

The Mail Bag

FAVORS GIFT OF DREAD- NOUGHTS

Editor, Guide:—In reading The Guide for some time I have noticed that you and some of your correspondents speak of the assistance Premier Borden is supposed to have promised the Mother Country, as though we have no right to give anything toward the support of the British Navy, and I see by the papers that the grangers in Ontario are petitioning for a referendum. Now, Mr. Editor, when I read these things I wondered what kind of men you, and other farmers who are speaking this way, are. I have been in Canada nearly fifty years and in this time I have heard talk of two or three wars between Canada and the United States about the fisheries question, the Behring Sea question and other questions, and the only thing that stopped war was the British Navy. When some of the wise men of the States began to tell of the power of the British Navy and their own helplessness they stopped their war talk, and today Canada is what she is through the power of the British Navy. Yet, when the time has come for Canada to do a little towards the upkeep of this navy, so many seem against it. You said, some weeks ago, that Canada was willing to help if it was needed. Do you suppose Mr. Borden would be asking for money to build dreadnoughts if he had not been informed it was needed? He should know a great deal better than the farmers of this country when he has got his information from the British Admiralty. When the South African war was on we sent our men to help, showing that what touched one part of the Empire touched the whole of it, and the rest of the world looked on in amazement. Now, when an emergency has arisen, some little Canadians want a referendum and don't want anything that is likely to touch their pocket book. What a sight it would be to the rest of the world—a referendum in Canada, voting against giving help to build and support the navy that has been their stay and protection for so many years. Some say there is no emergency. Then why is Britain doing her best to build battleships as fast as she can, and why is Germany building battleships? What need has she of them now, any more than a few years ago? It is as Lord Roberts says, Germany is preparing for war and when she is all ready and sees an opportunity she will strike, and woe to us if Britain is not ready. Lord Roberts also says that Britain's only hope lies in having such a strong navy and army always ready that it will be useless for any other nation to attack her. Now here is where Canada can come in. When Germany sees that Britain's Colonies are turning in to help strengthen her navy she will see it is useless to try to build warships to compete against Great Britain and her colonies so she will stop building and Britain can then stop and still be ruler of the waves. Let Canada spend \$30,000,000 in dreadnoughts; it will be a small amount compared to what a war would cost.

SAMUEL W. BISHOP.
Sintaluta, Sask., Dec. 2.

PRIVATE PROPERTY IN LAND

Editor, Guide:—Mr. W. B. Hull seems to be under some misapprehension as to what Henry George really proposed to do with regard to private property in land. In order to clear up any doubts upon this question I am enclosing you an extract from Progress and Poverty, book VIII, chapter 2, dealing with this point:—

"I do not propose either to purchase or to confiscate private property in land. The first would be unjust; the second, needless. Let the individuals who now hold it still retain, if they want to, possession of what they are pleased to call their land. Let them continue to call it their land. Let them buy and sell

and bequeath and devise it. We may safely leave them the shell, if we take the kernel. It is not necessary to confiscate land; it is only necessary to confiscate rent.

"Nor to take rent for public uses is it necessary that the State should bother with the letting of lands, and assume the chances of favoritism, collusion, and corruption this might involve. It is not necessary that any new machinery should be created. The machinery already exists. Instead of extending it, all we have to do is to simplify and reduce it. By leaving land owners a percentage of rent which would probably be much less than the cost and loss involved in attempting to rent lands through State agency, and by making use of this existing machinery, we may, without jar or shock, assert the common right to land by taking rent for public uses.

"We already take some rent in taxation. We have only to make some changes in our modes of taxation to take it all."

These are Henry George's own words and leave absolutely no doubt as to what he proposed to do. Yours truly,

F. J. DIXON.

Winnipeg.

PARLIAMENT AND THE BANKS

Editor, Guide:—The question of loaning money to farmers at a low rate of interest is one that has been very much discussed of late. Now that the revising of the banks act is before the people I would like the following questions answered through the medium of the Guide:

How can the farmers or any other party of the wealth producing class hope to obtain loans at a smaller rate of interest when 38 of our members of Parliament are interested in the banks and are deriving over \$75,000 per year in bank dividends? How can we expect the government to protect the people from the banks when we find such names as R. L. Borden, J. A. M. Aikins, Samuel Barker, Thomas Beattie, L. P. Pelletier, G. H. Perley, Rodolphe Lemieux, James Douglas Hazen, Rodolphe Forget, Charles Joseph Doherty and others too numerous to mention on the list of banks shareholders?

Are these men going to deny themselves their dividends and grant the loan of money at a smaller rate of interest to farmers and small manufacturers? Will they cut off the income which they exploit from the farmers and others and deny themselves the pleasure of an evening's amusement or a new auto, so as to grant cheaper money to the people?

Is it not a disgrace that these men are allowed to have the ruling of what the citizens of Canada are to do and what they are not to do?

Is it not time for the people to throw aside the old parties and form a new party pledged to Direct Legislation and to safeguard the people's interests?

A short while ago there were 41 banks in Canada. Now we have 26. Like everything else we have mergers of

banks. Hoping some of your readers reply to this.

NELSON W. DANN.

Nateby P.O., Alta.

