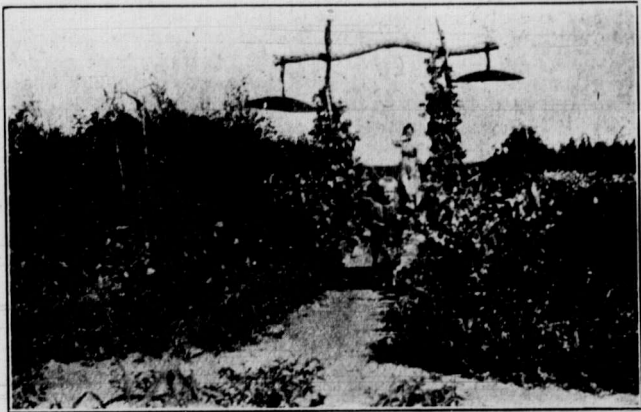


The Mail Bag

BELGIAN RELIEF FUND

Editor, Guide:—Since your appeal in your valuable paper, I have received many communications thruout the West and the farmers have been very liberal towards the Belgian Relief Fund. Besides contributions in money, I have received large quantities of wheat, flour and other goods, also many localities are preparing to send a carload each either of flour, wheat or fresh meat. Although the response from the farmers has been very generous and enthusiastic, I have still to beg for more, as from



A BEAUTY SPOT
Man's handiwork has changed this from bare prairie to a bower of beauty. On the homestead of F. E. Wilson, Caron, Sask.

recent reports I have received, the Belgians are going to die of starvation unless the United States and Canada keep on sending food. The British Admiralty is going to provide a fifth steamer about the 15th of February for the carrying of whatever Canada will send to Belgium, and we are making another appeal thruout Canada for contributions in money to help us in buying wheat, flour and other food-stuffs to fill the said steamer. Also we are making an appeal to the farmers to send one or more bags of wheat or flour if they so prefer. We also receive with gratitude anything else that may be useful to the Belgian sufferers.

I have no doubt but that you will be kind enough to make another appeal thru your paper to the Western farmers.

Money cannot restore the father slain, the son mutilated, the daughter ravished, the home given to the torch. But money can at least feed the hundreds of thousands who remain to face a long winter in a land laid waste; it can at least convey feebly the message that hearts beat in sympathy thruout Canada. East and West, the people of the Dominion have responded readily to appeals on behalf of Belgium, but the need is so great and so pressing that the efforts on behalf of the sufferers must not be allowed to slacken.

Is it not possible for every one of the branches of the Manitoba Grain Growers' Association to take the matter in charge and to become a branch of the "Belgian Relief Fund" for the time being and to open subscriptions and receive contributions in kind?

With my most grateful thanks for what you are doing for the Belgian Relief Fund, believe me,

Yours very truly,

A. J. H. DUBUC,

Belgian Consul.

NOTE.—We publish the above letter from the Belgian Consul for the information of our readers. The heart of the people of Western Canada has been touched as never before by the appeal to help our suffering allies in Belgium. Any food or clothing should be shipped direct to "A. J. H. Dubuc, Belgian Consul, Winnipeg," and the shipping bill forwarded to him at once. The railways will carry all such shipments free. All cash should be sent to The Guide and all checks made payable to "The Grain Growers' Guide." The amounts will be acknowledged in The Guide each week and forwarded to the Belgian Relief Fund.—Editor.

THE INCOME TAX

Editor, Guide:—I would draw your attention to a want of harmony in the teaching of your journal and the expressed opinion of the delegates to this year's Manitoba convention. This convention resolved, with only one dissenting voice, to advise the Government to abolish all present forms of taxation, and adopt the Single Tax as the sole source of revenue. It was suggested that it might be well to include an Income Tax. But this was sharply opposed by F. J. Dixon on the grounds

that it had a tendency — as Mr. Gladstone said — to breed a nation of liars, and the delegates, with one exception, submitted to his dictation.

However, the solitary delegate had not long to wait for his vindication, and it came from a quarter he least expected it; for on returning home he had the gratification of seeing the cartoon of The Guide commend the very same measure that was turned down by the Brandon convention.

