

The Grain Growers' Guide

Winnipeg, Wednesday, December 3rd, 1913

MARK YOUR BALLOTS

In this issue of The Guide our readers will find the ballot papers on which to record their votes on the eleven questions contained in The Guide Referendum. There are two ballots in this paper, one for women and the other for men. Any reader of The Guide, married or single, who is 21 years of age, may vote and we want every ballot made use of and returned to us. The Guide is endeavoring to interpret and express the opinions and demands of the men and women on the farms of Western Canada, and we want our readers to tell us, and to tell the statesmen and legislators of Canada and of the world, where they stand on these eleven vital questions. All that is necessary is to mark "Yes" or "No" opposite each question, sign your name, give your address, and then cut out the ballot and mail it to The Referendum Editor, Grain Growers' Guide, Winnipeg. Several ballots may be put in one envelope, but do not enclose anything else, as there will be so many ballots arriving that we shall not be able to open them all as they arrive. The ballots will not be printed again, so that you must use those in this issue or lose your vote. The best thing to do is to mark your ballot right now and get it ready to mail next time you go to the post office.

Laurier Demands Free Food

It is gratifying to know that the Liberal party, through its leader, Sir Wilfrid Laurier, has at last definitely and unequivocally declared in favor of placing all food products upon the free list. Sir Wilfrid voiced this declaration at Hamilton last week, his remarks being reproduced elsewhere in this issue of The Guide. Free food will find favorable support all over Canada. There never was a time since Confederation when both the rural and urban citizens of Canada from the Atlantic to the Pacific found it as difficult to feed themselves and their families as today. And this high cost of food, which is the same thing as a scarcity of food, is due absolutely and entirely to artificial conditions fostered by laws passed by the House of Commons during recent years. Both political parties are guilty of passing this legislation, but the party in power must always bear the responsibility of maintaining unjust laws. At the present time the people of Canada are being taxed more heavily than any other civilized country in the world. The public treasury is so full that it simply has to be shovelled out to special favorites in order to get rid of it. Sir Wilfrid Laurier will find a ready response to his demand for free food, and he will do well to make it clear that he means what he says this time, because his record on the tariff during the fifteen years of his rule was not such as to inspire confidence. Other features of the cost of living that should command the attention of the Liberal party and also of the Conservative party, as well as every intelligent citizen in Canada, are the cost of clothing, the cost of shelter (material for home building), and the cost of the tools of industry. Every one of these essentials is tremendously increased in cost by the customs tariff. The manufacturers of Canada are a very necessary class of people and no person is desirous of ruining any of our splendid industries. But there is no good reason why a little group of manufacturers should be permitted to take millions out of the pockets of the public when they are performing no more useful service than is performed by every other class of people in Canada who have no special privileges. The revolt against the protective tariff is spread-

ing, and in the course of a few years, when the common people have risen in their might and demanded that the protective tariff be wiped out, one or other of the political parties will then grandly come to the front, pass the necessary legislation and exhibit themselves before the public as the saviors of the nation.

TACKLING THE OCEAN COMBINE

The report of H. L. Drayton, chairman of the Railway Commission, upon the subject of Atlantic freight rates has been made public. Mr. Drayton, it will be remembered, visited England last summer to conduct an investigation into the matter, and held consultations both with the British Board of Trade and with the heads of the steamship companies comprising the North Atlantic Shipping Conference. In his report Mr. Drayton states that at the time of his investigation the Allan, C.P.R., C.N.R., Cunard, Dominion, Donaldson, Furness, Manchester and Thompson lines were all members of the conference, but the C.P.R. has recently announced its withdrawal. The members of the conference, which is a perfect organization for eliminating competition and fixing freight rates, endeavored to convince Mr. Drayton that government control was impossible, and that they were justified in charging higher rates on eastbound traffic than on westbound because there was more freight going east. Coming west with only half a cargo they might charge a certain rate, but going east, with holds full, they considered they were entitled to charge much higher rates. In his negotiations with the British government Mr. Drayton endeavored to obtain the appointment of a joint commission to make a thorough and complete investigation of rates and charges of ocean carriers, insurance charges, the operation of terminals and port authorities, and the traffic generally. The British Board of Trade pointed out, however, that a Royal Commission on the Trade of the Dominions, to which the question of ocean freights had been referred, was already in existence and would be sitting in Canada before a new commission could possibly be appointed, and it was suggested that the matter should be dealt with by this body. Mr. Drayton observes that if the Dominions Trade Commission could take the matter up and make an interim report upon it, the enquiry could not be in better hands. The commission will, it is expected, sit in Canada in August next, and it is presumed that the matter will then be dealt with. Mr. Drayton's report shows that the steamship combine, or "conference" as they prefer to call it, is stifling competition, has raised rates, and has power to crush the business of any exporter. Government control, it is also pointed out, is difficult, if not impossible. The probability is that if the full facts are revealed by the promised investigation it will be found that the best method of regulating rates will be by the establishment of competition by a line of public owned steamers.

