

The Mail Bag

WANTS A REFERENDUM

Editor, Guide:—In the December 25 issue of The Guide there appears an article by one S. W. Bishop, in which he seems to be worried about who the men and farmers are that do not favor Mr. Borden's proposed gift to the British navy. Now, in the first place I wish to say that we have a right to object, furthermore, we as Christian people do not think well of the barbarian idea of urging the other fellow to fight by putting a club in his hands. Truly we do not wish to see Great Britain have a war, and the best way to keep her from having trouble is to urge peace and not put a club in her hand.

I would ask Mr. Bishop why does Great Britain need the help of Canada? Isn't she able to take care of herself? and why should Great Britain be foolish enough to prepare for war just because some other nation is doing so. Has ever a nation been conquered just because it was peaceful and did not show signs of fight? The reason that Canada has enjoyed a hundred years of peace is not entirely due to the protection of Great Britain, but is due to the fact that Canada has not been going around swinging a war club.

We even hear some good Canadians claim that Canada has not been treated fairly by the U.S.A. Now, if such was the case, then why did not Great Britain show some of her protection, as Mr. Bishop claims that the peace of Canada was due only to the protection of Great Britain.

I say the progress of Canada is due mainly to the activity of the farmer and others of the producing class, therefore, we should have a vote as to whether we go to building dreadnaughts, just because some steel plate magnet is sending out a war cry, or whether we use that \$35,000,000 in the betterment of our own conditions. And I hope that if Mr. Borden sees fit to tax his people to the extent of \$35,000,000 he will at least hold a referendum and then we will submit to authority, but not to a mere war cry.

J. W. PITTMAN.

Warner, Alta.

FAVORS NAVAL EXPENDITURE

Editor, Guide:—Re the naval question, in your issue of the 18th you say, Britain intends to keep her own navy sufficient for her own needs entirely independent of what Canada may do. Therefore, you seem to draw the conclusion that we in Canada ought not to contribute anything towards naval defence. What I would like to ask of you is, should Canada, as part of the British Empire, contribute anything towards the defence of that Empire? It is a thing to deplore, this building and maintaining of huge navies, but it seems impossible for the great nations of the world to get along without them; so I maintain that Canada, as part of an Empire, should participate in the defence of that empire. I would like to ask you a straight question. Do we or do we not get any advantage from being a part of the British Empire? If you think we do, is it not fair to help maintain that Empire? If you think we do not, then why not say so and advocate getting out of it? I entirely agree with what you say about the banks, railways and manufacturers, but it is the way the taxes are raised that is to blame and not the tax itself. Enclosed you will find my vote on The Guide referendum. Should have been sent off before, but you know what the preacher says, "We have left undone those things which we ought to have done, etc., etc." Good wishes for the New Year.

HARDY WEAR.

Cummings, Alta.

THE NAVAL QUESTION

Editor, Guide:—I am so enthused with your broad, sane, courageous and fearless comments in your editorials that I am driven to tell you so. I have been taking The Guide ever since the first issue. I have always liked its broad and fearless statements of fact, but never have I been more enthused than in reading the copy of January 15. I might also say I am proud of the stand the Manitoba Grain Growers have taken on the navy question. I fully endorse their resolution and also your comments

on same. Enclosed find 50 cents for the worth of it in copies of The Guide of January 15.

W. SAM. METHERAL.
Weyburn, Sask.

ANOTHER NAVAL ADVOCATE

Editor, Guide:—Mr. Scallion's extraordinary statements about the naval question, which you endorse in your article by calling them outspoken and courageous, should not be allowed to pass unchallenged by any lover of his country. Has Mr. Scallion been going about his business for the last fifty years with blinkers over his eyes; has he not been able to find out for himself what tremendous changes have taken place in international relations during that time?