I congratulate you on the advanced position you have taken (for I presume the cartoonist had your sanction), and I trust you will not hesitate to defend it against all comers. Because a man is inclined to be a liar is not sufficient reason why he should escape taxation, and as Mr. Gladstone's argument was not convincing to the Englishman, no more should we be dissuaded from making this individual pay his just dues. Other forms of taxation also, such as Inland Revenue, which are not expensive to collect, might well be retained.

I wish to consider these matters much more fully when there may be less pressure on your columns, but will thank you to allow this brief reference to them, while the incidents are still fresh in the minds of the delegates.

F. HOWELL,

Royallen Delegate.

FREIGHT ON FRUIT

Editor, Guide:—In your issue of December 23 there is a communication from G. H. Manser, of Lewisville, Alta., commenting upon the alleged excessive freight charges on a carload of fruit delivered at Wetaskiwin.

After considerable difficulty I was able to locate the car. It was shipped from Truro, N.S., on October 24th, and consigned to The Grain Growers' Grain Company at Wetaskiwin. It contained 165 barrels, and not 160 as alleged by Mr. Manser. The freight amounted to \$532.35, the weight of the contents of the car being 26,100 lbs.

Your correspondent evidently gives no heed whatsoever as to the service performed by the railways handling this car. The shipment, while billed from Truro, originated at Paradise, N.S., and was hauled 3,044½ miles. Owing to the character of the contents it was necessary to supply a refrigerator car. The Intercolonial Railway hauled this car 357 miles, the Canadian Pacific Railway 2,687.5 miles and the charge amounts to 11½ cents per mile, a charge considerably less than what the Board of Railway Commissioners, after a prolonged and thorough investigation, allowed the railways for handling low-class traffic in ordinary gondola cars. For Mr. Manser's information, I may advise him that the charge in this instance is fully one-third less than would be made by an American carrier for a similar service, and for a similar distance in the United States.

I can hardly believe that the Grain Growers are not prepared to deal justly with the railways, but I think in this

instance the criticism is absolutely uncalled for.

While I am on this subject I may mention seeing in the Manitoba Free Press of January 16, re convention of Manitoba Grain Growers at Brandon, a report that the delegate from Carroll had asserted that the rate from Carroll to Fort William was 12 cents and to Winnipeg 14 cents. If I may be permitted the use of your journal, I would say for his information, that the rate from Carroll to Fort William is 13 cents and from Carroll to Winnipeg 12 cents.

W. B. LANIGAN,

Asst. Freight Traffic Manager, C.P.R., Winnipeg.

CO-OPERATION AND ORGANIZATION

Editor, Guide:—As there exists an injurious confusion in the minds of our members concerning various organizations engaged in co-operative work, some action should be taken regarding consolidation of the same. This can only be obtained, in my estimation, by a large measure of co-operation in organization. I would submit that the time is come when it is imperative for us to reconstruct the Grain Growers' constitution, retaining provincial rights alone, if you wish; but preferring to establish a grand central agency or federation of the three provincial executives under a Dominion charter, said central executive being empowered to carry on a general co-operative business, with full wholesale and retail rights; also to operate and acquire terminal elevators, manufacturing plants, abattoirs and cold storage plants; coal mines and oil wells; steamships and general transportation facilities, and to conduct an importing and exporting business. The central executive to consist of president and secretary of the three provincial Grain Growers' Associations, also the president and manager of The Grain Growers' Grain Company and Co-operative Elevator Company, respectively, in advisory capacity if necessary. Sub-centrals to be formed wherever there is a group of locals sufficiently strong to engage in co-operative trading; each local to be in touch with central and nearest sub-central office and meeting at least twice a month, preferably at the natural centres, the country school-houses. Concerning retail rights, many say we have collective buying in carload lots and do not want retail trading, the time not being ripe. We must all agree, however, that the present co-operative acts in various provinces curtail our privileges in some directions. In Saskatchewan we pay for the word Limited in our charter by being denied retail rights in co-operative trading. A system of wholesale trading in carlots, tho having many advantages, also has some decided disadvantages. For example, on arrival of a car, you must have a certain sum of money, or you miss your chance of buying any articles in that carload. This often happens when one has no account at the bank. Again, if your order brings the total amount to over a carload, you are left out. In other words the Saskatchewan Act, as now framed, is only of benefit to a small section of each community, successful farmers, or, small capitalists, as you will. We wish these men all success, and when we make our little pile, we can do some carlot trading, too; but in the meantime, what are we poorer co-operators to do? We pay cash for our commodities and are forced to deal with the local trader or departmental stores. The local retailer is enhancing his price and taking out of the poorer class, comprising at least 85 per cent. of the farmers, what he has lost by the carlot trading of the richer men of the community. We

