

# The Grain Growers' Guide

Winnipeg, Wednesday, October 22nd, 1913

## HOLD YOUR WHEAT

The extraordinarily heavy shipments of grain during the present season has had the expected result and the bottom has dropped out of the market. Steadily the Winnipeg prices have fallen, in sympathy with foreign cables, as the immense quantities of wheat poured into the elevators at the lake front. Several things have contributed towards this unprecedented deluge of grain.

1. The crop has been generally fairly good.
2. The season has been about a month earlier than last year and the weather has been wonderfully favorable.
3. There has been a great shortage of money among the farmers and they have been compelled to crowd the market in order to meet their pressing liabilities.
4. Farmers know by experience that the time to get the best prices and quickest returns is to get their wheat on the market ahead of the rush, and there has been a scramble to be first.

Probably eighty to ninety per cent. of the wheat sent to commission firms this season so far has been with the order to "Sell at once," which is about double the proportion of immediate sales of last year's crop. The mortgage companies, banks, many machine companies and other creditors are already hounding the farmers for their money and compelling them to market their crop at any price they can get. At the present time wheat is worth 78 cents in Fort William, and there is no profit in wheat raising for the average farmer at that price. The price will probably go lower, despite the fact that the world needs our hard wheat. If the market is glutted the prices must fall. We do not urge any farmer to avoid payment of his just debts, but we do urge them to stop breaking the market. The loan companies have good security and also the machine companies. They will not lose a cent by being human. They are simply lessening their chances of getting full payment by forcing the grain on the market. Many a farmer will lose several hundred dollars this year by the fall in prices and will find a millstone around his neck that will require years to lift. Hold your grain as long as you can in an effort to save the market, and thus to save yourself.

## AN HONEST POLITICIAN

Can an honest man engage in politics? How often have we seen our representatives lay aside, as soon as elected, the strict integrity of their former life and the fervid purity of their campaign pledges, just as they would lay aside an old coat, never to see it again. Principles and politics do not usually mix any better than oil and water. So accustomed are we to this condition of things that it has ceased to cause surprise. A host of cynics have arisen in the land who turn in disgust from all political concerns, firmly convinced that no man goes in for a public career except to line his own pockets, or for some equally selfish reason. In the face of all this dreary pessimism, President Wilson's career comes as a welcome shock. Here at least is an honest politician. The whole American nation, one can safely say, knows him to be at least honest. This does not mean that they agree with his policies—millions of voters strongly dissent from the President's progressive measures, some because his legislation touches their special privileges, many more because of their inbred reactionary spirit. But Woodrow Wilson shows up through the long tariff fight just completed as every inch a man. With him there is such a thing as right and wrong in public affairs. His course so far has been guided by the same

lodestone as made Abraham Lincoln the most loved President of a century—devotion to the welfare of the common people. "The Lord must like the common people best," Lincoln used to say, "for He made so many of them." President Wilson, like Lincoln, believes that honesty is not only the best policy, but also the best politics. But it needs more than simple honesty to pass through both Houses of Congress a contentious tariff measure cutting off the Protection hitherto enjoyed by a swarm of privileged interests and worth to them hundreds of millions of dollars a year. Here again Wilson has scored: Seasoned politicians, experts in the devious arts of manipulating the law-making machinery, have to yield the palm to this scholar in politics. It is only seven months since the high Protectionist and stand-patter Tait vacated the Presidential chair, and yet in that short time Wilson has succeeded in enacting a low tariff measure—his main pre-election pledge—has set the new income tax law into operation, patronage abuses have been corrected, arbitration treaties have been arranged with other nations, and now he is working with Congress to undertake sweeping reforms in the banking and currency system. International difficulties have arisen with Japan and Mexico, grave enough when fanned by the yellow press to drive a weak Executive into war, as McKinley was driven in 1898. But Wilson has been very unresponsive to the war-scare bogey-man. Indeed, so much common sense and uncommon honesty put him out of the class of the common politician. He is a Christian Statesman of whom Canadians as well as Americans may be proud. Oh that his striking example may infect a few of our politicians! We need a few public men of Wilson's type, perhaps even more sorely than the United States needs them.

