

PRIVATE MEMBERS

HAVE FIELD DAY

**Provincial Affairs Discussed
From Farmers' Point of View
in the Legislature**

**Beautiful Plains Members' Tells
of Deep-Rooted Objection to
Protective Tariff**

Private members had the ear of the house at the sitting of the legislature yesterday afternoon and provincial affairs were discussed from the point of view of the agriculturist. W. R. Wood, Beautiful Plains, declared the farmers had a rooted and radical objection to a protective tariff, and commenting upon the soldiers' land settlement policy said, the returned men should be placed upon the land under conditions that would make for their permanent and satisfactory existence.

Dr W. Harrington, Dauphin, claimed that the time had arrived for the division of the province into hospital districts, and said that the influenza epidemic had demonstrated the need for hospital accommodation in the country districts of Manitoba.

Joseph Hamelin, Ste. Rose, complained of the necessity for the extension of a railway to Winnipegosis north and this brought a statement from Premier Norris, that arrangements had practically been made with the management of the Canadian

National for the carrying out of the extension this year.

W. H. Simms, Swan River, denied the charge that the farmers were profiteers, and giving instances of the spread between what the farmer received and what the consumer paid. He claimed it was the duty of the Dominion government to get after those who were doing the real profiteering.

A bill introduced by the provincial treasurer respecting the payment of succession duties, which was read a second time, provides for the taxation of widows and children at a less rate and gives effect to the principle of a sliding scale. Dealing with a question raised by the member for Swan river, Mr. Brown said the government would give every encouragement to the issuing by municipalities of bonds for good road construction.

Wood Explains Farmers' View

When the house resumed the debate on the address, Wm. R. Wood, Beautiful Plains, who had the floor at the adjournment the previous day, expressed his unqualified admiration for the work of the education department. Whatever its shortcomings may have been, there could be little question, that its operations had made for the upbuilding of a real civic unity. Whatever the present government might or might not do, the speaker believed that the administration of the education department would stand to its eternal credit.

The speaker did not intend to spend two or three hours in a general extensive view of the political situation, but there were two or three matters with which he desired to deal. He wished to direct the attention of the house to the platform which had been adopted by the grain growers. Their reconstruction platform was calculated to educate and stimulate the population in better citizenship. The farmers' policy was one which met the needs of the whole of Canada, it was no class policy; it was not conceived in the interests of any special class, but for the general good of the whole community.

Touching upon the tariff situation, the speaker insisted that the organized farmers had a rooted and radical opposition to a protective tariff. He admitted that revenue for government purposes had to be secured, but this should be obtained by direct taxation. No more of their natural resources should be alienated, but wherever they were required for the public service should be operated on lease.

Attitude Toward the Soldier

Regarding the returned soldier, Mr. Wood, insisted that no class in the community was more interested in securing a square deal for the soldier than the people who were living on the land. They wanted the soldiers properly cared for and not turned adrift. If they were to place the returned soldiers upon the land it should be under conditions which would make for their permanent and satisfactory existence. This was an agricultural country and the soldiers should be able to find satisfactory life upon the land. Conditions however had never been satisfactory even for the farmers, and definite steps should be taken to make life there more attractive. Overstocked cities were always a serious menace to the country; they meant low wages and an opportunity for profiteers to batten upon the weaker members of the community.

The speaker urged that steps should be taken to secure the repeal of the war times election act, the discontinuance of the practice of conferring titles; the abolition of the senate, and the patronage system; and the removal of the press censorship. This meant definite political action, and the farmers wanted this action taken as speedily as possible.

Price Fixing No Longer Necessary

Referring to the position of the farmers taken at the Brandon convention with reference to the discontinuance of the fixed price on wheat, Mr. Wood admitted the fixing of the price had done good, but that it was no longer necessary. It was significant that the first intimation they had that the farmers might ask for a continuance of the fixed price came from the east, and that the strongest advocate for its continuance at the Brandon convention was not a farmer but a banker. It looked very much as if the eastern manufacturers were willing to continue this fixing of the wheat price, so that they themselves might make a stronger claim for the retention of their high protective tariff. Farmers however were not asking for special privileges, they desired a fair field and no favor, with special privileges for none.

Hospital Protection.

The time has arrived when the province should be divided into hospital districts, declared Dr. Wm. J. Harrington, Dauphin. Dr. Harrington briefly reviewed the influenza epidemic, declaring that it has shown the public the great need of hospitals in Manitoba.

He advocated dividing the province into hospital districts, the hospitals in which would be maintained by a light tax on the district. Every person living in the district would have the privilege of being admitted to the hospital free of charge and there would be no need of charity.

Speaking of the epidemic, Dr. Harrington lauded the board of health for its vallant work during the spread of the disease. He declared, however, that the board had not gone far enough in the ban on public meetings. "The only way to stop the spread of the epidemic," he declared, "is to stop gatherings of all kinds."

He referred to the crowding in the big stores, and stated that, in his opinion, only a certain number of customers should have been allowed in the stores at once.

During such an epidemic as the influenza plague, Dr. Harrington declared, all passenger trains should be stopped. Supplies could be transported by freight, but all other traffic, he thought, should be completely eliminated.

The matter of quarantine, the member for Dauphin asserted, is a very important one, and the only way to get proper quarantine, he thought, is by the co-operation of the public. The people should be educated to the dangers of infection and the necessity of being careful about reporting cases.

Ninette Sanitarium Badly Located.

Dr. Harrington, in his address, mentioned Ninette sanitarium, and declared that the government would be ill advised to spend any more money on this institution on account of its poor location. He advocated the finding of a new and more central site for the sanitarium and also suggested the establishment of a sanitarium for more advanced tubercular patients.

