

# The Mail Bag

## AN OPEN FORUM

This page is maintained to allow a free discussion of all questions vital to western farmers. It is the limit of space letters will be published giving both sides of all such questions. It is not possible to publish all letters received, but an effort will be made to select those most fairly representing different views. Short letters will be given preference. All letters must be accompanied by name and address of writer, the not necessarily for publication. Unusual letters will be returned if accompanied by postage.

### GRAIN GROWERS' SUNDAY

Editor, Guide:—I know it is not your purpose or intention that the columns of The Guide should be taken up by a discussion on Orthodoxy vs. Free Thought, although that is practically the whole point of Mr. Randall's last letter under the above caption. As I pointed out in my former communication, the purpose of the resolution on this subject introduced at the convention at Moose Jaw was to emphasize a phase of the Grain Growers' movement which was in danger of being overlooked. There was not I venture to say in the mind of one person in a hundred any thought of the difference that might exist in the matter of race, or creed, or language, in the whole of that great gathering, and I think it is some credit to Mr. Randall's ingenuity that he should have discovered and attached these peculiar objections to the very simple resolution that asked for the establishment of a Grain Growers' Sunday. Every one of the objections he urges might be urged against the establishment of a Red Cross Sunday, which I at least for one should regard as a very excellent proposition. It never was intended that any alteration should be made in anyone's creed any more than in his race or his language.

I notice that in his recent somewhat lengthy letter, Mr. Randall criticizes the Christian religion generally and the policy of the "Lord's Day Act" particularly. It is difficult to read Mr. Randall's letter without coming to the conclusion that in his opinion the Christian church is a very malevolent and wicked institution. He has a perfect right to hold that view in this land of exceptional freedom, although I very much doubt the wisdom of giving public expression to it. I myself do not agree with him, as I believe all our Christian churches are institutions making for righteousness, by that I mean helping men and women to think right, speak right and do right, and more, I do not think that the temper displayed in Mr. Randall's letter would mark him out as a man fitted to pass judgment on the action of the church in its many and varied activities. It may seem to the superficial student of history that certain wars have been caused by religion, although the probabilities are that similar wars or probably worse ones would have been caused if there had been no churches at all, and where there is caused by the church one case of dispute, whether in the family, or in business, or in the community, there might easily be a hundred cases cited where the spirit of the church has prevented any such dispute taking place. Mr. Randall being entirely outside the church only sees the one dispute which is advertised and fails altogether to see the one hundred which have been prevented.

He refers at length to the restraints imposed under the "Lord's Day Act" and evidently regards himself as a martyr because he is compelled to comply with the conditions of that act. I have no strong belief in the benefits of one day of rest in seven for man and beast that I am inclined to think the restraints imposed are beneficial, and would go even one step further and voice my belief, that the freedom Mr. Randall hankers after might easily degenerate into a license that would be a thousand times more harmful to our people generally and to Mr. Randall himself than the present restraints under which he appears to chafe so uneasily. As proving of my general position on the question of the "Grain Growers' Sunday," as you are well aware the Sunday has passed by, our Grain Growers did in large numbers attend churches at different places, and the information which I have been able to gather directly and indirectly has led me to the conclusion that our people acted very wisely when they determined to establish this institution, and although I have tried to do so I have not been able to find one single case where anyone has been hurt in the way Mr. Randall tries to persuade us he and a number of others have. Should you feel inclined to insert this letter I can assure you, Mr. Editor, Mr. Randall and myself having each had

two opportunities of expressing ourselves on this topic, I at least shall not trouble you by any further communication.

GEO. LANGLEY

Maymont, Sask.

Note:—Both sides of this question have been fully stated. No further letters on this subject will be published.—Editor.

### GOVERNMENT LAND EXCHANGES

Editor, Guide:—Here is a condition that savors of insincerity. I made application for the quarter section of prairie adjoining me. The owner ignored my request to rent or buy. I had outfits sufficient to have broken the whole quarter. If access could have been secured to this land 4,000 bushels of wheat would have been available next fall for consumption. If the government means conscription let it mean resources, especially land, as well as the lives of the workers. Justice in Canada is a sham. The speculator goes free while the innocents suffer in the hands of the unscrupulous. Take land exchange out of the hands of real estate dealers and establish government land exchanges.

H. C. BELL

Sask.

### OPPOSES WHEAT EMBARGO

Editor, Guide:—In the recent numbers of your paper I have read with unbelieving and till now mute amazement of the government's recent drastic action in placing an embargo on the shipment and a maximum on the price of Canadian wheat. The embargo on shipments to the United States is of necessity a feature of the price fixing, as without the embargo the producer would be free to ship his grain to Minneapolis and realize the 50 to 60 cents better price paid there than at Fort William and Port Arthur. That the embargo was put on shipment to the States to keep our grain out of enemy hands is too absurd to call for an answer. Till this embargo was put in effect the government accomplished the embargo results by collusion with the railroads whereby the roads would not receive grain even when destined to their own terminals, if within the States.

The Board of Supervisors, whoever that may be, announce that the embargo on exports to the States may be suspended by first securing the board's sanction. The board neglects to say, however, whether the uninfluential farmer with a few hundred bushels or a few cars of grain to ship, or the middle man with millions of bushels and a line of elevators through which to handle them, will be the more likely to be favored with permission to ship to the States where the laws of supply and demand are still allowed to work. An analysis of the application of the measure is easiest by noting its workings on the marketing of one's own productions. On my this year's crop of about 6,000 bushels of shelled No. 4 wheat, this nefarious measure levies a tax of no less than \$3,600. Were the measure framed to levy on all lines of production alike the amount involved in a single season would exceed Canada's cost of the war to date. However, it is not so framed and the farmer is the goat. Seemingly the purpose is to spread the action of the measure over a series of years and compel the farmer to pay a bill equal to the entire cost of the war, but not to apply his payments in that way.

Frame this measure so as to affect all lines of production alike and relieve it of the pernicious exceptions and it will be acceptable to the farmer class. Unless that is done, the farmer will regard it as the nefarious measure it appears to be—a measure of such colossal dishonesty as to make treasury booting look like petty larceny.

GEO. C. BENT

Whitla, Alta.

Note:—The higher prices in the United States were only temporary. The announcement of the American food controller of his board for fixing wheat prices brought the price down until now the Minneapolis quotations are about on a level with those of Winnipeg.—Editor.

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