

The Mail Bag

INTERIOR STORAGE ELEVATORS

Editor, Guide:—Referring to F. J. Collyer's letter in your issue of January 21, regarding interior storage elevators, there seems to be a lack of information among grain growers as to whether these elevators are being proceeded with or not.

I am in a position to state that contracts for two interior terminal elevators, as they are called, one at Moose Jaw, and one at Saskatoon, were made several months ago, that material for them is being prepared at Winnipeg and elsewhere, and finished material for them has already been shipped to the sites.

It is a safe assumption, therefore, that the building of these elevators will start with the spring.

I have helped in the preparation of a portion of the above mentioned material, and while betraying no confidence in giving you this information, which should be more fully known, for obvious reasons, desire my name withheld.

"WESTERN FARMER."

FAVORS INTERIOR STORAGE

Editor, Guide:—I notice a letter under the head "Opposes Internal Storage" in the mail bag of January 21.

I am sorry to see the internal storage elevator opposed by any of our farmers, because during the long term of years I have been in this country I have seen so many seasons when elevators would have been of great service to us.

It is not my intention here to discuss the merits or demerits of such elevators, for space will not permit, but rather to give a word of warning to any one who, like Mr. Collyer, has decided that because the bumper crop of 1913 was handled without blockade, blockades are a thing of the past.

Mr. Collyer says: "The railway companies have proved that they can handle a crop practically as offered in a season of heavy shipments." Mr. Collyer should remember the fall and winter of 1913 and 1914 have been especially favorable to the rapid transportation of our grain.

What would have the conditions been had the season been like so many—in fact, the majority—have been? Almost as bad a blockade as ever, for instead of farmers being able to hold their grain this season, as many had done other years, almost all were compelled to sell, and had bad weather blocked our transportation only for a few days, a great blockade would have resulted and farmers would have felt the results more severely than during any previous blockade. The conditions which would have made a blockade extremely severe this year need not be dwelt on; they are well understood. Are we always to have seasons as favorable to transportation as this season has been? That cannot be expected. Then why not be prepared for what is to be expected?

Mr. Collyer weakens his argument by saying: "Should it be thought, that the railway companies would fall down in their deliveries from these interior storage houses from any cause." Every one admits these storage elevators would be a relief to transportation companies in a time of heavy traffic. Mr. Collyer says himself: "Those who would be benefited by the change, namely, the railway companies." Now if there is a chance of the railway "falling down" under conditions greatly improved is there not a great deal more danger of a "falling down" without the improvement? I would express an entirely different opinion than Mr. Collyer does, by saying I hope the construction of these interior terminal elevators is pushed ahead as rapidly as possible.

I would suggest that Mr. Collyer and all others who see the great advantage the railways would get from the proposed system, and see no advantage for themselves, to look carefully into the subject before giving it any serious opposition.

R. R. TIGAIT

Rouleau, Sask.

FOR A NEW PARTY

Editor, Guide:—It is generally conceded that present day governments are not legislating in the interests of the wealth producing people of our country. The degree of insincerity seems to be so

manifest that right-thinking people accept their legislation and statements as a part of a play to conceal the real and treacherous plot, the results of which we see driving our country to the poorhouse as fast as it can be put there.

For some years I have been a supporter of the present government and must confess that I appreciate the early work accomplished by the Conservative party. Great statesmen have been identified with it, and equally great with the Liberal party. There are, I believe, great men in both parties today—men that see the real condition of our country and would stand true to her cause if they could. But government life is like school life, the bullies rule, and the cause of the people is sacrificed. Might I suggest that after all the people have the power to put a stop to class legislation by a proper use of the franchise. Candidates for elections are nominated by cliques, not by bodies of voters representing the interests of the country, hence the sordid election campaigns conducted by both parties. Is there not some way of influencing and elevating the ideal of election promoters and enlisting the sympathy and co-operation of the good substantial people of our country? Is not this all that is needed? I have no faith in candidates that call themselves Independents, but I do believe in a great Labor, Democratic or Progressive party, cut clear and distinct from the other two, with a platform of its own, that would not be duped by the hiring press of Tory or Grit, and, further, that the time is ripe for such a party now. It is opportune because there is a great deal of labor and farm organization in the country at the present time. This would make complete organization comparatively easy. It is the right time because there is two years before a general election in which to complete organization and get candidates in the field. And, Sir, might I suggest that some move be made in that direction? It might be thru the executive of the Grain Growers of each province. If the voters get a chance

in the next election, there is no doubt but that the four provinces, namely, Ontario, Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta, would send enough new party men to Ottawa to influence legislation in the right direction. It is not too much to expect with the new distribution of seats and with the present feeling in the West that from fifteen to twenty seats could be captured for the new party.

I would like now to suggest a few planks for the platform of such a party: planks which strong Liberals as well as Conservatives accept gladly and have promised to support. First—Free trade with all countries. Second—Revenue raised by income tax. Third—Direct Legislation. Fourth—Government commercial fleet to put our productions on the market. Fifth—Our natural resources taken out of the hands of trusts and railways and operated by the government. Sixth—Prohibition of the liquor traffic, wholesale and retail. These, with various others, I think, would meet the requirements.

R. S. ANDERSON

Stelcam, Sask.

CO-OPERATION AND AMALGAMATION

Editor, Guide:—In your editorial columns of late and in leading circles amongst the organized farmers of the West the desire has been prominently expressed that the farmers' commercial organizations should adopt co-operative methods and also amalgamate their forces. You have also invited an expression of opinion from your readers. I understand that the matter has advanced so far that the directors of The Grain Growers' Grain Company have been instructed to prepare a scheme of co-operation and submit it to the next annual meeting of shareholders.

