

# The Mail Bag

## OBJECTS TO POLITICAL ACTION

Editor, Guide:—I received a short while ago, forms for the signatures of any Grain Growers who desired that women should have the vote. To me this was almost the proverbial last straw. When I became a member of the association about one year ago I understood that the Grain Growers' Association had nothing at all to do with politics, but consisted of farmers of any and every political view banded together for their just rights. But I have had a rude awakening. I find that, instead, the Grain Growers' Association dabbles in all the politics of the day and officially have very decided views on all questions. I just want to say that if the association which was formed to look after the farmers' interests is going to continue along these lines the Grain Growers' Association is doomed to be a dismal failure, so far as its original intention is concerned. It must be plain to everyone who gives the matter a moment's thought, that it is impossible to hold an association together as one man, to demand justice to the farmer, if one half of that association preaches no navy and votes for women, and the other half are in dead earnest against these things. There is bound to be a split sooner or later. I am an enthusiastic grain grower, but I have travelled, and am a strong believer in the necessity of a strong navy, and I am also, after a great deal of consideration, against the cry of "votes for women." How then, can I and many others feel at home in the Grain Growers' Association. We feel out of place and our interest is bound to grow less, and the end will be we shall drop from the association. This must come to all members who do not agree with the political views of those at the head. I say, away with politics, they are all right outside of the association, but they are bound to produce ill feeling inside. What is it to do with the Grain Growers' Association (directly, of course, I mean) what the naval policy of the country is, or whether women get the vote? The association's work and object and end is to look after the interests of the farmer. It might be all right to have a third political party, but let not the association make itself that party. May she rather resolve to know nothing as an association but farming and the needs of the Grain Growers.

W. S. GILBERT

Minnehaha P.O., Sask.

Note.—Mr. Gilbert overlooks the fact that practically every move the organized farmers make to improve conditions takes them into the political field. No matter whether the farmers want better car distribution, lower freight rates, public ownership of terminal elevators, free trade in agricultural implements or Direct Legislation, it takes them into politics. Naturally all the organized farmers will not always be unanimous on every question, but if they stand shoulder to shoulder and are willing to abide by majority rule, they can accomplish much. If every man drops out of the association just as soon as he disagrees with some move that the association makes, there will soon be no association. Let us each have our own opinion, but abide by majority rule for the common good.—Editor.

## THRESHERS AND FARMERS

Editor, Guide:—I think it would be of great interest to all threshers in Saskatchewan to know of my experience in regard to collecting for threshing. As the law stands now, a farmer may get his threshing done and pay for just what he likes. Last fall I threshed 1,264 bushels of barley and 3,250 bushels of oats for a party here. He paid all but \$78.49, and claimed he was short over 100 bushels of barley, and 1,000 bushels of oats. This case was tried at Kipling on May 15, and judgment was reserved. The judge said the barley was alright (it was mostly shipped) but the defendant drew lots of the oats to his brother's place, and nothing was weighed. He measured his bins with a stick and guessed at the

rest. Also the oats were wet, and I told him they were not fit to thresh. They were hot before the cars left the station. But while the judge thought the automatic weigher was good for barley, it was not in regard to oats, as I have since heard that he only allowed me \$15.13, so you see unless a thresher has a written agreement to accept machine weight he might better be home than threshing for his neighbors.

C. F. WEST.

Langbank, Sask.

## DOCKAGE ON SPECIAL BINNED GRAIN

Editor, Guide:—Would you allow me through the medium of The Guide to point out what I consider an unfair system of elevator companies. I am speaking of both co-operative and line elevators, but more particularly of the farmers' organization, as these being built or guaranteed by the farmers and for the farmers' benefit should lead the way in equitable and fair dealings. Now to come to the point. A farmer engages a special bin to ship his grain through. He brings in his wheat load by load and is docked for shrinkage from half a bushel to two bushels per load. That's all very well if the wheat shrinks that much, but does it? Never on short storage, and the bulk of the bins are filled and emptied within twenty days. Now what becomes of the overplus? A farmer puts say 1,050 bushels in, net weight, as per tickets, and he gets 1,050 bushels out all right, but he has been docked a matter of thirty or forty bushels perhaps. Then that car is consigned to a commission

## DENOUNCE \$15,000,000 GIFT

Editor, Guide:—At our meeting on the 16th June, it was resolved unanimously "that this Association express its strong denunciation of the grant of over fifteen millions, given to Mackenzie and Mann, by the Dominion Government at Ottawa. We also regret that the opposition did not more strenuously oppose the gift."

It was also resolved unanimously at the same meeting that we convey to the Grain Growers' Guide our sincere appreciation of the stand it takes on all vital questions affecting the grain growers of Western Canada and trust that the farmers will give it more wholehearted support, as they are brought in fuller realization of what the fight it is putting up means to them.

A. W. PUGH, Sec.  
Arlington Beach G.G.A.

## A MISLEADING REPORT

Editor, Guide:—It is not often I take up my pen to contradict anybody's statement in the public press, but this time I am moved to contradict a statement that is given wide publicity by W. J. White, of the Immigration Department of Ottawa. It seems he has been through the West inspecting agencies and has telegraphed to the Immigration Department that "Never was there a year when prospects for the farmer were so bright as this."

