their evidence by representing as fact what is not fact.

The farmers have a strong case without any misrepresentation. They could show beyond contradiction that the tariff as a whole presses heavily upon their industry. They could easily prove that the people of the West are obliged to pay much more than their share of tariff taxation. In doing this, however, it was not necessary that they should single out the few features of the tariff which are in their favor, and declare that they were of no value to them. Between protection and free trade, it might not be very hard to make a choice; but so long as protection remains in force, even those who are free traders in principle, would be justified in seeking to secure as much benefit as possible from the tariff. So long as the farmers are obliged to pay heavy duties on goods which they consume, they are not called upon to object, on principle, to any benefits they may receive from the duty on flour, wheat, hog products, etc.

Some other statements were made before the commission which were equally as misleading as the statement regarding the duty on wheat and flour. It was absurd to put in as "evidence" the remark that lumber was cheaper some years ago than it is now. Almost every one here knows that there has been a very great reduction in the price of lumber and the tendency of prices has been steadily downward.

It is also a matter for regret that some of the farmer delegates adopted a whining style, and made statements which they would probably be ashamed of when they see them in print. It was not necessary to try to prove that farming is unprofitable in this country, in order to impress the commissioners with the need we have for a reduction of the tariff burden.

On the whole The Commercial was pleased to see that many of the farmers who appeared before the commission have such sound views on the tariff question, and the number who declared in favor of the principle of direct taxation must have been quite a revelation to the commissioners.

One disagreeable feature was the practical possession of the proceedings of the commission, which was assumed by a clique of persons, who adopted the policy of interrupting any one who attempted to give any evidence which did not suit them. On this account the proceedings several times degenerated into a noisy wrangle. Those who disagreed with the clique had difficulty in getting a hearing.

Winnipeg Prices a Year Ago.

This week last year, wheat declined in country markets, to 47c at 18c freight rate points.

Following were Winnipeg prices this week last year:

Wheat—About 45c to 47c for No. 1 hard, country points, to farmers, 6 1/4 afloat Fort William.

Flour.—Local price, per sack, Patents \$1.85 to \$1.90; Bakers, \$1.65 to \$1.75.

Bran.—Per ton, \$9.

Shorts.—Per ton, \$11.

Oats.—Per bushel, Winnipeg street price, 16 to 17c. Car lots at country points, 12 to 14 1/2c.

Barley —Selling at 17c for feed here. Car lots at country points worth 11c to 16c.

Flax Seed.—60 to farmers at country points.

Butter.—Dairy round lots, choice, 12c to 14c.

Cheese.—Jobbing price 9 1/2 to 11c.

Eggs.—Fresh, 18c to 19c net price.

Beef.—City dressed, 5 to 6c, unfrozen; country frozen, 3 1/2 to 4 1/2c

Mutton.—Fresh, 6 to 6 1/2c, country do, 5 to 5 1/2c.

Hogs.—Dressed, 5 1/2 to 5 1/2c.

Cattle.—Nominal at 2 1/2 to 3 1/2c. for butchers' stock.

Hogs.—Live, off cars, 4c.

Sheep.—Sheep nominal at 3 1/2c off cars.

Seneca Root.—Dry 18 to 20c lb.

Poultry —Chickens, 8 to 10c lb; turkeys, 10 to 12c; ducks, 10c, geese, 10c.

Hides.—Green frozen, 4 1/2 to 5c.

Winnipeg Wheat Inspection.

The following shows the number of cars of wheat inspected at *Winnipeg for the weeks ended on the dates named, compared with the number of cars inspected for the corresponding weeks a year ago, as reported by Inspector Horn to the Board of Trade.

Grade.	Jan. 10.	Jan. 23.	Jan. 31	Feb. 6	Feb 13
Extra Man. H'd	7	0	0	0	0
No. 1 hard	35	25	37	34	21
No. 2 hard	5	10	12	6	22
No. 3 hard	6	5	11	4	11
No. 1 North'n	6	1	1	3	0
No. 2 North'n	0	1	0	0	0
No. 3 North'n	0	1	1	0	0
No. 1 white tyle	0	0	0	0	0
No. 2 white tyle	0	0	0	0	0
No. 1 Spring	0	0	0	0	0
No. 2 Spring	0	0	0	0	0
No. 1 frosted	7	3	1	4	1
No. 2 frosted	6	3	5	7	2
No. 3 Frosted	0	3	0	1	0
No. 1 Rejected	2	3	2	6	10
No. 2 Rejected	1	0	1	0	2
No. Grade	1	0	0	0	0
Feed	0	0	0	0	0
Total	70	57	101	75	127
Same week last year	175	167	213	305	217

*Wheat inspection at Emerson going out via the Northern Pacific to Duluth, is included in Winnipeg returns. A considerable portion of the wheat moving is inspected at Fort William, and does not show in these figures.