## DIRECT LEGISLATION

The first question in The Guide Referendum deals with Direct Legislation. Last year our readers voted in favor of this reform by an overwhelming majority, only 63 votes, in more than 4,000, being cast against it. Since The Guide Referendum was held Direct Legislation bills have been passed by the Legislatures of Saskatchewan and Alberta, and readers of The Guide in those provinces may without undue conceit claim that they have had no small part in securing the recognition of the principle which those bills contain. It will be noticed, however, that in this Referendum readers are asked if they are in favor of having the Initiative, Referendum and Recall placed upon the statute books of their own provinces in such form as to give the people complete control over all legislation and legislators. The reason for the latter half of this question is that neither of the Direct Legislation bills passed by the Western provinces gives the people complete control over all legislation and legislators. The Alberta bill does not give the people the right to demand a referendum on any bill, but only on such as the Legislature specially decides to make subject to the referendum. Neither may the people initiate any bill they choose, but only such as do not provide for any grant or charge upon the public revenue. There is no provision for the recall of unfaithful members, and for either the initiative or referendum it is required that petitions must be signed by 8 per cent. of the electors in each of 85 per cent. of the constituencies. The Saskatchewan Direct Legislation Act, which is at present being referred to the people to decide whether or not it shall go into force, is not much better than its Alberta brother, a great weakness being the fact that the people may neither initiate a bill which provides for any grant or charge upon the public revenues, nor de-

mand a referendum on any bill granting supply. In these respects the Direct Legislation bills passed by the Legislatures of Alberta and Saskatchewan do not give the people complete control over all legislation and legislators. We believe that the only hope of establishing better conditions in this country, the only way to abolish corruption and special privilege, is to place all legislation and all our members of Parliament under the direct control of the people who elect them, who pay their salaries, who provide the funds which they spend, and who must obey the laws which they pass. A truly democratic measure of Direct Legislation would make the people their own rulers. It would provide facilities through which a reasonable proportion of the people might bring any bill, whether calling for public expenditure or not, before the Legislature and if the Legislature refused to pass it, before the people. It would also give the people the right to demand a referendum on any bill passed by the Legislature, except such as the public health and safety require should be put into force immediately. This is the kind of Direct Legislation that the advocates of the reform asked for and expected the Legislatures to pass. Do the readers of The Guide believe in this kind of Direct Legislation?

## FREE WHEAT

The new American tariff and its effect upon Canadian trade is the all absorbing topic throughout Canada today and is receiving very careful attention by the press. All those who favored the Reciprocity Agreement of two years ago are of course today in favor of accepting the offer of free wheat, which can be secured by placing wheat and wheat products upon the free list in Canada. The leading Protectionist journals are as a rule quarrelled in their utterances. On October 6 the Toronto News published a lengthy article, of which the following are significant extracts:

"No doubt the Western grain growers desire to have the Canadian duty removed. Probably it would be unwise to resist the demand."

"The Canadian mills, which manufacture chiefly for foreign markets may not be greatly prejudiced, while possibly freight rates may be favorably affected."

"It would be foolish to adhere to duties which may be safely reduced or abolished under the new relationship."

"It is most undesirable that any legitimate appeal from the West should be rejected or any grievance perpetuated which can be removed without endangering national interests."

"But since the West clearly demands free wheat it would probably be unwise to continue the Canadian duties which prevent free shipments to the American milling centres."

Of course the somewhat favorable attitude of the News at the present time cannot be depended upon. When the Reciprocity Agreement was announced in January, 1911, the News was heartily in favor of it, but bolted as soon as its bosses ordered a change of front. The same possibility no doubt exists in the present instance. Some other Protectionist journals are endeavoring to point out that the American wheat market is no better than the Canadian at the present time, and that free wheat would not be of any advantage to the Canadian Grain Grower. Any individual with eye-sight can see that the Minneapolis market is running at the present time about 5 cents over Winnipeg for contract grades of wheat, with a wider spread on lower grades, while the spread on oats is less. On barley Minneapolis is from 10 to 25 cents over Winnipeg, and on flax the Minneapolis price is about 22 cents over Winnipeg. Any person who can read ordinary print can find these figures in The Guide market page every week, as well as in any other important newspaper