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The Grain Growers' Guide

Winnipeg, Wednesday, November 20th, 1912

ORGANIZE FOR PROTECTION

Had it not been for the wide-spreading organization of farmers in the Prairie Provinces, it would not have been possible to meet Sir Wilfrid Laurier and R. L. Borden when they toured the West in the summers of 1910 and 1911 respectively. Neither would it have been possible to send to Ottawa the delegation of 800 farmers, who, in the House of Commons chamber on December 16, 1910, presented their Bill of Rights to the politicians. Today both the leaders in Parliament know that the West has a grievance, and that the farmers of Canada in general are suffering from unjust economic burdens. The tariff question is to the front as well as other Western problems. Each political party has its own idea of the remedy. Part of the remedy as proposed by each party coincides with the views of the Grain Growers and part is antagonistic.

The point we want to make abundantly clear is that without organization the farmers would have got absolutely nothing of what they demanded. And further, it must be patent that with a better organization the farmers can force both parties to grant the entire Bill of Rights. It is useless for either the Liberal or Conservative politicians to declare that their's is the farmers' party. They are not. They have both refused to grant full justice, but both are prepared to go part way. Not one single politician of either party can today deny the absolute justice of the farmers' demands. Then the cause of their refusal to grant these just demands can be due to nothing else than to the fact that other organizations are exerting sufficient pressure to offset the farmers' demands. We cannot be too emphatic on the need of organization. By the next election there will be 43 members from the Prairie Provinces and by 1921 there will be double that number. It is absolutely necessary that every farmer be brought into the organization and educated to the needs of the common people, and how to secure them. There must be a local farmers' organization in every rural neighborhood, where farmers can get together and discuss matters of vital and material interest. These local organizations all united in an efficient central provincial organization, and the different provincial organizations united federally will present a front that no government can defy and no organization of Special Interests can undermine. With such an organization and a free and independent press, through which to set forth their views and to interchange ideas, the farming industry will come into its own—and in no other way. No such organization can be effected if farmers retain their blind faith in either political party. Keep up the organization and educational work, and both parties will be very glad to meet the farmers' demands. How many farmers are honestly and sincerely prepared and willing to take hold of such work during the present winter? There should be at least 50,000 in the West now alive to the needs of the times. If they will all with one accord take an active part in the organization this winter there will be a revival of interest that will make the organization successful in its demands.

AGRICULTURAL CREDIT IN CANADA

The importance of cheap agricultural credit has been more clearly impressed upon the minds of public men during the past year than ever before. The interest shown in this important question by President Taft, and various of the public men and bodies in the United States, has already made it a living

issue. Next May a large delegation of farmers from various parts of the United States will go to Europe under the auspices of the American Government and make a study of agricultural credit as organized in those countries, and bring home recommendations for inaugurating the best system in their own country. A similar move on the part of the Canadian Government would be in the interest of the farmers of Canada. The Saskatchewan Government is taking the initiative in the matter and has announced an enquiry to be held for the benefit of the farmers of Saskatchewan. But the question is one of Dominion wide importance and the best information on the subject should be secured from every land where relief has been secured. Up to the present time the question of agricultural credit has not been made a party issue in Canada, so that if the matter were laid before the House of Commons, it seems probable that the House might agree to institute a complete enquiry into the question, so that legislation could be enacted a year hence. Such an enquiry should include not only European systems, but also the Co-operative Credit Bank system that is operating so successfully in the Province of Quebec. When farmers in the Australian countries can secure long term loans at from 4½ per cent. to 5½ per cent., and when our own Canadian governments and Canadian railways can borrow hundreds of millions of dollars at 4 per cent. or less, there seems no good reason why agricultural communities might not be allowed to partake of these great advantages. Today Canada is lagging behind the Anglo-Saxon world in democratic legislation. Here is a good opportunity for the Dominion Government to make a move to bring some relief to the farmers.

WHAT IS A FAIR PROFIT ?