The Manitoba Temperance act as it affects the medical men of the province was made the topic of some discussion by Dr. Harrington. He declared that the act lays too great a burden on the medical men in the issuing of prescriptions, and gave three solutions to overcome the difficulty. He suggested that those needing liquor should obtain it through the license inspector or through the clergymen of the district. The average minister would cut down the supply, he said. Another solution would be to publish the names of all those who were in the habit of procuring liquor for use.

Most of the doctors, he said, are trying to observe the act, but some of them are making out false prescriptions and selling them. "This is a criminal practice," he declared, "and should be remedied."

Dr. Harrington referred to the poor hotel accommodation in the small towns, and suggested means to eliminate this bad condition of affairs. Concessions, he thought, should be made to these hotels, including a re-

duction of their assessment. He also advocated giving them the exclusive right of selling 2% beer.

Referring to the alien enemy question, the member declared that discrimination should be made among the foreigners. He made a plea for the Ukrainian people, who he declared, are fine and loyal citizens and should not be driven out of the country.

Joseph Hamelin, Ste. Rose, emphasized the need of the extension of the C.N.R. line from Winnipegosis, north. He declared that there was an abundance of good arable land in that district, but settlers become discouraged and move away on account of the absence of a handy railway line. He explained the great difficulty of transporting grain and cattle over great distances to the nearest markets without the aid of a railway line. There couldn't be a better location than this district for soldiers desiring to go farming, he said, providing the government extended the railway line and gave the farmers better conveniences.

The government, Mr. Hamelin asserted, should spend less money on advertising and more on improving roads and carrying out other works for the public benefit. He also urged the government to take steps with regard to improving the drainage system of the province.

Mr. Hamelin complained of the poor telephone service in his constituency and asked for redress. Change of location of the exchanges has caused a great deal of trouble and deprived many of telephone service, he charged.

He also laid a complaint against the long distance service, in his district, declaring that when residents of the various towns desired to get in communication with neighboring towns by telephone they had to call Ochre River for connection. He claimed that the service was poor in this particular town, and those wishing to use the long distance service were obliged

to put up with a great deal of delay and inconvenience.

Mr. Hamelin complained of the extravagant budgets of the government in the past sessions and declared that the opposition members did not support this financial policy.

Premier Norris answering a question of the member for St. Rose said it had practically been arranged with the Canadian National railway management that the line from Winnipegosis north would be moved this year.

Farmers Sent Share of Men

W. H. Simms, Swan River, speaking on the war from the farmer's

standpoint, challenged the statement that the farmers had not contributed their quota of men. In his own constituency they had given men running up to four figures. During that time immense quantities of food had been produced and there had been co-operation between all classes of citizens in the campaign of greater production. People who accused the farmers of profiteering, said the member, were ignorant of the facts, and declaring there was too much difference between the price paid by the consumer and the price received by the producer. He gave illustrations of this in the price the farmers got for stock, oats, and hides and in connection with the price of hides he said he had been told last year thousands of hides were rotting in the east, hoarded by some for higher prices. The point he wished to emphasize was that there was too much spread between the prices and something should be done to prevent it. The farmers admittedly had made money, but they had not profited at the expense of the consumer. The rural credits act had given great satisfaction in his district and it and the Farm Loans legislation filled a long felt want. As one farmer had said, if the government had done nothing else than pass these measures they were worthy of the support of the farmers. Great care should be taken he advised in the admission of immigrants. "We can't afford to grant any more concessions; special privileges. These people should be very glad to come in and live under conditions such as we are living under. Our immigration policy should have in the forefront 'desirability' and among our list of exports should be 'undesirables.'" He suggested the consideration of the rebate of the taxes to the soldiers and urged road construction in this part of the province. People, he said, had to leave the district because they could not get their children to school. Mr. Simms hoped there would be no more daylight saving legislation. It was

an absolute inconvenience to farmers in his district.

Taxes on Soldiers' Homes

Hon. Edward Brown alluding to the matter of returned soldiers and taxes said it had been a question of serious consideration of the government and a bill would be brought down this session dealing with the remission of the taxes on a soldiers' homes whether in cities, towns or on farms. In regard to the issuing of bonds for the construction of good roads that might be disposed of locally which was referred to by the member for Swan River, the provincial treasurer said he knew of no reason why this should not be done. In fact it was desirable from every standpoint and they have one outstanding instance in the past season with respect to the municipality of Wallace which was recognized as the father of good roads in the province. They had had an issue for good roads purposes and the treasury department offered to purchase the issue of 6 per cent., but after consideration the municipality decided to dispose of the bonds locally and sold the entire issue. "This is a policy," said Mr. Brown, "that might be encouraged in other districts of the province. There is no objection from any standpoint so far as I can see and any encouragement the government can give will be given cheerfully."

On the motion of J. H. McConnell, Hamiota, the debate was adjourned.

Succession Duties

The provincial treasurer in moving the second reading of the bill respecting the payment of succession duties said the object of the legislation was not to get more revenue, but to remove certain inequalities and emphasize certain principles. "The following are believed to be correct principles to govern in the levying of succession duties," Mr. Brown explained: 1—To tax widows and children a less rate, than more distant relatives and strangers. 2—

To tax on a sliding scale so that smaller amounts will be taxed equally in all states, and specified surplusses over such amounts to pay higher rates on increasing scales until they reach fixed maximum rates when no further increases in such rates will be made. 3—To grade rates as they go higher, as evenly and regularly as possible. 4—To charge duty on the portion of an estate in Manitoba, at a rate to be established (on above principles) by the total size of the estate no matter where situated.

On the motion of the premier the house was adjourned until Monday night at 8 o'clock.