

The Mail Bag

Continued from Page 8

THE COST OF LIVING

Below is a copy of an open letter addressed to Premier Borden. To the Right Honorable Robert Laird Borden.

Premier of the Dominion of Canada. Dear Sir:—

If the commission which you have ordered to enquire into the cost of living does its work in anything like an adequate manner, it should be an untold blessing to this country.

Is it not a reproach on the manner of distributing the wealth of the community, that while the power of production has been multiplied more than ten-fold, and in some cases more than a hundred-fold or even a thousand-fold, while the opening up of this continent has added immensely to the natural resources of the people, at the same time there come periods in which a considerable part of the people are reduced to the terrible condition in which they have to beg, borrow, steal or starve? Should there not, therefore, be the most earnest enquiry into the cause of this miscarriage of equity? Why should there be any want amid such plethora of supplies? How is it that one part of society enjoys such a superabundance, leaving to the rest only a very meagre support? It has happened more than once in the history of this continent that just at the very time when there should have been the greatest prosperity, business has had to face disaster, and bankruptcy has come as an epidemic. And even at the present day, with all the agencies for the production and exchange of wealth in the greatest efficiency, more so than they have ever been in the history of the past, we are likely to be plunged into depression, with its heart-rending train of misfortunes.

In addition to all this, we see the debt of the country increasing continuously. The national debt, the provincial debt, the municipal debts, together with all the mortgages spread all over the country, are growing to gigantic figures. Is it not a proper subject of inquiry why it is that one part of the community should thus become so much indebted, and increasingly indebted, to some other part of the community? While industry is striving by every possible method to add to the wealth of the country, what function are the land speculators fulfilling? Do they change the desert into a garden, barrenness into fertility and scarcity into abundance, as industry is doing all the time? Verily, and most emphatically, they are doing nothing of the kind. Are they not striving to carry off some other man's crop, to gain wealth by the despoiling of honest industry, to impoverish and bankrupt their fellow men?

Should not your commissioners inquire as to the disastrous effect of land speculation, and try to suggest some adequate remedy? Is it not true that the great bulk of our taxation is so imposed as to penalize and discourage production and so as to encourage rapacious predatory speculation? Is it not true that by placing the taxation on the producer that we thus allow those who can appropriate the value of the land, which rises to such enormous figures in our large cities, to get all the benefits of society without any of its burdens and that therefore all the burden falls on the industrious classes, so that industry is compelled, not only to support the government, but to support the exactions of the speculators and the ground lords besides?

If it is true, as is alleged, that with every increase in the population, the owners of the best sites can demand a greater and greater tribute from industry, thus dooming a large part of the people to inevitable poverty, should not the most earnest enquiry be directed to the propriety of concentrating more of the taxation on this particular, unearned value and also the propriety of removing the taxation from the food, the clothing, the tools and the furniture of the poor man's home?

Yours truly,

D. B. JACQUES

DEFENDS THE CHURCH

Editor, Guide:—In your issue of February 4 is a letter from Fred Kirkham, in which the writer seems to have run away with the idea that the churches possess the only cure-all for the ills of party politics. He asks: "Are the churches making any organized effort to put an end to the notoriously corrupt party politics?"

Perhaps they are not doing as much

as they should or could do. But, be that as it may, the church is very little stronger than its weakest link. The links are its members. Possibly they are not all sincere Christians. I do not know. But we have reason to believe that their ideals are at least on a par with those of non-church members.

And I really believe that they strive to attain more nearly to their ideals than the average non-church member does to his ideal.

It shows bad taste, to say the least, to hurl a broadside of doubtful adjectives at the churches just because they cannot readily "cleanse Canada from this political filth." And the simple statement that the churches are allied to party evils doesn't necessarily prove that such is an actual fact.

It is hardly fair, however, to say that the churches are doing nothing. Take, for instance, the case of a few Winnipeg preachers who have tried to do their level best to point out some of the evils of politics—what happened? Immediately one of the party newspapers jumped right on their backs, so to speak, and tried to strangle them, and all because they were endeavoring to do just what our esteemed friend declares they are not doing.

As I said before, the church is no stronger than its weakest link, and if the members will not back up their minister in his endeavor to have cleaner politics, is it any wonder that he flees before the enemy? One soldier may have all the confidence and courage necessary to whip a whole regiment—but he doesn't do it. And I am of the opinion that it is all wrong for one to expect the churches to do that which we could easily do at the polls. The responsibility rests with the voters—not with the churches or any other organized body of reformers. We cannot swap our political filth for a prayer or two, and we shouldn't try. The fight is ours, and victory lies only in the proper use of the ballot. The church is here to administer to the needs of the soul, not to save any political party unto itself, nor yet to bring about the birth of a new and spotless party.

T. S. EVANS

Strathelair, Man.

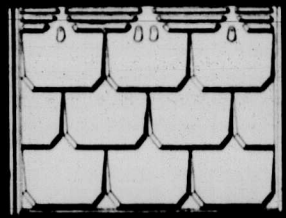
WHY? WHY? WHY?

