



NOTICE TO CORRESPONDENTS

This department of The Guide is maintained especially for the purpose of correspondent should remember that there are hundreds who wish to discuss a problem or offer suggestions. We cannot publish all the immense number of letters received, 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. Each and ask that each correspondent will keep his letter as short as possible. 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. The aim is to make this department of great value to readers, and no letters not of public interest will be published.

RECIPROCITY MUST PASS

Editor, Guide:—My, oh, my! What a name to be sure. Say, Mr. Editor, haven't we had all sorts of "guides" and false prophets galore, ever since we were boys, and before. But what kind of "guides" were they? Simply, "You farmers, work, work hard and be saving. Wear little, eat little, for you know there is everybody depending on you farmers and grain growers for a living, and it is a good living we expect, and by the powers of a charitable and almighty government, it is guaranteed unto us. You chaps stick at your farming, and follow the advice given you by the several 'guides,' and if you are not happy and contented, well, we will be. Just grow two blades of grass, etc., where you grew one before. Mind your farms," as Geo. Foster says. "Go into mixed farming and grow cheap beef and pork, butter and eggs for the combines, so they can buy this truck cheap and sell it at a profit of several hundred per cent. But by all means keep out of politics, as you sure will be neglecting your farms and be greasing the rails and preventing us getting in all the fine work we have in view for the welfare of Canada." This is about the size of it up to the advent of the Grain Growers' Guide into the realms of journalism, when its objective point was to show us that we would be far better off and more contented as a class if we could manage it something like this:—Instead of being at it from 4 in the morning till 10 at night, to work more like the gentry, who come down town at 10, and go to lunch when we have our dinner, and quit at 3 or 4, and go home to their dinner when we have our supper, and have their supper when we are going to bed after eighteen hours of work. You see we put in ten for the class, and the other eight for the mass, i.e., ourselves, and still some of those chappies, Col. Hughes (the chap who licked the Boers while 200,000 other Britishers looked on), would have us work all winter time, when the gallant Colonel is sitting in Parliament legislating? As it is, we Grain Growers are keeping tab on everything that goes on down there in Ottawa, Winnipeg, Regina and Edmonton. We leave Ontario and Quebec to the unemployed the year round, and in a good many things that they would miss we catch what goes on in our several Parliaments, and can therefore decide what is best for all the farms in the East, Middle and the West; and what is good for the Middle (Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta) cannot be bad for the other parts. And right here, let me speak for those we left in the East. We know what their lot has been, and is now. There in the old churchyard are our worn-out parents. On the old farms are our brothers, our sisters, our cousins and our aunts. Do we of the Middle West want to injure their prospects? Not by any means, and they know it, too. Last December they joined us in Ottawa, and the men who have failed to take warning are men like Mr. Foster, and those opposed to reciprocity, including some of our Western M.P.'s, who misrepresented the West. I, though born and bred a Grit, have only voted the Grit ticket twice in the last sixteen years in this country. I tried as hard as one vote could to turn Mr. Greenway out and the old man's son,

Hugh John, in, after Mr. Sifton turned traitor to the West. Now, I propose to vote only for the party in favor of reciprocity, and as far as I can gather (for I am one of those blacksmith-shop politicians, as the Boer fighter calls us), there are quite a few men in this country, like myself, going to vote the reciprocity ticket, so you cannot say we are agitators. We think, after sizing things up, that a change is about as good as a rest. By having two markets it will be better than one, the same as being midway between two towns on two lines of railway. Sometimes accommodation is better. So with markets on the South and East. We will choose where we will sell, and the same where we buy. Now, I want to say something else in passing. We have The Guide, and it came not a day too soon. I like it, and every man and woman connected with its make. They are each and all doing a good work. And I want to say this about another Winnipeg paper, The Tribune. From the first issue of The Tribune I saw, right up to the one of last week, this paper has stood up for the peoples' rights as against the combines, and is today battling away as at the first. When Mr. Richardson in his first nomination in Lisgar in 1896, and then a Laurier candidate, declared if they were returned to power and did not carry out their promises he would oppose them, which everybody knows he did. When Sifton turned tail on his Brandon friends, or most of them, especially the farmers, he could not succeed in his desires with Richardson in Parliament. He proceeded to get rid of the man who would have been a check, and how many men were fooled I will leave you to imagine. Then Mr. Sifton came out in favor of the monied interests last winter in Ottawa, and opposed the pact. Mr. Sifton is in the upper class today. He took off his coat, and went right after the swag, and he got it, too, while Richardson took off his shirt and put more fire into his thunderings against everything that tended to take the very hide off the farmers. Now, farmers, see who and where your true friends are, and help yourselves by helping them to fight and win this great battle of the right.