The purpose of the protective tariff is supposed to be to guarantee manufacturers a fair profit upon their business. The manufacturers are the only people in Canada who have their profits guaranteed by the government, and under the present system the manufacturers are allowed to fix their own profits. If they are not high enough they go to the Government and get an additional guarantee in the shape of higher tariff on their finished product, lower tariff on their raw material, or something special in the way of underhand rebates or rake-offs. In Canada 6 per cent. is regarded as reasonable interest for the use of money loaned upon good security. Where there is an element of risk the interest is naturally higher. Most commercial organizations meet the matter of future risk by placing a part of their annual profits in the "reserve fund." Two per cent. would seem a reasonable allowance for risk, particularly in the light of a state guarantee of profits by means of the protective tariff. This would provide 8 per cent. on the use of the manufacturer's capital, after all wages, large salaries to the managers, directors' fees and wear and tear on the plant and machinery had been provided for. How many farmers would be glad of 8 per cent. annual profit on their capital investment, after allowing for wages at the current rate for themselves and any members of the family who were engaged in working on the farm, and also making provision for wear and tear on the machinery and buildings. If it could be shown how many farmers in Western Canada are making less than eight per cent. on capital the result would be astounding. Of course many farmers who are making nothing on actual farming operations are becoming well-to-do through the increase in value of their land. The increase in the

land is not due to the industry either of the farmer or of the manufacturer, but to the presence of the people of the community as a whole, therefore we have not reckoned the increase of land values. How many manufacturers would be satisfied with such a miserably low profit as 8 per cent.? The cotton merger in Quebec pays 50 per cent. dividends, thanks to the protective tariff; the William Davies Packing company, of Toronto, paid on an average of 53 per cent. for thirteen years, thanks to the protective tariff; the Lake of the Woods Milling company paid one year 80 per cent. profits, thanks to the protective tariff. We might instance scores of other industries that are making great profits out of the protective tariff. How long are the farmers willing to permit this condition to continue?

CANADIAN BACON IN ENGLAND

In the weekly report published by the Trade and Commerce Department on November 11 the wholesale price for Canadian side bacon at Bristol, Liverpool and London is quoted at 75 shillings per hundredweight, or 18 cents per pound. In Winnipeg the lowest wholesale quotation on selected Canadian side bacon is 20 cents per pound. The retail price of this same bacon in Winnipeg to the consumer is 30 cents per pound. It is not very difficult to see that the Old Country consumer buys his Canadian bacon at a lower price than the Canadian consumer gets it in the country where it is grown.

PROSPEROUS YET BEGGING

We are particularly fortunate in having at hand the Sydney (N.S.) Morning Post, of November 5, for on the front page under a large type heading we find the following:—

"Without an exception, the past month at the steel plant was one of, if not the, most successful months yet experienced by the Dominion Iron and Steel company. In five or six of the departments the standing records were broken, the cause given for the increased output being the blowing in of the new blast furnace.

Following is the output by departments:—

	Tons.
Pig iron	31,090
Steel ingots	29,975
Steel blooms	27,880
Steel rails	15,656
Steel rods	8,868
Coke	50,540

Total shipments

"The pig iron established a record for monthly output, the highest figures before these being 29,532 tons, made about a year ago.

"Steel blooms made a record, the highest previous figures being 27,620 tons. Rods followed the example of the blooms, establishing a new high figure with 134 tons over the highest previous figures.

"The coke output is especially gratifying, where the output for the month was 50,540 tons, the record standing up to this time being 45,233 tons made a few months ago. As a result of the big coke output, the output of sulphate ammonia was also large, and, although the exact figures cannot be obtained yet, it is understood that the record in this department also was smashed.

"The figures also for wire and nails are as yet unavailable, but the output in both these departments, was the best of any month since the wheels of these two new mills started revolving. Although no record was made in the ingot output, the figures are very large and well up to the average.

"The total shipments are large, but about three thousand tons below the record made a few months ago."

This journal is published in the home city of the steel industry, and these figures could not have been published except with the approval of the company. The steel industry has reached the most successful time in its history, and yet it is besieging the govern-