

The Mail Bag

THE HOPE OF THE WEST

Editor, Guide:—There has not been, in the history of The Guide, any editorial or article of such vital purport to the public welfare as your leading editorial of March 24, entitled, "The Hope of the West." Too much attention cannot be paid to the sentiments of its closing paragraph, if Western farmers are to have just treatment from our Dominion parliament. Everybody please re-read it. Both parties are in the hands and at the mercy of money influences. Canadian Liberalism and Conservatism are two farces. Two equally ludicrous political shams. It is worse than a farce; it is seriously grave; it is even ghastly! It is a system of government for parasites, who are all grafting off the farmers' products. It is, as you say, "the hopelessness of the situation must now begin to dawn upon the Western people." But any movement "of the Western farmers to elect men independent of both political parties" will have to come from a strong organized force. It cannot come from the Grain Growers' Association until our non-political constitution is annulled. That clause compels us, as members, to vote for one of these two ghastly sham parties, or the only other alternative of staying at home on polling day. We are bound, but this bond is one of self political ignorance and self political coercion. We are suffering this graft from our own folly. We have made ourselves politically helpless by this non-political bond which compels us to vote for one of two dismal evils. We are suffering from ourselves. No one else compels us to hug and kiss a farcical Borden or Laurier and their ilk of eighty lawyers and one hundred and forty partisan placemen, besides a whole chamber of senatorial decrepits who are having a fat living off the people.

There is liberty for us if the West will cease to divide its votes, uniting our strength for a business government and administration at Ottawa. This can only be accomplished by a systematic campaign in every rural constituency in the three Prairie Provinces, to enable us to hold an equitable balance of power. But Grain Grower officials must make the move and each province act in unison, and the people—ourselves—must find the necessary funds.

Are your readers ready for liberty and decent government? All speak at once to The Guide. I will give \$50 as a starter, to save four or five hundred per annum. I request the insertion of this in your next issue before farmers get too busy to read all your columns.

FREDERIC KIRKHAM.
Saltcoats, Sask., March 31, 1915.

CAN TAKE CARE OF THEMSELVES

Editor, Guide:—I note in your Mail Bag from time to time letters on co-operation and country merchants, and the writers, without exception, seem to be solicitous for the safety of the country merchant. My opinion is that the country merchant in the past has proved that he is quite capable of looking after himself, and if he considers that the co-operative movement is encroaching on his preserves, he has only himself to blame. Had he been satisfied with a

reasonable profit there would have been no need for co-operation. The fact that the Grain Growers of Saskatchewan had a turnover of \$300,000, with a surplus profit of over \$10,000 (irrespective of the profit each local made on the retailing), in the first seven months of co-operative trading, goes to prove that the merchant has been able to take care of himself, and also that the farmers are just beginning to realize what can be done by collective action. Let the farmer look to his own interest and not allow his better judgment to be warped by sentiment. He has been carrying too many on his back in the past and he realizes that if he is to have comfortable going in the future, he must lighten the load. Some farmers think that the country merchant has been a great friend to them because he has allowed a system of credit to spring up, which has been more of a curse than a blessing, for it has allowed the farmers in a good many cases to live above their means and go into debt to such an extent that 75 per cent. of the farms in Saskatchewan are mortgaged at the present time. The Canadian farmer is beginning to think and is getting tired of being the bottom dog and the co-operative movement is going to educate him to the fact that anything he cannot pay cash for he cannot afford.

A. S. WARBURTON.

Caron, Sask.

AN OFFER OF SUPPORT

Editor, Guide:—I have been instructed by the Keatley G. G. A. local to send you the following resolution passed by us:

This Association would be delighted to see an effort made to put a genuine Grain Growers' candidate in the field of Dominion politics for the Battleford constituency. That for this purpose this local will be willing to contribute the sum of ten dollars for a properly accredited man. We make this offer on the following conditions: (1) That the total of the sums promised by all the locals in the district shall be an amount suitable to run his election expenses. (2) That a proper nomination convention be called in Battleford. (3) That none but credentialed delegates be allowed to be present at this convention. (4) That the man chosen for our candidate shall sign his resignation from parliament and place it in the secretary's hands at that meeting, in case at any time the majority of Grain Growers in his division need to recall him.

LIONEL G. SIMMONDS, Secretary.
Keatly P.O., Sask.

