

have been in favor of free wheat for some weeks past. There seems to be some likelihood that free wheat will be granted. Pressure is also being brought to bear upon the Government by its own supporters to have a big reduction in the duty of agricultural implements, and it is probable that there will be some relief in this direction. Judging from Premier Borden's remarks on co-operation, the delegates present went away in the belief that the government would enact a co-operative trading bill during the present session.

But the real work must be done in the country among the farmers themselves. There are still several hundred thousand farmers in Canada who are not alive to their own needs, or are still in the bonds of political party slavery. These farmers must be stirred up. They must be educated and induced to stand shoulder to shoulder with their brother farmers in the struggle for relief. If equal progress is made during the next three years and a proportionate growth in the membership of the organizations is made, then whatever Government may be in power at Ottawa will certainly give very careful attention to the needs of agricultural Canada.

ONTARIO FARMERS JOIN HANDS

Among the farmers of Ontario there is no organization of a strength proportionate to that of the independent farmers' organizations in the Prairie Provinces. In Ontario there are several different organizations, some of them independent and others aided and directed to a greater or less extent by the provincial Department of Agriculture. The leading men in several of these organizations have felt that their work would be more effective and of greater benefit to the agricultural industry generally if they were working together. The example of the western farmers' organization and the development of the western farmers' grain companies have stimulated the Ontario farmers to embark upon similar work. The subject was discussed at considerable length at the annual meeting of the Grange, held in Toronto, on December 17 and 18 and the following resolution was unanimously adopted:

"That steps be taken to form a provincial organization on the same lines as the Provincial farmers' organizations of Western Canada by means of which it will be possible to bring into co-operation and unity of effort the various farmers' organizations of Ontario, including the Dominion Grange, the farmers' clubs, farmers' exchanges, farmers' associations, etc.

"That steps also be taken to form a farmers' co-operative company on the lines that have proved successful with the Grain Growers' Grain Co.

"That a committee of five members be appointed to make all necessary investigations, and that this committee shall have power to take all necessary action if, in their judgment, action is deemed desirable."

The following committee was appointed to give effect to what is proposed: J. J. Morrison, Henry Glendenning, Elmer Lick, H. B. Cowan and E. C. Drury, all being prominent members of the organization. There is no doubt that the Ontario farmers, living closer together and being in better shape financially, have even greater opportunities of development than in the West. The organized farmers of the West will all join heartily in wishing their Ontario brothers every possible success.

A WISE ACTION

One of the precautions which the delegates at the annual farmers' conventions in the Prairie Provinces have taken year by year is to see that the officers and directors which they elect to transact their business are each and all heartily in support of the policy laid down by the convention. At each convention, when the time comes to elect officers and directors, it has been the custom to ask each candidate when nominated to state his views

on the tariff, Direct Legislation, Co-operation, Taxation of Land Values and other questions upon which the organized farmers have definitely fixed their policy. In this way the delegates, before casting their ballots, have been able to know exactly where the candidates stood, and thus to be assured that their officers would give their very best efforts towards carrying out the wishes of the farmers who elected them. This course of procedure has undoubtedly been an excellent one and should be continued, whether the candidates are new ones or whether standing for re-election, as there are a large number of new delegates at each convention and it gives them an opportunity to see and know the candidates for whom they are voting. In this respect the farmers are putting into actual practice in their own organization a principle which is recognized as very important in the wider political field. When the time comes that every political candidate can be pledged to support certain principles for which the people stand, then we can be assured of more satisfactory legislation in parliament. The training which the farmers are getting in the conduct of their own business at the conventions, and in the election of their officers, is bound to have its effect in the political field, and in the future candidates for parliamentary honors will find it necessary to give clear-cut and specific statements as to the policy they will adopt on various questions of vital interest to their constituents.