I have watched with intense interest, tinged with sadness almost bordering on despair, the efforts of the leaders of the farmers' organizations to evolve co-operative schemes of handling grain. When the last scheme, the Alberta one, was accomplished I felt (to use Robert

L. Scott's remark anent the Saskatchewan D.L. Bill) that "outright defeat never takes the vigor out of reform movements. Only betrayal by professed friends can do that." The commercial success of those undertakings and the undoubted general benefit they have rendered to all the farmers of the West should not blind us to the fact that they lack the one essential that would make them truly equitable as well as increase their efficiency and commercial success, that is, co-operation.

When The Grain Growers' Grain Company applied for a Dominion charter they inserted an anti-co-operative provision that led the Dominion legislators to enact a counter provision that 8 per cent. must be paid on investment before the other provision could become operative. Now, if The Grain Growers' Grain Company had sought to adhere to the truly co-operative method of dividing its profits amongst its shareholders in proportion to the patronage of each, it is not reasonably to be supposed that the Dominion House would interfere; but the power was sought to divide the profits amongst the patrons, irrespective of their being shareholders, and the Dominion members, to protect the shareholders, and rightly so, inserted the only amendment that could suggest itself to their capitalistic minds. That is one rock which can be surely avoided in future.

I one day encountered one of the framers of the Saskatchewan scheme, in fact, a member of the commission that investigated the whole question. This man has the inconvenient habit of blurting out the unadulterated truth when surprised by an abrupt question. I asked him: "Will you explain to me why you did not make the Saskatchewan Elevator Act co-operative?" His answer was, "The truth is, we did not know enough." Since the establishing of the Saskatchewan Elevator Company The Guide has published many excellent articles explaining the principles of co-operation, so ignorance can no longer be advanced as an excuse.

The betrayal of co-operation in Alberta was hotly contested. The majority of the U.F.A. directors who accepted the Elevator Bill have pled no excuse. They insist and reiterate that it is co-operative. I sincerely believe that these men are honest in their conviction. I know that among them are men of extraordinary ability and singleminded purpose, men who would never try to deceive anyone else until they had first successfully practiced deceit upon themselves, so I am led to the conclusion that their minds became unnerved thru fear of leaving the beaten track, the track already beaten by Manitoba and Saskatchewan. Now, all those schemes are huge successes. So were John D. Rockefeller's schemes. The West has really benefitted by the establishment of utilities and true competition. John D.'s schemes must also have been beneficial to the public or they would never have brought their author wealth. There are miniature John D.'s in the farmers' commercial companies and altho at present their operations are of undoubted benefit, within life's span a thousand of them may become as great a burden as one John D. In January, 1913, I wrote to The Guide on this subject, pointing out the possibility of farmers disposing of their holdings, investing in The Grain Growers' Grain Company stock and living in idleness and comparative comfort on the profits. In April of the same year there appeared in two successive issues of The Guide a display advertisement of The Grain Growers' Grain Company, announcing how John Hopkins, of Carnduff, Sask., had sold his property, bought for himself and family one hundred and sixty shares in The Grain Growers' Grain Company and retired to England where he can live comfortably on the sweat drops wrung

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OUR CO-OPERATIVE NUMBER

Following the practice of several years past The Guide will publish a special co-operative number on March 18. In this special number we want to publish a complete report of the co-operative buying done by every local farmers' association in the three provinces. In past years the reports received have not been very satisfactory in number, but this year we do not want to miss one. As a special inducement to local secretaries or others in charge of co-operative buying we are going to distribute \$50 in prizes for the best reports received. The prizes will not go to those who have done the largest amount of buying, but will be awarded for the best report received, even tho the total purchases may be small. The prizes will be as follows:

FIRST	\$10 00
SECOND	8 00
THREE PRIZES	5 00 each
FOUR PRIZES	2 00 "
FIVE PRIZES	1 00 "

These reports to be counted in The Guide competition must be in The Guide office not later than March 6. They must be written plainly and on one side of the paper only and, in addition to being a general report, must contain the following information and answer the following questions as far as is possible:

- 1—The total amount of purchases, specifying whether coal, apples, lumber, fence or whatever it may be.
- 2—The cost of each shipment laid down at the local shipping point.
- 3—The name of the firm from whom purchased.
- 4—As nearly as possible the exact saving effected on each shipment by buying co-operatively instead of buying individually at the ordinary retail prices.
- 5—Whether or not it is your policy in making co-operative purchases to deal with those firms who advertise in The Guide; state the views of the farmers in your locality on the matter of supporting The Guide by purchasing from Guide advertisers.
- 6—How has co-operative buying affected your association?
- 7—Do you allow non-members of your association to participate in your co-operative purchases?
- 8—Are your co-operative purchases made cash in advance, draft attached to bill of lading or on time?
- 9—Is the secretary or member who collects the money and makes the payments bonded?
- 10—Have you an incorporated co-operative society? If so, give the report of its work; if not, is there a desire to incorporate such a society?

It will not require much time to answer all these questions and give a complete and comprehensive report on the co-operative buying done by each local association. These reports will be of immense value and will do more to stimulate co-operation than almost anything else. It will require not more than an hour's work to prepare these reports in most cases. It is to be hoped we will receive several hundred reports.

THE GRAIN GROWERS' GUIDE

Winnipeg, Man.

NOTICE TO CORRESPONDENTS

This Department of The Guide is maintained especially for the purpose of providing a discussion ground for the readers where they may freely exchange views and derive from each other the benefits of experience and helpful suggestions. Every letter must be signed by the name of the writer, though not necessarily for publication. The views of our correspondents are not of necessity those of The Guide.