To one like myself who has been growing grain for 21 years, this looks like deliberate misrepresentation, but then, Mr. Editor, we have to make allowance for a man travelling in a parlor



JOHN ALEX McPHERSON

The 16-year-old winner of the Halcyon Grain Growers' Plowing Match, and his plowing outfit

house to be sold and he gets, all being well, his 1,050 bushels, but if the outturn of that car be examined you will find that the car contained more wheat than that and the overplus is claimed by the elevator company who loaded that car.

Can you wonder that men are deserting elevators that they have shares in to load their wheat over platform again? They can soon save the amount of their shares that way.

Now my contention is this: Is it a fair deal that the farmer who has paid for having his wheat loaded through an elevator should lose the amount of weight in wheat that his wheat has not shrunk, and what right has the elevator to that wheat? They I know will claim that they have to have a fair dockage for shrinkage to safeguard themselves, but when the wheat has been delivered to Fort William or elsewhere their risk is over and surely the farmer should have his own wheat. They will also put up another claim, that they often put extra wheat of their own into a car to make more room for farmers, but that argument does not hold water. If you special bin a car of wheat through an elevator that must be your own individual wheat. Is there a remedy? I don't know, but I think every farmer should see his bin was entirely empty when hiring same and also see that it was entirely emptied when his car was loaded and insist that all that came from that bin to his car was his alone.

F. B. YATES.

Marieton, Sask.

or observation car and spending money that others make. The crop, on the whole, is very unsatisfactory. The late sowing has made scarcely any growth owing to heat and drought. The earliest sown wheat is preparing to head out and only a few inches in height, and at the best it is thin on the ground.

I claim to know whereof I speak as I am just home after a 700 mile trip through Saskatchewan and Alberta. In many parts of Saskatchewan the wheat leaves had turned yellow owing to the hot winds of June 10, 11 and 12. The date of Mr. White's telegram is June 11.

Mr. White's message will be read likely in all civilized countries and I think, Sir, it is time the farmers who are already in this country, in practically a state of bondage, should take some means to prevent such a misrepresentation of facts, even if made for immigration purposes.

JOHN EVANS.

Nutana, Sask.

## COST OF RAISING WHEAT

Editor, Guide:—In answer to S. L. Lamb's letter which appeared in your issue of May 28, I would like to ask if his figures are correct. If the labor is hired at the rates he quotes, then the interest on stock and equipment should be left out of cost, likewise the depreciation, for hired labor at this rate brings its own horses and implements.

Then his figures in some instances are very high. A four horse team and driver can harrow 50 acres per day, and

at 25 cents this would mean \$12.50 in wages per day—pretty high wages. Take his own price of wheat at 65 cents and allow 1½ bushels per acre; including cost of doctoring it would only make \$1.00 per acre for seed. A four horse team and driver can seed 20 acres per day and at 50 cents per acre this would bring \$10.00 per day. Subtract 20 cents for twine from his figure for harvesting and it leaves 90 cents per acre and 20 acres per day brings \$18 per day for wages.

The following estimate will show the cost per acre to be less than S. L. Lamb's figures and will still pay big wages.

	Cost Average	per acres per	acre day Wages
Preparing ground for seed—plowing	\$2.00	4	\$8.00
Twice harrowed	.30	25	7.50
Seed at 65c per bu. and cost of doctoring	1.00		
Cultivation, once harrowed	.15	50	7.50
Harvesting, twine	.20		
Stooking	.20	20	4.00
Binding	.40	20	8.00
Planting	.40	20	8.00
Interest on land	3.00		
Haulage	.90	100 bu.	per day 5.00
Threshing at 10c	1.80		
Total cost per acre	\$10.35		

Market value at S. L. Lamb's figures: \$11.70; profit \$1.35; wages \$4.35.

If a farmer works his own land, as most owners of quarter sections do, then he has a total figure of \$5.70 per acre for his wheat. Even at this it is low, for 18 bushels per acre is a low average yield. Will some of your readers give estimates from their districts, showing number of acres a man can handle per day and the rates?

DEEPLY INTERESTED.

## TWO DOLLARS A MINUTE

Editor, Guide:—I saw, in a Saskatchewan newspaper, a cartoon which calls for a little comment.

In it Mackenzie and Mann occupy soft seats and the people of Canada are passing by. As they do so each person hands \$2.00 to the magnates (the recent gift of \$15,640,000 means \$2.00 from every man, woman and child in Canada). Now suppose Bill and Dan kept their seats 12 hours per day, including Sundays, every day in the year, and each person took one minute to hand over the \$2.00 in passing it would require nearly thirty years to collect that \$15,640,000 of tribute money. I think one minute is a very conservative estimate of the time required, as many would hesitate, falter and protest. For instance, the little tots, who had taken the last cent from their toy banks, to appease special privilege, would naturally protest; their eyes would fill with tears and they would hand over their pennies rather slowly. Why, it would take Bill and Dan almost a minute to count \$2.00 in nickels and coppers! The cartoon is somewhat misleading. Bill and Dan will not collect the subsidy at all. The government will do that and it will cost several millions to do so. And anyhow, before one-thirtieth of thirty years they will be back in Ottawa engineering another raid on the treasury.

What do the readers of The Guide think of giving two millionaires a sum of such magnitude, that it amounts to \$2.00 per minute, twelve hours per day, every day for thirty years? Think of it!

## A SASKATCHEWAN FARMER.

I know of no more encouraging fact than the unquestionable ability of man to elevate his life by a conscious endeavor.—Thoreau.

## 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.

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