

The Grain Growers' Guide

Winnipeg, Wednesday, October 20th, 1915

PROMPT ACTION NECESSARY

All Canada from coast to coast is suffering serious loss because the western farmers are not permitted to ship their wheat into the United States and take advantage of the higher prices prevailing there. The loss to our farmers on this year's crop on account of the closed market to the south will total easily more than \$10,000,000, and this estimate is a conservative one. Already considerable wheat has been sent to the United States after paying the ten cent duty. This money being lost to the farmers is kept out of general circulation in Canada, and each commercial interest in the country loses its share. Why the Dominion Government retains its sphinx-like attitude in the face of this situation is beyond comprehension. We believe it is within the power of the Dominion Government to place wheat and wheat products on the free list immediately, by Order-in-Council, and thus secure free entry to the United States market for our wheat. Section 92 of the Consolidated Revenue and Audit Act of Canada reads:

"The Governor-in-Council whenever he deems it right and conducive to the public good may remit any duty or toll payable to His Majesty, imposed or authorized to be imposed by any act of the Parliament of Canada."

There are several conditions attached to this clause, none of which, however, would seem to affect the case in question. Whether, however, the remission of the Canadian duty on wheat and wheat products would be accepted by the United States government the same as "free wheat" would be a matter that could be ascertained only upon consultation with the Washington authorities. However, if this action were not acceptable to the United States Government, Premier Borden and his cabinet might use the power granted them in section 286 of the Customs Act, which reads as follows:

"The Governor-in-Council may, from time to time, and in the manner hereinafter provided in addition to the other purposes and matters in this Act mentioned, make regulations for or relating to the following purposes and matters:

"(k) Transferring to the list of goods which may be imported into Canada free of duty, any or all articles, whether natural products or products of manufacturers, used as materials in Canadian manufactures; any such materials transferred to the free list by such order-in-council, to be free of duty of customs for the time therein appointed for that purpose."

We believe that this clause could be interpreted to cover wheat and wheat products, and if so it would be an immediate acceptance of the United States' offer of free trade on wheat and wheat products. It is the duty of the Dominion Government to take action on this matter and to take it at once. The western members of Parliament who are supporters of the Government could do excellent work for the farmers by urging Premier Borden to prompt action. No man in Western Canada, who has the interest of his country at all at heart, can fail to be strongly in favor of free wheat. All possible pressure should be placed on the Dominion Government to take action.

If the Government decides that it has not the power to get free wheat by Order-in-Council, and we have no doubt but that this will be the first excuse offered, without even waiting to test its validity, then it is the duty of the Government to call a special session of Parliament and place wheat on the free list.

The Liberal party is already in favor of Free Wheat, and if the Government also favored it, the necessary legislation could be put thru both houses in one day by common consent. To call Parliament together for such a purpose would cost less than one day's loss to our western farmers on the amount of grain going thru Winnipeg. If Sir Robert Borden and the cabinet members have any regard whatever for the development of the West, they will cease being party politicians and will get busy on this most important problem (next to the war) which now faces our country.

KEEPING BOYS AND GIRLS ON THE FARM

The story is told of a western farmer who got up from the supper table one winter evening with a speech, addressed to his twelve-year-old son, something like this: "Now, Jimmy, hurry up, you've got to clean out the stable, bed down the horses, milk the cows, separate the milk, and chop some wood for your mother. And don't forget to feed the pigs. I've got to go to the schoolhouse to give a lecture on 'How to keep the boys on the farm.'" The rest of this man's sons had all left home and gone to the city because they got tired of doing the chores, and it is more than likely that this boy did the same as soon as he was old enough.

The new way to keep the boys and girls on the farm is to give them a little farm of their own and let them have the proceeds, instead of killing their young ambition with the drudgery of continual chores. In the new order of things a very prominent part is being played by the boys' and girls' farm clubs and the country school fairs. The boys' and girls' club idea is more fully developed in the United States than in Canada, but it is taking hold in Western Canada and a lot of boys and girls are developing thru the work of these organizations that love of the land which is necessary to the building up of permanent, prosperous agricultural communities. The Manitoba Department of Agriculture during the past few years has been doing a valuable work in organizing boys' and girls' farm clubs and assisting in the holding of school fairs, and no one who has been present at one of these fairs, seen the exhibits and talked with the boys and girls who are taking part in the work, can help but become enthusiastic about the future of agriculture. The rural school fair and exhibit of the Boys' and Girls' Farm Club held at Portage la Prairie recently brought together the livestock, the field and garden produce, the household art and the school work of over 500 children. There was not one of those children who was not a better farmer's son or daughter as the result of the fair and the work of preparation for it, and there is no doubt that many of them are being saved for the farm by the interest in agricultural life which they are developing. The West needs more boys' and girls' farm clubs and more country school fairs.

THE COLLECTION SEASON

The first of November in this country is the recognized time for all interests to whom the farmers owe money to press for collections. Despite wet weather and other drawbacks the country, as a whole is in far better shape than last

year and the farmers will undoubtedly be able to clear off a good part of their obligations from the proceeds of this crop. Those who have had the experience of carrying a burden of debt and finally getting rid of it, will need no warning to avoid similar dangers. But there are many, in fact the majority, who will not free themselves this year, and those interests who have been "carrying" them at 10, 12 or 15 per cent. interest should not act the Shylock part, but give the farmer a fair chance. We have just received from one of our subscribers a private notice which the Credit Men's Trust Association, of Winnipeg, has sent out to the retail merchants thruout the country, and we take pleasure in turning the spotlight upon this communication:

September 15, 1915.

COLLECTIONS

To the Retailer:

It has been brought to our attention that farmers have been advised to hold their grain for higher prices. This is all right if they have paid their store account, but if not, they should be compelled to do so. It is not fair to ask you and ourselves to carry them still longer. We are advised that the banks or elevator companies will advance them money against their grain. Therefore let them borrow enough to pay their store account, and they can hold the balance if they want to.

REMEMBER the farmer has other obligations besides yours, and the old motto, "First come, first served," is a mighty good one. Govern yourselves accordingly.

REMEMBER your credit standing for next year depends on your collections NOW.

We quite agree that the farmer should pay his store bills just as soon as possible. If the Credit Men's Trust Association were as well informed as its name would indicate, it would know that money is not advanced against grain unless that grain is in storage, and once grain is in storage it has the same effect on the market as if it were actually sold. The only place that the farmer can hold his grain so that it will not have a depressing influence on the market is on his own farm. No elevator would advance money against such grain, and, altho the banks are permitted to do so, we have never heard of a case where they have done it, altho we are informed that at least one of the banks is making an effort to assist farmers in the extension of credit. We sympathize with the retailers, who are a necessary part of the commercial machinery of this country, and their bills should be paid just as soon as possible. We hope, however, that they will not take the advice of the Credit Men's Trust Association and act harshly with the farmers. In fact we feel certain that they will not, but will be willing to deal reasonably with their farmer patrons. The retail merchants in the small towns and villages are absolutely dependent on the farmers in their community. The time is coming for a better understanding between the retail merchants and the farmers wherein there will be mutual benefit.

THE FARMERS' FRIEND

The Calgary News-Telegram is doing excellent work for the cause of the organized farmers. Some months ago it devoted its energies to unceasing attacks upon the Alberta Farmers' Co-operative Elevator Company with the result that the farmers' company is daily growing in favor amongst the farmers of Alberta. From time to time the Calgary News-Telegram has accused The Guide