

THE PREMIUM NUISANCE

In the United States an effort is being made to discourage the practice of various journals in giving premiums to their subscribers to induce them to read the paper. It had come to such a pass that visitors to state fairs were obliged to force their way through a horde of subscription agents armed with fountain pens, cheap jewelry, soap, perfume, spectacles, tobacco, pipes and various farm tools, and wagon loads of other articles. It would be beneficial if some such a movement as this were inaugurated in Canada where many publishers induce farmers to subscribe to their journals by handing them a fountain pen or some other article supposedly of greater value than the subscription price of the paper. The use of such a premium to induce the farmer to read the paper is an admission by the publishers that the journal is not worth the price asked for it, or else it is a reflection on the intelligence of the farmer. Farm journals are like most other people, they do not generally give something for nothing. Their aim is to secure as large a circulation as possible so that they may secure a large price for their advertising, and thus prosper. When a subscription agent comes round loaded down with all sorts of merchandise to extract a dollar or two from the farmer's pocket the farmer should be on his guard. The paper that is not worth its subscription price is not worth the farmer's while reading it, and when the farmer has been induced by these premiums to subscribe to a paper he will not generally renew his subscription without another inducement, which is quite natural. Further than this, it will be better for the farmer if he subscribes to every paper on its merits alone. Every farmer should read the best journals in his line and not be influenced by the value of the premium.

A RECORD TO BE PROUD OF

The ranks of the organized farmers in the Prairie Provinces are steadily becoming strengthened by the enlistment of those who have for some time held aloof. There are still tens of thousands of intelligent farmers in the West who are not identified with the Grain Growers or United Farmers. This hardly can be due to the fact that these farmers are satisfied with their lot. If this be not the case, then either the organization has not been properly presented to them or they are influenced by other reasons. How else than through their own organization do the farmers expect to secure justice? No one in these days, not even the wildest politician, will claim that any political party will protect the interests of the producers unless they themselves are organized and able to present their claims forcibly to the government. If these same farmers will not join the organization how can they expect to secure a square deal? We have no doubt that many a farmer avoids the association because some politician of his own party says "Beware! Tory!" or "Beware! Grit!" The farmer should see that the politician is only working to keep him out of the organization and keep the farmers divided among themselves. Surely the time has come when the farmer is intelligent enough to know that he has been the loser by being either a loyal "Grit" or a loyal "Tory." Surely the farmers can get together and work for their common interests without suspecting each other of political designs. If not, then where and how is the farmer to be protected? The Manufacturers' association have no politics when they get together to keep up the tariff; the Bankers' association know nothing but banking and study how to make more money by special legislation; the railway magnates never allow any feeling of rivalry or suspicion to turn one against the other, but all stand shoulder to shoulder to compel the government to give them special privileges; the insurance companies have their organization

for mutual benefit; the big flour millers never allow any foolish whims to lessen their profits by fighting each other, and all of them are solid on the tariff; the lumbermen have their combine to keep up prices; the elevators have their organization to profit from the farmer, and thus it goes through every calling in the land. None of these organizations ever allow the "Grit" and "Tory" appeal to bother them in the least. But the farmer has always been the victim of the political parties. Surely by this time the farmer ought to know that these two parties are too much under the influence of these big financial organizations we have shown above. What have the organized farmers accomplished? Some disgruntled farmers say: "Nothing." But let us see. But for the farmers' organization the Grain Act would still allow the elevators all the privileges of old. The Grain Act today means at least ten cents a bushel more to every farmer on his wheat. But for the farmers' organization there would be no Grain Growers' Grain company and no Saskatchewan Co-operative Elevator company. These two companies are helping to drive the speculator out of the grain trade and give the farmer the full value of his crop. But for the organized farmers there would be no government terminal elevator now building at Fort William. The Hudson Bay railway would not be actually under construction if the organized farmers had not unanimously demanded it. The fact that the Railway Commission is investigating Western freight rates is due to the demand of the organized farmers. Entirely on account of the demands of the farmers the government has announced that the bank act will be amended so that the banks may loan to farmers on the security of the grain on their own farms. Nothing but the organized farmers' demands has brought about the pledge of the Saskatchewan and Alberta governments to place Direct Legislation on the Statute Books of those provinces. It was the farmers' demands that caused the Saskatchewan government to promise to provide a system of supplying "cheap money to farmers." It has been the presence and activity of the organized farmers that has kept the tariff from being greatly increased and has even brought about some reductions. Nothing but the demands of the farmers' organization brought forth the reciprocity agreement. This is a partial catalogue of the accomplishments of the farmers' organization. These have been secured partially through each of the political parties. Every single farmer gets the benefit of these reforms, yet many of them will not raise a hand to assist in the work of the organization. The only thing needed today to give the farmers equal rights with all other classes is to have a strong and energetic organization. Every farmer that believes in a square deal must know that the only way to get it is for all the farmers to stand together. With such a record to their credit the farmers have every reason to be proud of their organization. By keeping their political feelings in control and standing shoulder to shoulder the farmers must win.