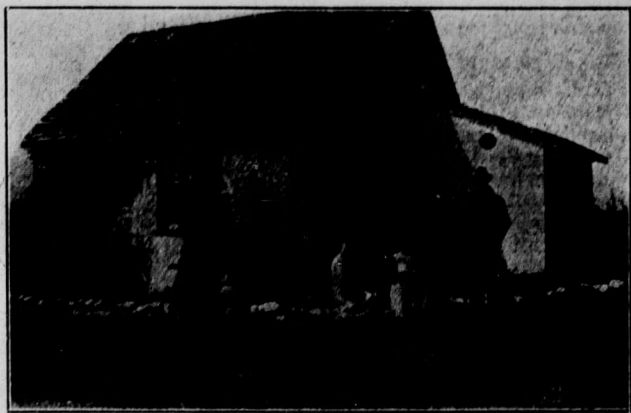
acknowledge that carlot trading has materially reduced the prices of certain staple articles and the poorer man benefits thereby. The departmental store gives us a fair article for a fair figure, but, of course, no cash dividends. I do not advocate retail stores at small points, but I do claim that the establishment of co-operative departmental stores, or, at worst, even sample rooms, doing a mail order business at such points as Winnipeg, Brandon, Moose Jaw, Regina, Saskatoon, Edmonton, Calgary and Prince Albert would be a God-send to the poorer farmer and not militate against carload trading in the least. Such stores would have the support of the urban laboring class, and in them town and country would, in addition, find a mutually profitable market for eggs, butter, cheese, cream, milk, cured meats and vegetables. The best co-operative movements finance themselves. How shall we capitalize our central, whether it be grand or provincial, as we may decide? A true democratic method would be to raise the Grain Growers' Association fee to \$2.00. I would suggest capitalizing for a start at two million dollars; shares \$100 each, to be paid in four annual instalments of \$25. You attain this result by allotting one share to each local, and not more than five shares to any local as a corporation. The object of locals taking shares is so that the poorest member, by taking a portion of a share as low even as one dollar, enjoys all the privileges of a shareholder and draws dividend accordingly. In every association there would be members who, being assured of a safe investment, would take up to five or even six shares each. One man, one vote. Strength lies in unity and of co-operation in strong centralization. We can enforce our demands as farmers if we present a solid front. Instead of having a score of separate co-operative, beneficial and farmers' welfare movements, let us build them up into a harmonious whole.

E. BOISSIER.

Guernsey, Sask.

GOVERNMENT SEED AND FEED

Editor, Guide:—I would like to say a few words in regard to the way the Government is supposed to be assisting the settlers in the way of providing seed grain and feed, etc. We are living here just on the edge of the dry belt this last year, and some of us are fortunate enough to have a few hundred bushels of good No. 1 Marquis wheat to sell, while a great number here are unfortunate enough to have to apply to the Government for seed for this year's crop. We are about 20 miles from the



Creepers and vines do much to beautify the surroundings. House of F. E. Wilson, Caron, Sask.

railroad, and those that need seed have been trying to get an order from the Government so that they could get their seed from their more fortunate neighbors right at home, which they could buy for \$1.00 per bushel. But the Government says, "No. Those that have wheat to sell must haul it to town 20 miles or more and sell it at market price." The Government has men in town buying this wheat and shipping it to Moose Jaw, 400 miles or more, and then they will ship it back and sell it to the needy ones at

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