AN APPEAL TO LOCAL SECRETARIES

Editor, Guide:—Allow me, through the medium of "The Guide," the only medium for the western grain grower, to make an earnest appeal to the secretaries of the branch associations, throughout the Prairie Provinces, to bring before their respective associations this, at present, most important of all matters, "Government loans—at a reasonable rate of interest." If every secretary, that is every live secretary, will but consider this proposal seriously, and act accordingly, the result will be so many resolutions forwarded to the executive, and also to the various Houses in session that they will be compelled to entertain the idea in spite of the many opposing interests. Especially does this apply to Saskatchewan at this juncture, as there is every prospect of this so-called question materializing only so far as to be a subject for inquiry. As one who has lived in Australia and New Zealand and realized the great benefits accruing from "Government Loans," and who can only imagine how many thousands of struggling farmers can be so easily lifted from despair to hope, from uncertainty to confidence, in a word, to enjoy a measure of the prosperity begotten of their own exertions, I venture to subscribe myself, yours truly,

JOHN McNAUGHTON.

Hon. Sec., Hillview G. G. A.
Piche P.O., Sask.

A DOCTOR'S TESTIMONY

Editor, Guide:—I have just read your statement on the cover of the edition of November 27. Your words are, in my opinion, terribly true. I am a friend of any person who makes war on Special Privilege. We are living under social conditions which permit part of our population to levy heavy tribute on the rest. We are putting a premium on manipulation, idleness and fraud. When I see the bitter poverty in some of the homes which I visit, and see in the same district large profits made out of the abominable real estate business, I cannot help seeing how these two parts of one whole, and related to each other, at least partially, as cause and effect. Privilege strong, keen, relentless, merciless, is reaching out its hand to control all the necessities of life. The true patriot is the man who studies the causes, the fundamental conditions which make these wrongs possible, informs the public, and leads the way to their removal. Yours truly,

R. G. SCOTT, M.D.

Wakaw, Sask.

Note.—The writer is medical superintendent of the Anna Turnbull Hospital at Wakaw.

CANADA'S HARD WHEAT THE BEST

Editor, Guide:—The superior quality of our Western hard wheat has been called into question by a representative from Australia and the Hon. Mr. Foster, the representative of Canada, present at the time the statement was made, very opportunely, rose to question the assertion, that the Australian wheat ranked first of all countries. This is the first known occasion on which the intrinsic value of the highest grades of our hard wheat has been questioned. The high quality of Australian wheat may remain undisputed, but to assume that it is up to the hard wheat that is grown in Western Canada would be tantamount to the conclusion that conditions must be the similar in both countries. If the same seed that is planted in the prairie provinces be sown in Ontario, you will not obtain the same hardness in the berry.

The principal factors in the West are the highly productive soil, long hours of sunshine and dry atmosphere with the northern latitude, and, within certain limits, the further north that it can be grown the better. These climatic and other conditions do not obtain to the same extent or in the same variety or degree in Australia or any other of the principal wheat-growing countries, and while we may pride ourselves on the intelligence and progressive methods of our Western grain producers, we must concede that with all this, they or no other like body of men without the factors above mentioned could produce the world-renowned wheat grown in our Western country. We must therefore grant that it is no reflection on the people of Australia to state that with all their enterprise they cannot as a rule produce hard wheat like ours, because we are highly favored in our northwestern climate by the gifts Nature has bestowed upon us to which no human ingenuity or foresight can lay claim.

With so much conceded to Nature, we cannot as Canadians be considered as over-sensitive or charged with boasting when we advance the statement made in the heading to this article.

In support of what has already been stated, the Liverpool prices for 1912 as given in Broomhall's Corn Trade News (in shillings and pence) may be advanced. They are as follows:—

	Australian.	No. 1 Man. Nor.
	Per 100 lbs.	
Jan. 30.	8/0 to 8/1	8/8 1/2 to 8/9
Feb. 6.	8/0 to 8/1	8/7 1/2 to 8/8
Feb. 13.	8/1 to 8/1 1/2	8/8 1/2 to 8/9
Feb. 20.	8/1 to 8/1 1/2	8/8 to 8/8 1/2
Sept. 3.	8/4 1/2 to 8/5 1/2	8/6 1/2 to 8/7
Sept. 10.	8/4 to 8/4 1/2	No. 2 Nor. 8/6
Sept. 24.	8/4 to 8/4 1/2	No. 3 Nor.
		8/3 1/2 to 8/4
Oct. 15.	8/5 1/2 to 8/6	No. 3 Nor.
		8/6 to 8/6 1/2

In the weeks above enumerated where No. 1 Manitoba Northern is compared with Australian, the Canadian wheat shows an advance in price of from 3 to 16c per 100 lbs. Even the No. 2 Northern is 1 1/2c, and the No. 3 Northern 1 1/2c in advance of the Australian.

J. BYRNES.

Ottawa, November 25, 1912.

THE NEEDLESS, SHAMEFUL TRAGEDY

Editor, Guide:—I rode over to my neighbor's "shack" this morning. As I neared the door I heard a thin, cracked, pitiful voice singing "Love me and the World is Mine." There was no music

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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.