The loyalty of manufacturers is becoming a by-word in other countries besides Canada. A few days ago the United States Government opened the tenders for about \$2,000,000 worth of shells and other ammunition for the navy. It was found that English manufacturers had underbid their nearest American competitor by hundreds of thousands of dollars. But the half dozen highly protected United States manufacturers, in order to prevent the contract getting away from themselves, practically told the Government that if this order went to England they would abandon shell making and let Uncle Sam get his war supplies from wherever he could. This ultimatum meant that in time of war the United States would be helpless, alto-

gether at the mercy of the enemy. There's loyalty worthy of our own manufacturers who laughed in derision at the idea of increasing the preference with the Motherland.

An Edmonton bank clerk has been arrested at Vancouver and has confessed to forging checks to the extent of \$60. A case of gay living, of card playing, theatre going and drink, some will say. But that is not so. This young man, who is 20 years of age, was receiving the miserable salary of \$50 a month, and on that he was supposed to pay all his living expenses and keep up appearances in the city of Edmonton. He could not live decently on that salary, and instead of going into debt robbed the bank. When arrested he had not eaten for three days, but had secured a position in a store at a fair salary, and even the police, who are proverbially hard hearted, believed him when he said he intended to live an honest life, and pay back what he had stolen. This young man no doubt did wrong in taking what did not belong to him, but what about the people who put him in a position of such temptation? The bank he was working for is paying a dividend of 12 per cent. It made a profit last year of \$704,045.94 and has accumulated a reserve fund of \$5,702,799.00. Its board of directors includes a knight who is also a member of Parliament, and several other millionaires. And they expect a bank clerk to be honest and live in Edmonton on \$50 a month.

Even the protectionists admit that Canada might lower her tariff without fear of annexation. They admit that if the American tariff against Canadian goods were abolished it would not cause annexation. But if both countries should lower their tariffs at the same time the protectionists say Canada would be annexed. And the worst of it is that many otherwise sensible Canadians allow this argument to influence them.

When some prominent citizen with influential friends commits an offence against the laws of the land he frequently gets off with a small fine. But when the offender is an obscure individual with no friends he goes to penitentiary "as a warning to evil-doers." If "justice is blind" then its hearing must be exceptionally acute.

The farmer who stands by his "grand old party" through thick and thin is doing just what Special Privilege wants him to do, and is pleased. But when the farmers get together in their own organization and demand a square deal Special Privilege gets nervous.

The railway blockade in the West is no longer "coming"; it is here. We hope Sir Thomas Shaughnessy will have the good grace to apologize for his reference to The Guide's statement on this subject. Perhaps he will now be ready to open the southern route.

When two farmers living on adjoining farms go to the polls and vote for opposing candidates, neither of whom will protect the farmers' interests, how on earth do they expect to get a square deal?

American imports to Canada average \$1,000,000 a day, yet we are not annexed. We punish British imports with a high tariff yet we are still a part of the Empire.

If some newspapers and politicians would devote less time to "saving the Empire" and more to common sense statements the country would be better off.

The ordinary politician loves the farmer only when he wants his vote; the rest of the time he laughs at him.