

the West, to keep the ledger of cereal production. And sometimes the pen's work is a blot.

His home and hearth is turned into a counting house. The fumes of coal and gasoline wither his garden; he rises early, not to feed his live stock, but to wire his broker in Winnipeg or Minneapolis his market instructions. The telephone is never at his ear; the stock ticker is in his parlor. He follows feverishly the movements of the Chicago pit.

Having no love for animals, he has almost as little for his fellow man. He almost prays for famines and crop failures in the Argentine Republic or in Russia, that his own surplus may dominate the world's total supply.

And so on throughout the full page article.

Was a more untruthful, damaging and insulting attack ever made on the Western farmer? As though he had not enough to contend against already in the risks and severities of nature and the injustices of man, must the grain grower of the West be pilloried by a conscienceless publication of the money trust? No word of respect, encouragement or thanks for the thousands of prairie farmers whose ill-requited toil makes possible the gilded luxury and sumptuous ease of the Toronto millionaires; no word of the years of loneliness, hardship and struggle which most western farmers have experienced and which thousands are undergoing today; no word of the mildest rebuke for the sharks in human form who have looked on every newcomer to the Prairie Provinces as their lawful prey; not a word of all this, nothing but scorn and insult for the grain grower. Talk about setting the West against the East! Could anything be more nicely calculated to this end than the wholesale distribution of such a grossly unfair caricature of the prairie farmer? Fortunately the article is so plainly false that, unless we overrate the common sense of the public, the Baron's Countryman will find it increasingly hard to hide its wolf form behind sheep's clothing now that we have all had a good peep beneath the disguise. It is too late in the day to stifle Western Canada's demand for justice by inventing fiction about the Midas wealth of the grain growers. Everybody knows that "grain growers with the stock ticker in their parlors" are about as plentiful as are the real friends of the grain grower among the magnates of the Canadian (Northern's) Countryman.

PUBLIC OWNERSHIP OF RAILWAYS

It was announced by the Minister of Railways last week in the House that F. P. Gutelius had been appointed general manager of government railways at a salary of \$20,000 per year. The new manager will have charge of the Interoceanic Railway system and also of the Hudson Bay Railway when it is completed. We know nothing of Mr. Gutelius, but, providing he is capable and allowed to exercise his business judgment, his appointment looks well for the future of government railways. There have been many attempts on the part of the Canadian Northern Railway and the Canadian Pacific Railway to secure either control or ownership of the Interoceanic, because so long as it is operated by the government they fear its competition and they also fear that its low freight rates will tend to create public opinion in favor of nationalization of all the railways. It is well known that at heart Premier Borden leans towards public ownership of railways, and it is to be hoped that he will not be over-persuaded by railway sympathizers both inside and outside the government. The salary of \$20,000 a year in this commercial age is not a bit too high, despite the fact that it is more than the salary of the Premier of Canada. If Mr. Gutelius is a capable manager, and given a free hand, he can save five times the amount of his salary to the people every year in the operation of the road. In the same way if

Premier Borden, as Business Manager of Canada, would conduct the public affairs of Canada on a business basis, the same as any other large business establishment is conducted, we could afford to pay him a salary of \$500,000 every year, because he could easily save ten times that amount to the people. If all the Canadian railways were taken over and operated by the State there is no doubt but that at least \$30,000,000 or \$40,000,000 per year could be saved to the people of Canada. This is a very conservative estimate. If a man of the type of Sir Thomas Shaughnessy could be secured to manage all the railways of Canada under government ownership, as he today manages the Canadian Pacific Railway, and if under government ownership he gave the people the same faithful service that he today gives the Canadian Pacific Railway shareholders, the people could afford to pay him almost anything he could ask in the way of salary. Today he draws \$50,000 per year salary. Public ownership of railways must come in Canada, and there need be no difficulty whatever in the management and operation under public ownership, because just as good men can be secured as under private ownership. Though private ownership of railways in Canada means that the roads are built from the public treasury, the people have absolutely no voice in their control.