Where and what was Germany fifty years ago? What is she now? The mightiest military power in the world, and determined also to be the greatest naval power. She has distinctly and publicly challenged Britain's sea supremacy. "The trident must be in our fist," said Emperor William, and he is doing his best, backed willingly by the German nation, to get hold of it.

Where would Canada be today if she had not been protected by Britain's navy? Where would she find herself if that navy were destroyed by Germany? Paying taxes to keep up the United States fleet.

No, Sir! Mr. Scallion's ideas about the naval problem are altogether unworthy of the support you have given them. We are bound in honor to help to keep the flag flying; our interests are completely bound up with it also.

Mr. Scallion speaks of Lord Roberts clamoring wildly for war; he is trying nobly to bring his countrymen to see

their danger before it is too late. What has the great founder of Christianity said, "I came, not to bring peace on earth, but a sword."

At the bottom of the last page of your issue you quote some words of Emerson's—"The lesson of life is to believe what the years and the centuries say against the hours." Shall we shut our eyes to the teaching of history and go down to destruction before a more virile people, because we will not make the necessary sacrifice to support our Empire?

P. H. SPENCER.

Millwood P.O., Man.

INCOME TAX TO SUPPORT NAVY

Editor, Guide:—Since you ask for the opinions of subscribers on the above question, I would like to state mine briefly.

If there is any need of a contribution of dreadnaughts, the charge should be placed on the people according to income, not by any increase of tariff. An income tax of \$1 per \$100 on incomes of \$2000 and upwards should be welcomed by those Eastern magnates who are never tired of parading their intense loyalty because it would give them a real chance of giving substantial proof of their desire to "Save the Empire."

At any rate an income tax should suit the farmers instead of protective tariff, because then everyone would contribute according to his means.

E. WAINWRIGHT.

Borden, Sask.

DIRECT LEGISLATION LEAGUE OF SASKATCHEWAN

Editor, Guide:—Last week's issue contains an urgent appeal to "Saskatchewan women only," to bombard Premier Scott with demands for equal suffrage.

The Reason Why

The following letter, written by Mrs. Robert Hicks, of Rosetti, Sask., has been Awarded the Third Prize of \$3.00 in our Contest "Why Farmers Should Advertise in The Guide."

To The Guide Readers and Western Farmers:—

Are you one of those who keep on spending money without thinking why? For instance, you have something you wish to buy or sell, something lost, something found, something, in short, you wish to advertise. Now, especially when you advertise, should you think why? Am I getting the largest number of the right kind of eyes to read this in return for my money? Am I giving my work to the right sort of people to do for me?

And now I am going to ask you to think, and think hard, about the advertising you have to do. Are you thinking? Well, then, I am going to suggest that you concentrate your advertising in one direction—your own paper, The Grain Growers' Guide. You are probably very much alive to the value of the advertising department of the press, though not to the extent that Mark Twain was, for on reading of the discovery of a buried forest in some part of Germany he wrote the following paragraph for the Virginian City Enterprise:—

"Germany has discovered a buried forest in her midst, supposed to be ten thousand years old, but if the man who lost it had advertised in the Enterprise it would have been returned to him the same night."

However, I do not intend to put forth arguments claiming any such wonderful results from advertising in The Guide, but plain, simple and, I trust, conclusive reasons, so that each and every reader of this article should lay it down with the feeling that it is not only his duty, but his pleasure and profit also to patronize the advertising pages of this—your own journal. The power is yours. I trust you may be led to feel the responsibility.

To determine upon any course of action we usually have one of three reasons: to get some good from it ourselves, to help those who have helped us, or to help those who need help. Now, I shall try to show that by giving your advertising work to The Guide you can do all these things and therefore it is the best and only course for you to pursue. First, I

firmly believe you will get better results for your money. What class of people do you wish to reach? Why, farmers, of course. Well, The Guide reaches more farmers than any other farm journal, its circulation being 26,100 per week. There is no advertisement too small for it to print, and none but what an effort to please to the last detail will be made.