MILLERS NEED NO PROTECTION

Grain Growers have no difficulty in remembering the hue and cry raised by the milling interests of Canada two years ago when Reciprocity was being considered. The big millers asserted in the strongest and most unqualified terms that the removal of the wheat duty and reduction of flour duties would ruin the Canadian milling industry. The American millers would gobble up the unprotected Canadian flour mills more quickly than the sad story could be told. Anyone who has these dismal forebodings in

mind would get a mild shock to find the following frank admission in the November "Canadian Miller and Cerealist," recognized as the organ of the milling interests:

"We are inclined to the belief that Canadian millers have nothing to fear from the removal of the present duties on wheat and flour. Canada grows the finest milling wheat in the world. We have ample water power, natural gas and as competent and capable milling men as are to be found south of the border. It is reasonable to assume that flour mills located alongside their raw material can manufacture more cheaply than mills which are forced to haul their raw products a considerable distance and then ship out their flour. . . . Another reason why Canadian millers have nothing to fear is found in the fact that today they successfully compete with American millers in foreign markets. They meet their American competitors in South Africa, the West Indies, in Newfoundland and other places and that they are successful is shown by the fact that Canadian exports of flour into these countries are continually on the increase and are largely replacing American flour. There is also the fact that the United States is becoming more and more of an importing country and exports less year by year. Canadian millers need not fear the removal of the duties."

For a clear statement of the Free Trade contention that any industry so well adapted to this country by nature as the milling industry does not need tariff protection, the Canadian Miller's editorial could not be excelled. The December issue just to hand puts the case still more strongly. Its leading editorial, headed, "The Demand for Free Wheat," begins as follows:

"The question of free wheat will not down. Not only are the grain growers in the West insistent upon the removal of all duties on grain between Canada and the United States, but it is somewhat significant that a number of the largest exporters are also in favor of free wheat. The latest convert to the proposition is Mr. James Carruthers, president of the Richelieu and Ontario Navigation Company and widely known as the largest grain exporter in Canada. Mr. Carruthers has been travelling throughout the West, and on his return gave an interview in which he strongly advocated the removal of all duties on wheat. When it is remembered that two years ago Mr. Carruthers was one of the strongest opponents to the reciprocity pact between Canada and the United States, his change of heart in the present instance is highly significant."

The Canadian Miller goes on to give Mr. Carruthers' reasons for urging the removal of the wheat and flour duties, which are the following: The best Manitoba wheat is so much superior to the highest quality of wheat grown in the Western States that the Minneapolis millers will pay 3 to 5 cents a bushel more for the Canadian product. The railways would benefit from the increased attractiveness of Western Canada, resulting in larger immigration. Canadian milling companies would be able to develop markets in New York and the New England States. In conclusion, The Canadian Miller speaks of the money lost by the grain growers this season by reason of being shut out of Minneapolis and reaffirms its position that free wheat and flour would not hurt the milling interests. That being the case, what obstacle is in the way of the government removing this odious tariff obstruction?

BETTER BUSINESS

While it is now generally acknowledged that economic conditions in this western country are responsible for the failure of a great many farmers, yet the lack of business methods on the part of the farmers themselves is also the cause of very heavy loss on western farms. It is not possible to fix the precise amount that any farmer loses by not conducting his business in the most up-to-date manner. But anyone who has travelled throughout the three Prairie Provinces and