FARMERS' DUTY IN POLITICS

Editor, Guide:—The farmers of Western Canada deserve credit for their steady advocacy of the Free Trade principle. Agriculture is the greatest industry in the world, and it is essentially so in a new country like Canada. It is the basic industry out of which all others spring and all commerce, and should be

unfettered. As a Scotsman, I have been amused at the emphatic assertions one hears that this is the freest country in the world. How can a country be free when we are compelled to pay more than the natural price for the food we eat and for the requirements of the farm? Who governs the country? I say it is the manufacturers of the East. It is evident to the ordinary way-faring man that both political parties are controlled by the manufacturers. If the government of the day is not obedient to their demands the party funds suffer. It is no use being blindfolded with the word "Liberal," because the progressive party bears the yoke also and all progress is hindered, and any attempt to move forward towards freedom is rendered abortive by monetary considerations.

Mr. Farmer, you are of far more consequence than all the manufacturers, and all the wealth accumulated out of the subsidies they have drawn out of your pocket. Your industry is of infinitely greater importance; you are producing the raw material and bringing the land into a condition to produce more and more. It is on your foundation that this country must be built up. There is no other foundation for any country but its land and its productiveness. The manufacturers are only an outgrowth from your business and in place of dominating you and the country at large, it is the men who are living on the land, the workers and producers, whose voices should be heard in our legislative halls thru their own direct representations. There is only one safe-guard against the selfish greed of the pampered, subsidized manufacturers, and that is to fight them on their own ground, by forming a farmer and labor party who will act independently of either Liberal or Conservative, voting solidly as a party. You will in this way prove the righteousness of your cause, by fighting the burden of indirect taxation, by abolishing once and for all the barriers set up by these protected manufacturers against British goods coming into this country, and also from the other British countries.

Rest assured you will never get Free Trade established by either of the existing parties, and if you are to conduct your business under free conditions and become really free men, it must be by your own party.

The pettifogging system of taxation proposed by the present government in order to provide a war revenue is really childish and ought to be withdrawn. The only just method of raising revenue in war times is by means of the income tax, which places the burden upon the men of large means and protects the worker and poorer citizens from oppression.

In conclusion I would ask you to look across the line into the republic to the south founded by a good Englishman, but which has largely forsaken the prin-

ciples of Washington, and you will find there the extremes of wealth and poverty—a nation governed by an oligarchy of wealth, built up by the subsidies of which you complain and producing more and more evil forms of socialism and anarchy.

See that Canada, this great and promising country, is built up under British ideals—Free Trade—Equal rights to all and special privileges to none.

CHARLES KERR.

Edmonton South, Alta.

TENANT MAY VOTE

Editor, Guide:—In reply to enquiry of H. E. Fanshawe re not having a vote. I would advise him to see that his name is put on voters' list as the occupant of the land he rents. If necessary he could arrange with his landlord that he pay the taxes instead of an equivalent of rent. By doing this, in Saskatchewan, he would then have a vote, but he must see to things himself. Why has he not gone to his secretary and enquired? Most secretaries would have put him right.

THOS. J. DERMAN.

Sec.-Treas. R. M. 169.
Sandford Dene P.O., Sask.

TWO LIBERAL PARTIES

Editor, Guide:—We have two Liberal parties in Canada. One is the Liberal-Conservative and the other the Conservative-Liberal. If we believe in real Liberalism, however, we must form another Liberal party or an independent one.

The Liberal-Conservative party elects an attorney, doctor, preacher, merchant or real estate man. The Conservative-Liberal elects a real estate man, merchant, preacher, doctor or attorney. These middlemen represent only themselves and have no class behind them as a laborer or farmer would have. Their only claim is their partyism and having secured the office their only concern is to keep it regardless of principles. What is sound Conservative doctrine in Manitoba is adopted by the Liberals of Alberta.

Let us take a lesson from the United States. Fifty years ago there was not a millionaire in the country, now we have thousands of them, and not millionaires alone, but billionaires. To obtain this result they had to have special privileges given them by legislation. What kind of legislators did the United States elect? Seventy-five per cent. of congressmen and senators were lawyers, fifteen per cent. were attorneys-at-law residing in the outskirts of a city or town calling themselves farmers, and remaining ten per cent. middlemen of one kind or another. The real farmers were too busy clearing, breaking up and building up their farms to give time to politics and the result was that practically all the natural wealth of that great country was transferred into the pockets of a few.

We are repeating the same lesson in Canada. One quarter of the wealth is now in the hands of forty men. In ten years half the wealth will be owned by twenty men and so on. Seventy million acres of our best land, 250 millions in cash and 300 millions in bond guarantees have been given away to railway corpora-

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The line up of calves with their feeders at the Boys' Fat Calf Competition, held by the Manitoba Winter Fair and Fat Stock Show Association, at Brandon, on March 17 and 18. The winning feeder was Robert R. Moffatt, seen at the left of the picture, a 6-year-old boy, with a grade Hereford heifer. This boy won \$150 and a gold medal.