Next, what will cause The Guide to grow and flourish? Advertisements, first and foremost. The best paper would fail without them, for none could live, let alone enlarge its circulation on individual subscriptions alone. Why, the paper on which it is printed costs more. Therefore, you are best helping The Guide by giving it your work, thus helping the friend who is helping you. How has it helped me, you ask? As we look around the civilized world today we see much that is unjust, cruel and rotten at its core. If you are one of those who are satisfied with the state of things, stop right here! Do not read another word! This is not for you. But nearly everybody who thinks at all knows there are many wrongs to be redressed before every human being can get justice. Farmers of the West, don't fall in the rear of this reform! March with the procession! Every reform movement must have a mouth-piece, a leader, a Guide, without which it is helpless. The Grain Growers' Guide is your leader, farmers. In the words of its poet:—

"It shone across the night
To show us liberty,
The burning rays of light,
The fires of equity.
Held by no gold-grimed hand,
Swung by no swaying creed,
It stands and keeps its stand,
And is a Guide indeed."

Farmers in the past, partly on account of their isolation and partly because they have not had access to the kind of reading which would enable them to form correct views, have never organized as other workers, but have more or less tamely submitted to glaring injustices. Convinced of the impossibility of changing

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The futility of bombarding politicians with anything that does not materially affect the votes which keep them in office is too well known to need comment. May I suggest to the women of Saskatchewan that the better way of attaining their object is to swing in behind the movement for the Initiative and Referendum.

It was by the use of these democratic tools that the women of Oregon, California and several other States of the American Union secured the vote.

S. J. FARMER.

Moose Jaw, Sask., Jan. 15.

INSURANCE AGAINST FROST

Editor, Guide:—Mr. L. Vickar, of Edenbridge, makes reference to me in your issue of January 8. In this letter he criticizes the Saskatchewan Hail Insurance Act and makes a plea for Frost Insurance, and as this latter question is agitating the minds of many of your readers I beg space for a short reply.

Let me first point out to this gentleman that no part of Saskatchewan is free from either of these risks. Both are common to all parts of the province, and if Mr. Vickar considers his crops safe from hail he is prompted by a false assurance.

There are radical differences, however, between these two risks. As the hail risk seldom extends into the cutting season it is not in any way conditional upon early maturity, and, in consequence, nothing whatever can be done which will even slightly mitigate the risk of hail damage. Protection against damage by frost, or, on the other hand, at least to a very considerable extent, is well within the power of the farmer himself.

The experience of a farm with which I am acquainted at first hand may be of interest here. In 1911, the district in which this farm is situated suffered a severe frost on the morning of August 23. The wheat on this farm had been in stock two days prior and graded high, whereas no other wheat in the immediate neighborhood having been cut before the frost, the neighbors all had feed wheat. Of two fields of oats, nearly side by side, and both on summer fallow, one was dead ripe and partly cut before the frost and the other never filled in. There was a yet greater disparity in the dates of ripening of the flax on these two farms. On one the flax was not worth cutting; on the other it was sold for seed. Nor was this difference due to any variance of soil. It was the result of different methods of soil culture, time of seeding and kind and quantity of seed sown.

Yet the frost risk is so great and so common to all parts of the province that if your correspondent will come before the convention with a working plan for a practical frost insurance scheme he will receive abundant support. Personally, I consider the following the best insurance against frost damage yet devised:

Sow the crops suited to your soil and climate. Sow only good, plump seed, pure of breed if possible, and plenty of it. Sow early, pack thoroughly, always preserving a mulch, and get your wheat off while the other fellows are debating about it.

J. B. MUSSELMAN.

Cupar, Sask.

SOUTH AFRICAN SCRIP

Editor, Guide:—I notice in The Grain Growers' Guide of Jan. 1, an article entitled "Another Gift to Speculators." After considerable thought I have decided to write you stating my own experience in connection with South African Volunteer Scrip. I cannot help feeling that I have good reason for com-

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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.