R. R. FINDLAY.

DIRECT TAXATION WELCOME

Editor, Guide:—Mr. Borden has come and gone. He can safely say "I came and I saw," but can he say he conquered? I have followed his various speeches as well as I could, but it seemed to me they were all the same as at Brandon, where he told us that lowering the tariff caused combines. With all due respect to Mr. Borden I cannot believe this, as, if true, to what height must the tariff wall be raised to stop combines—100, 200 or 300 per cent? Would not the remedy be worse than the disease? Take the tariff right off, is the only sensible physic to administer to these mergers and combines. Bring them out of the hothouse of protection into the open. Mr. Borden also implied in his speech that every male servant in England had to pay a tax of \$3.75. He forgot to mention that the male servant was a footman, butler, or some liveried, powdered individual, employed by rich people, and that if they are able to afford to keep a footman, they (the rich people, not the male servant) are perfectly able to pay the tax. Then he

let fly at the English income tax. Now, what harm this income tax could do the bulk of the farmers I fail to see, as in England any income of \$800 a year or less is exempt, and above that it is a small tax rising higher as the income gets larger. How many farmers make an income, or rather, a net profit, (for that is what income means) of much more than \$800 per year? How many get less? One great advantage of an income tax is that it is necessary for them to prove you have an income of more than \$800 before you pay, whereas this duty has to be paid whether you have an income or only an outgo. I wish, sir, I had the figures so I could state what sized income a man in England would have before he would be liable to a tax of \$200 per year, the same as we pay now in duty. Have you the information? Anyway, give me a big income, and I will never squeal at paying the tax. Then he mentioned the increment duty in England, and gave an illustration of how it worked, and said that if you bought land today for \$10,000, and sold it in two years' time for \$20,000, you would have to pay 20 per cent. of the increased price to the government, or \$2,000. I am not sure whether his figure of 20 per cent. is right or not, but, anyway, it is not such a bad spec after all. I should get \$8,000 on the deal anyway, and this tax has this advantage that you don't have to pay it till you have made something out of which to pay it. Whereas this wonderful duty has to be paid on nearly everything you eat, on all your wear, and on all your tools to earn your living by, and it doesn't matter whether you make a good income or have hard luck for a year or two, and only make an existence, you have to cough up this precious duty or else quit eating, wearing clothes or using any implements. Whereas if you make less than \$800 per year under this income tax law, you pay nothing. Give us free trade and direct taxation, same as in England, and see in a few years how much better this Western, aye, and Eastern, too, country would become when the millstone of protection is taken off the necks of the farmers and consumers.

C. S. WATKINS.

Langvale, Man.

CONTROLLED MARKETING

Editor, Guide:—At a district convention of the local unions in the Edmonton constituency the subject of co-operation in marketing came up and with it the price-making as advocated by the American Society of Equity. In an article on this subject which appeared in The Guide a few weeks ago the writer warned the farmers of Canada that unless they join in the movement, if the reciprocity agreement is passed with the States, we are liable to lower the price of grain for both parties, and undo the good work the Society has done and is doing.

The idea of the farmers fixing a reasonable, equitable and profitable price on their produce and by controlled marketing obtain same, was thought much of in this district some years ago, but the organization being of such a local character it was impossible to carry it out on grain (but there is no doubt the price on the Edmonton market for hay was advanced and maintained, and still is helped by this principle), but under present conditions with a Dominion Council of Agriculture embracing all the provincial associations, with the Grain Growers' Grain Co. as our trusted agents, and The Guide as our trusted adviser and instructor, surely something could be accomplished towards a more regular and profitable price for our produce.

