

The Brain Growers' Guide

Winnipeg, Wednesday, August 9th, 1911

RECIPROCITY THE ISSUE

(Farmers' Weekly Sun)

Reciprocity, neat and clean, will be the issue before the public between the parties, whatever may be the issues behind the scenes. Not in a generation has an election been fought in Canada on a farmer's issue, or on any issue as clear and distinct as this. By the farmers' vote the issue will be decided.

WHAT RECIPROCITY MEANS

By the statements of Sir Wilfrid Laurier and R. L. Borden, which are published on page 8 of this issue, both leaders agree that reciprocity is the issue of the present campaign. This agreement on the part of the leaders makes the present election more nearly a Referendum than any general election held in Canada since Confederation. If conditions were right the present election would be a real Referendum and there would be no question of party involved. But education is advancing, and we can look ahead to the time when the people of Canada will be enabled to vote upon issues alone and not upon men and parties. But with the issue before us, let us examine it. Under reciprocity the farmer stands to gain from two sources. He will get a better price for what he sells, and will be able to purchase a large number of articles at a reduction.

The Western farmer will gain very substantially by having the American market in which to sell his wheat, barley, oats and flax, as well as cattle. With such a grain crop as the present one to dispose of the free entry to the American market will mean millions of dollars to the Western farmers. Every farmer who has grain to sell, under free trade with the United States, will be able to feel the benefit of reciprocity in his own pocket.

The Western farmer will also benefit greatly by being able to bring various stock and draft horses into Canada free of duty. Under reciprocity the tariff tax will be reduced on:

- Wagons, from 25 per cent. to 22½ per cent.
- Plows, from 20 per cent. to 15 per cent.
- Tooth and disk harrows, from 20 per cent. to 15 per cent.
- Binders, from 17½ per cent. to 15 per cent.
- Drills and planters, from 20 per cent. to 15 per cent.
- Mowers, from 17½ per cent. to 15 per cent.
- Horse rakes, from 20 per cent. to 15 per cent.
- Cultivators, from 20 per cent. to 15 per cent.
- Threshing machines, from 20 per cent. to 15 per cent.
- Wind stackers, baggers, etc., from 20 per cent. to 15 per cent.
- Hay loaders, from 25 per cent. to 20 per cent.
- Potato diggers, from 25 per cent. to 20 per cent.
- Fodder or feed cutters, from 25 per cent. to 20 per cent.
- Grain crushers, from 25 per cent. to 20 per cent.
- Fanning mills, from 25 per cent. to 20 per cent.
- Hay tedders, from 25 per cent. to 20 per cent.
- Field rollers, from 25 per cent. to 20 per cent.

The reduction in duty upon all these items will mean a great saving in the farmer's annual implement bill. Of course every item should be on the free list, but even the present reduction will help a great deal. The reciprocity agreement will mean a substantial gain to the Western farmer all along the line.

NO PREFERENCE WANTED

Opponents of reciprocity are endeavoring to delude the public with the idea that the people of Great Britain are anxious to adopt Chamberlain's scheme of preferential trade within the Empire. The Canadian Century, of Montreal, the mouthpiece of Special Privilege, in its issue of July 29, under the caption, "Can We Get a Preference," publishes the following article:

"The question naturally arises, can Canada really get a preference in the British market if the Canadian people reject reciprocity? President Taft has no doubt about it. What are his reasons for thinking so? He knows that a most remarkable revolution in the sentiment on the tariff question has taken place in the United Kingdom within a few years. He knows that twelve years ago both the British political parties were wedded to free trade. He knows that six years ago half the Unionist party had become protectionists, but the other half remained staunch free-traders. He knows that now the Unionists are practically unanimous in favor of protection and imperial preference. He knows that even the Liberal government of the United Kingdom, in making a tariff agreement with Japan, provided for the possibility of the adoption of protection and imperial preference by the United Kingdom. He knows that the Unionists were winning by-elections almost everywhere until Lloyd George diverted attention from the tariff question by the popular budget and the conflict with the House of Lords. He knows that sentiment in favor of protection and preference is growing every day among the British working classes, and that the great majority of British farmers are in favor of it. He has no doubt that when the veto question is settled and shelved, either temporarily or permanently, the tariff will become the one great political topic in England. He believes that if the Unionists could go to the British electors saying, 'The Canadian people have rejected reciprocity with the United States expecting that we will give them a preference, and we intend to give it to them if you put us in office, the response would be a sweeping majority in favor of imperial preferential trade.'"