Editor, Guide:—While the farmers, generally, are studying how to better their condition, how to get and keep for themselves and their families more of what their labor entitles them to, there is one point in particular that seems to have escaped their attention. It is this: While farmers are producing crops, cattle, etc., by their labors, directly, they are also, indirectly, adding to and increasing the value of their townsite, the bare land, the lots exclusive of improvements. That site grows in value, not in size. That value is often called the "Unearned Increment," but it is earned or worked for or caused by the labor of the farmers around as much as by the people in the town. Our railroad corporations aim to get the good of these sites in the sale of lots. That value is the profit of the labors of the farmers. It is theirs as much as are the crops. Why do the farmers, then, not reach out and claim their own? Is it not the spirit of Britons to hold their own? This "Unearned Increment" or "Site Value" could be secured for the farmers by assessing all the lots, used or vacant, at their full selling value, then much of what the townsites exploiters take in by the sale of lots would have to be returned again in taxes to the municipal treasury. Why have farmers not seen this point years ago? How much longer will they allow railway corporations to exploit them by getting the profit of their labors for nothing—the value of their townsites? How long before farmers will reach out and claim an interest in that gold mine right under their eyes, the value of their own home townsites? And, if they can't do this, is there anything else that they can do that will be worth trying for?

W. D. LAMB

Canada's trade, 1912, was over a billion dollars

Protect Your Buildings With These Fire, Lightning, and Weather-Proof Shingles



They save time and labor in laying, and give you the best possible roof for your money.

"Eastlake" Metallic Shingles

are made of heavily zinc coated steel and will last a life-time. Those laid 28 years ago are still giving good service.

"Eastlake" shingles are the simplest and easiest to lay. They are rust proof and do away with painting and repairing.

Write for our free roofing book that tells how you can secure fire and lightning-proof construction at the lowest possible cost.

We Manufacture all kinds of Sheet Metal Building Materials

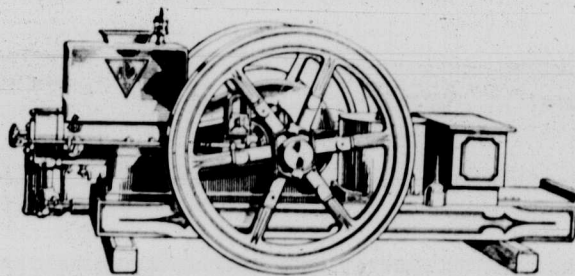
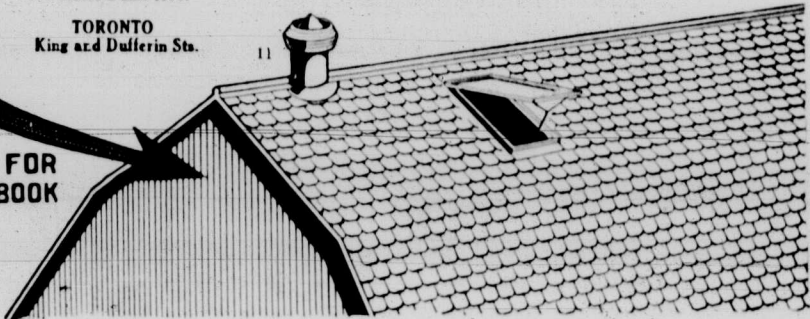
THE METALLIC ROOFING CO., LIMITED

WINNIPEG
757 Notre Dame Ave.

Manufacturers

TORONTO
King and Dufferin Sts.

SEND FOR
FREE BOOK



The Alpha Gas Engine

Doesn't need a skilled mechanic. So well built that it plugs right along like a steady well-broken horse. No worry, no bother, no tinkering.

THE ALPHA IS A GOOD ENGINE for any purpose, but because there is no mystery in either its construction or operation, it is an ideal engine for farm use.

IT ISN'T BUILT OF ROUGH castings and bolted together. It is made from the best of material, and the workmanship and design are high grade in every particular.

IT STARTS AND RUNS ON a slow speed magneto. That alone is a big item because it means you have no batteries to fuss with or get run down or out of order when you need to use your engine the most.

Eleven sizes, 2 to 25 horse-power. Each furnished in stationary, semi-portable, or portable style, and with either hopper or tank cooled cylinder.

Every farmer needs an "Alpha." Send for new catalogue.

DE LAVAL DAIRY SUPPLY CO., Ltd.

LARGEST MANUFACTURERS OF DAIRY SUPPLIES IN CANADA

MONTREAL PETERBORO WINNIPEG VANCOUVER

Make \$2000⁰⁰ more per Year

Hundreds of farmers right now are making from \$1000.00 to \$2000.00 a year extra money, besides keeping up their farm work, making wells with the

Improved Powers Boring and Drilling Machine

Bores 100 ft. in 10 hours. One man can run it; a team operates it and easily moves it over any road; Bores slate, coal, soapstone—everything except hard rock, and it drills that. No tower or staking—rotates its own drill.

20 years actual service all over the world have proven this the fastest and most convenient well making made. Easy terms. Write for catalog.

LISLE M'F'G. CO., Box 460 Clarinda, Iowa.