Even if we cannot maintain the price, yet each year if we had a minimum price fixed it would be something to go by. If a farmer went into a boot or other store, and asked the price of goods, and was told: "Just what you like to give," I doubt very much if he would give consideration to what it cost to manufacture or what he could afford to give in naming the price, and how can we expect the other fellow to do differently with our products? We thought anyhow that this subject was worth discussion in The Guide and a few remarks from our official friends in the Grain Growers' Grain Co. on the subject would not be amiss.

In conclusion, Mr. Editor, last fall some of our members wanted to sell carload lots of oats, so I wrote the Grain Growers' Grain Co., Calgary. They quoted me 35 cents for No. 1 feed oats, f.o.b. Strathecona. At that time the price on the Edmonton market was 31c, at Castor 30c, while at Islay 19c was all the elevators would pay. The Grain Company informed me there was a good demand and prices were steady and would most likely rise. This was for the B.C. market, which was at a premium over the Fort William prices. A few days later I had advice of a drop of 3 cents, as the buyers had gone into Saskatchewan and bought on the Fort William basis and then shipped west. Now, had we been in touch with the Saskatchewan Association in regard to prices we should have been able to maintain the higher price, both for them and for Alberta. Last year the oat crop was recognized as short, but prices ruled low on account of the large stocks in the terminals. This year there is the prospect of a much larger yield, and it will need all our energy to obtain profitable prices.

FRANCIS C. CLARE.
North Edmonton, Alta.

RE FARMER CANDIDATES

Editor, Guide:—Re the selecting of candidates, I am one of those who think that we ought to have farmer candidates in the field. Not only have them in the field, but we should vote for them and see that they get in. We should at least have thirty farmer members so that they can hold the balance of power, that can vote with the government when the government is doing what the people want. When the government is not doing what they want they could vote against them and defeat them. We do not want any whipper-snappers, but real and true men; men that believe in honesty and purity; men that believe in a higher power, and all that is good and noble.

JAMES HARDWICH.
Nesbitt, Man.

NOXIOUS WEEDS

Editor, Guide:—I am not a member, but I take the Guide, and would like to say a few words in regard to noxious weeds. You would think to read the Grain Growers' Guide and the Toronto Daily News that there was nothing to talk or think about except reciprocity, but it is different here, for no person will say a word for or against it. They say they are simply sick of hearing about it, and never read a word of it any more, but speak to them about weeds, and they will talk for an hour on the subject. I went to Hanley last week. It is an old settled part, and they claim the way they got so much dirty trash in their land was through getting oats shipped in for feed. It is the same complaint wherever you go. Now it does seem too bad that carloads of oats can be shipped here without being re-cleaned. I bought eighty bushels of oats lately, and I dare not put them into my granary for fear the seeds would get into the cracks in the floor, and probably be swept up next spring in the seed, so I put them in the oat bin in the stable and clean them by hand, and it is a real shame the amount of seed of all descriptions that is in it. They send a weed inspector throughout the country, and pay him, I hear, \$4 a day and mileage. They give him eight days to do it in. He goes and orders farmers to pull their weeds. Some pull them; some will not. When the eight days are up, he says he is clear. He has no more to do with it. It seems queer to me we must pay an inspector to tell us to pull our own weeds. Surely we know enough to pull our weeds without having to pay a man to tell us, unless he has power to look after every one and compel them to pull them. If a farmer does not pull his weeds I understand he can be fined not less than \$5, and not more than \$50. That is not the only fine he is up against. I for one have taken every care to get clean seed and always taken the greatest care to pull every weed I have seen, and this year I am pestered with weeds. Where did they come from? From roadside and careless farmers. I have picked nine days this summer. Now figure it up. I had to put six horses in the stable and leave off breaking three acres per day at \$3.50 per acre, and