As a matter of fact the people of Great Britain have said very plainly at the last two elections that they are satisfied with their system of free trade, and have no desire to change it. The shelving of the trade question by declaring for a Referendum upon it saved the "tariff reformers" from annihilation at the last election. A large percentage of the Unionist party are free traders, and if they came into power they would not touch the trade question without a Referendum and that Referendum would result in a demand for free trade to be continued. Again, who wants a preference? The working people of Britain certainly do not want to pay more for their bread. The farmers of Canada have repeatedly declared that they will not favor any scheme to get a few cents more per bushel for their grain when that few cents is by law taken out of the pockets of the toilers of Britain. Who, then, is it in Canada that is preaching Preference? It is a protectionist propaganda, purely and simply, to stave off tariff reduction. The protectionists have no more desire to allow free entry for British goods than to allow free imports from any other country. By talking "Preference in Britain" they hope to prevent any lowering of the tariff against the United States. They know at the same time Britain has no intention of changing her present fiscal policy which has given her the commercial supremacy of the world. Then with free trade with the United States tabooed these same patriotic protectionists would protest, with equal noise, against any lowering of the tariff against British goods on the pretext that Britain was giving no return preference. Day by day it is becoming more and more apparent that "Scratch a Protectionist and you find a Protectionist."

CANADA'S MOST BONUSED INDUSTRY

Under the above title the Toronto News, the leading anti-reciprocity organ of the East, recently published a long editorial article showing that \$3,000,000 was expended by the various governments of Canada to assist the agricultural industry during the year of 1909-10. The following are extracts from this article in The News:

"The importance of the farming industry to the people of Canada is abundantly demonstrated by the fact that there is not a province in the Dominion which has not established a department of Government to promote and safeguard the interests of agriculture. From Atlantic to Pacific a veritable army of experts is engaged in assisting the farmers of the country in their efforts to grow bigger and better crops, to raise better live stock, and make more excellent butter and cheese. Experimental farms, where all manner of crops and soils are being tested for the general benefit of the agricultural community, dot the broad expanse of the Dominion. Agricultural colleges of international reputation, built and maintained by government, are open to receive the sons of the soil, intent on acquiring that knowledge which will make them more expert farmers. Societies and associations supported generously with provincial funds, exist in every county for the purpose of bringing the farmers together and encouraging them to improve the quality of their products. Problems of cold storage, the destruction of noxious weeds, the extension of markets, the spraying of fruit, drainage and a hundred and one other questions are handled by experts in the employ of the State and for the direct advantage of the farmers. In brief, between the Dominion and the provincial governments this industry is being bonused annually to the extent of several millions of dollars and there seems no limit to the extent to which the state will go to carry out its maternal policy."

"Summing up and taking the totals for the Dominion and the provinces, it is found that the people of Canada expend approximately the large sum of \$3,000,000 per annum to bonus the farming industry, and that this sum is being increased very considerably each year. That the money is well spent, and that it is paid out ungrudgingly, goes without saying. The increased productivity of the farms, the growing efficiency of the farmer, the improved quality of farm produce, the achievements of the agricultural colleges and the experimental farms, all testify to the value of the work undertaken by the various governments of the country in the interests of the farming community."

On the strength of these statements The News declares that agriculture is more heavily bonused than any other industry in Canada, and that free trade in natural products with the United States will render this expenditure useless. The News declares that no industry in Canada is receiving such "intensive and extensive treatment" from governments as this same farming industry. Without questioning the figures contained in The News, let us consider a little.

The iron and steel industry in Canada has been bonused to the extent of \$18,000,000, and another \$18,000,000 has been distributed in steamship subsidies. Land grants have been given to the railways to the value of \$200,000,000, while cash subsidies have been donated to these same railways to the extent of \$199,000,000. In addition to this our railways have been given bond guarantees to the extent of \$127,000,000. These are all direct gifts, and they do not by any means cover everything. Largess has been given with a lavish hand to nearly every industry except agriculture, and with absolutely no return to show for it. But far greater than all the above combined has been the aid given to our manufacturers, not always direct gifts, but by means of a protective tariff under shelter of which they have made extraordinary profits for the past generation. In 1893 Sir Richard Cartwright estimated that