The farmers in Western Canada should refuse to sign bank notes, machinery notes, or any other kind of notes bearing interest at 12 per cent., either before or after due, because they are nothing short of a species of highway robbery, and there are banks and machine companies who are willing to give lower rates of interest. This would be a good subject for discussion in any local association, because if the farmers get together and discuss these questions and take a joint action they can bring down the rate of interest to a reasonable basis in any community. As long as the farmers play their own game individually they will be the prey of all the other interests, but just as soon as they organize themselves for defence they will get justice.

What are you going to do about the rate of interest charged by the banks? Do you intend to keep on paying 10 per cent. and 12 per cent. simply because the bankers think you are easy, and intend to take out of you all they can get? Why not talk it over with the farmers in your community and find out why it is you cannot get money at 8 per cent. at the very most?

There is no need to pay 9 per cent. on mortgage loans and heavy lawyers' fees in addition, but these rates will be charged so long as the farmers play their own game alone. It is better to get together and talk it over with your neighbors. There is nothing to be ashamed about in having a mortgage on your farm, providing you are making good use of the borrowed money. Probably your neighbors are just as heavily mortgaged as yourself. Talk it over with them and find out some means of reducing the rate of interest and lawyers' fees. You will never reduce them in any other way.

Have you ever discussed the rate of interest and terms of payment charged by the machinery companies? Why not devote an afternoon meeting to the discussion of this subject? If you all get together in a community and decide that you will not pay any more extortionate interest on machinery notes and that you want the date of maturity changed, you will find some of the companies, at least, ready to meet you. If twenty or thirty farmers get together and decide to buy their machinery for cash they will be able to drive a remarkably good bargain, and save themselves a lot of real, good, hard money.

Sir William Mackenzie is back from Europe feeling particularly pleased over the financial situation and declaring that everything is O.K. We presume then that he will not now require the extra "gratuity" of \$15,000,000 or \$25,000,000 which it was reported that his running mate, Sir Donald, was endeavoring to get out of the public treasury. Still we have our doubts, because these fellows have been so long accustomed to running their business by the aid of the people's pocket book that it has become a habit hard to break.

Between seed time and harvest is a splendid time to fix up the school house and the school grounds to make them look a little more cheerful and homelike. Don't forget that your children spend the most impressionable part of their lives in the school house (or ought to) and if it looks like a barn, and feels like a barn and is located like a barn, the children are hardly to be blamed if they don't learn to love the school.

Whose fault is it that so much grain remained out under the snow all last winter? This will be a good question for many farmers to ponder over. Was it due to carelessness, or the lack of threshing outfits, or was nature too hasty with the snow? Experience has shown that snow is liable to come early and this should be taken into consideration in the fall. The wise man gets his grain threshed as early as possible.

The picnic season will soon be with us. We hope every local Association will plan on at least one picnic, or, if possible, two, during the summer, and that the men and women and the boys and girls will all be present and will have a rattling good time. One or two good speeches will add to the success of the occasion, but don't have too many.

We do not see that any of the railway magnates wish to avail themselves of our offer to use The Guide to defend themselves. If anything unfair or incorrect in connection with the Big Interests is published in The Guide then they should take advantage of our oft-repeated offer to give them plenty of space for reply.

What is the matter with your local town? Is it alive or is it only one-half alive, or is it merely kept in existence to boost real estate prices for a few gentlemen who happen to own the townsite? Think it over and see what is wrong with the town, and then see if you cannot find a remedy.

Beef-rings have become quite popular in the West and there will this year be a large number of communities supplied with fresh meat throughout the summer at the minimum of cost and the maximum of convenience. The successful operation of a beef-ring is a splendid training for further co-operative enterprise.

A sod house is not a bad dwelling at all. It depends upon the people who are in it whether it is comfortable, neat and homelike. There are families living in sod shacks on the prairies today quite as happily as others in the finest homes in the land.

How many farmers have sold out and left your neighborhood in the last two years? Why did they leave? There must be something wrong. Let us have the wrong made right.

Farmers "keep out of politics" and the tariff will go up; the railway bonuses will increase and the rate of interest will remain at 10 and 12 per cent.

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