CANNING COMBINE BUSY

Reports to hand from Eastern Canada indicate that the Canners' Combine is making an onslaught upon the independent canning companies that have developed throughout Ontario during the past few years. When the Canners' Combine was formed it took over a large number of small canneries, injected a huge amount of water into its stock, and proceeded to make dividends by charging very high prices for canned goods. Every housekeeper will know how the price of canned goods has increased in the past five years. The result of the combine and the high price of the canned goods has been that upwards of fifty independent canneries were built throughout Ontario, many of them by farmers. In these independent factories the local product was purchased, and the canned goods placed upon the market. Many of the independent factories found that they could sell at lower prices than the combine, give equally as good, and frequently a better product, and still make money for their shareholders. The high price of canned stuff charged by the combine has naturally decreased its consumption, and it is understood that there is a very large stock of canned goods now on hand in the combine warehouses. The latest move on the part of the combine has been to reduce wholesale price to 10 per cent. below the actual cost of production. The result has been that the price of canned goods to the consumer has come down, but the independent factories are finding themselves in a very serious situation. They have no organization among themselves and are generally in no position to hold their own against the cut rate prices of the combine. No doubt the result of the price cutting will be that many of the independent factories will be forced to close their doors, while others will be absorbed by the combine. Then, when the field is cleared of the independent factories we will see the handiwork of the combine again, when prices will go up and the consumers will be plundered for all the traffic will bear. How long will the public stand for tariff protection and watered stock combines that breed such commercial immorality?

Just as long as the protective tariff continues, so long will we find watered stock combines killing off legitimate industry.

In this issue we publish an index of all the important articles published in The Guide during 1913. Those who have kept all their numbers during the year may now fasten them together and have a most valuable reference work on the activities of the organized farmers and on democracy in general throughout the world. A few bound volumes will be available from The Guide office for those who would care to have them.

The delegation of Ontario Fruit Growers and Breeders who advocated high protection before the Government at Ottawa on Dec. 16 were in rather a peculiar position. Two of them were breeders of pure bred stock, which has been on the free list for many years. Their industry, therefore, was on a Free Trade basis, but they were quite willing to see their fellow farmers burdened with a tariff which did not affect themselves.

There was a certain amount of irony in the fact that the protectionist fruit growers who waited upon the government, went to Ottawa partly for the purpose of attending the funeral of the late Alex McNeill, Chief of the Fruit Division, and one of the leading co-operators, free traders and all-round democrats, of Canada. Their respect for the late Mr. McNeill could not have been very deep, when they would rush from his grave-side to demand that to which he was entirely opposed.

The farmers of Western Canada want free access to the American market for their wheat and they are quite as willing to have free wheat from the present government as any other government. It is not the agency by which it comes that they are interested in, but the fact of its actual operation.

Nothing will help to solve the financial troubles of the farmers more satisfactorily than the development of a co-operative organization, through which they will conduct their own trading. Self-help is the only kind of help that will bring permanent relief to the agricultural industry.

We are disappointed in the comparatively small number of our readers who marked their ballots in The Guide Referendum. We ask as a special favor that every reader who sees this paragraph will turn back to The Guide of December 3 and mark the ballot in that issue. The ballot is secret and no one will know how another votes. But we want the vote to be representative.

Now that there is some leisure on many farms in the West it is a good time for farmers to consider the financial end of their business. There is always plenty of room for improvement and the farmer who puts the best business methods into his farming operations is the man who is bound to make good in the long run.

Every local association should have at least one good delegate at the annual convention. It is the most important event in the history of the association and should not be missed under any circumstances. A good delegate will take back to his local a report that will inspire every member to greater efforts in the cause of better conditions.

When the farmers of Ontario get a strong organization and a system is worked out for a proper interchange of products between the East and the West there will be better conditions among farmers on both sides of the Great Lakes. Both are producing what the other needs and they should get together for mutual benefit.

Wherever there is a local association containing several members who have an active interest in the public welfare, there you will find a live organization.