

The Farmer's Advocate and Home Magazine

"Persevere and
Succeed."

Established
1866.

REGISTERED IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE COPYRIGHT ACT OF 1878.

Vol. XLIII.

LONDON, ONTARIO, SEPTEMBER 24, 1908.

No. 835.

EDITORIAL

FACTS FOR ALL ELECTORS.

The executive of the Dominion Grange, in its discreet but forceful appeal to the members of subordinate Granges, with reference to the policy of that organization in the forthcoming Federal elections, has taken ground which will, for the most part, be quite generally endorsed by the more independent element of the Canadian electorate, even though they may not all agree on every particular point. In presenting its case, the Grange Executive has wisely refrained from throwing the onus of responsibility on either political party, but has urged the members of its organization to use their influence within the existing parties to advance the objects with which the Grange has identified itself.

While the platform of the Grange regarding Federal issues was quite fully presented in our last issue, a brief recapitulation of its contentions can do no harm. First of all, it criticises the increase in the sessional indemnity of members of Parliament to \$2,500, and the annual vote of \$7,000 to the leader of the Opposition. While there may be room for difference of opinion on the former point, there can be no defence whatever of the way the increase was railroaded through at the close of the session in which it was passed, while the salary to the leader of the Opposition is ludicrous enough for a stage farce.

On the subject of militarism, the voter is reminded that eighteen years ago our expenditure on militia and mounted police was a little over \$2,000,000; in 1906 it was \$6,600,000. In the expenditure on armouries, which is carried out under the Public Works Department, the increase is proportionate. Against this, as also against military training in the public schools, the Grange vigorously protests.

The taxpayer is reminded that, in the thirteen years, from 1895 to 1907, inclusive, over nine and a half million dollars has been paid out of the Federal treasury to iron and steel manufacturers, as a free gift to this favored interest; while, from 1882 to 1907, over four million dollars was paid in bounties to the fishermen of Quebec and the Maritime Provinces. Lead and petroleum producers are among the other classes heavily subsidized at the general expense. On agriculture, the one great unsubsidized industry, the net burden of all these favors eventually falls, with only partial and indirect return in the form of improved home demand and prices for farm products.

From 1884 to 1907, a period subsequent to the \$25,000,000 donation to the Canadian Pacific, almost \$35,500,000 has been paid out of the Federal treasury in railway subsidies, besides which millions of acres of land have been granted by the Dominion and Provinces. Some of the subsidies were for lines in parts of Ontario settled for 100 years. Moreover, these railways pay little more than a nominal taxation, whereas, in adjoining States, railways built without subsidies pay \$400 per mile.

The enormously growing expenditure is viewed with alarm. Eighteen years ago, the total disbursements of the Dominion Government, under all heads, were less than \$42,000,000. In 1906 the total was over eighty-three and a quarter millions, while for the current year the appropriations, aside from the railway subsidy voted, amount to over \$130,000,000. At this rate, the Grange considers that expenditure is far outrunning the development of the country.

A trenchant plea is made on the subject of tariff reform. In 1906, the last year for which

official figures are obtainable, \$173,000,000 worth of dutiable goods were imported into Canada, and the amount paid in duties was \$46,671,000, which was at the rate of nearly 27 per cent. In other words, on every dollar's worth of these goods imported, we paid 27c. (less the cost of collection) to swell the revenue at Ottawa, which makes possible the enormously-growing expenditure. Moreover, by reason of the protection afforded home manufacturers, the latter were put in a position to add a proportionate amount to the selling price of the goods manufactured in this country, of which the valuation was \$718,000,000. Yet, in the face of all this, the manufacturers are seeking, through both political parties, to obtain an increase in the protection enjoyed. It remains for the great agricultural class to ring these facts throughout the country, to bring them home to every candidate, to create an irresistible public sentiment against tariff increase and for tariff reduction, and to send to Parliament a body of men who may be trusted to give that opinion effect.

A RURAL MAIL-DELIVERY SYSTEM.

Hon. Rodolphe Lemieux, Dominion Postmaster-General, announces that his Department has evolved a scheme of rural delivery and collection of mails. "The time has come," he says, "to give the farmer rural free mail delivery, and we are going to do so." It is opportune, from a political point of view, that the time has come on the eve of a general election. However, there seems no ground to doubt the sincerity of the intention, and the plan proposed will commend itself as a sensible and economical step, calculated to bring the boon of free delivery to many doors, and shorten the trip to the mail-box for many others. Undoubtedly, it will lead, in time, to a complete system of free rural delivery, when the country is more densely populated.

The plan, as outlined, is to utilize the present mail-carrier system between railway points and interior post offices. It is estimated that this will serve, more or less satisfactorily, about 50 per cent. of the rural population. In going from the railway post office to the several post offices back in the country, the carrier, instead of keeping the mail in bulk, will distribute along the way each farmer's mail at the box in front of his farm. For those on side lines, not on the mail-carrier's direct route, private boxes will be arranged at the cross-roads, perhaps a dozen or twenty of them at one point. The carrier, arriving here, will distribute the mail to each box in turn, and farmers will come here for it, instead of having to go two, three, or perhaps four miles to the post office. Registered letters will be left at the nearest post office, a notice being deposited in the owner's box, so that he may go to the post office for it.

THE FARM AS A HOME.

The farm is the best place to be born, to be brought up, to live, and to die. Only this much we concede: It is well to travel from it occasionally to avoid falling into monotonous grooves of habit and thought. Travel is an incomparable education to all men, but particularly to the tiller of the soil, who, by reason of the isolation and exacting nature of his occupation, is specially in need of the quickening and broadening influence of personal contact and extended observation. This in no wise contravenes the topical thought of the paragraph. Happy is he who, owning a few acres of good soil, is privileged to travel from it now and again, but wise enough to appreciate the blessings his possession affords.

THE PURPOSE OF THE SCOTTISH COMMISSION.

The point is raised in our Maritime Letter this week as to whether Canada has not outgrown the expediency of delegation advertising of the kind expected from the Scottish Agricultural Commission which is now touring Canada from ocean to ocean. As we understand it, the primary purpose of the Commission is to prosecute inquiries in Canada for the express advantage of informing, stimulating and assisting Scottish farmers in their own land. A similar commission visited Denmark in 1904, and Ireland in 1906, and their published reports were read with interest by many outside the country which sent them. It is to be hoped they may learn something in Canada, as doubtless we shall receive not a little from them when their conclusions are systematized and published in the official report that is to be issued. Incidentally, it is to our own advantage to give them a favorable impression of the Dominion, and if the result is to increase the number of stalwart Scotch immigrants coming to our shores, we may feel well repaid for any reasonable courtesy and favors that may be shown on their transcontinental tour.

THE WESTERN HARVEST EXCURSIONS.

If the harvesters' excursions to Western Canada are to accomplish the purpose they are intended to meet, something must be done to avoid such unsatisfactory conditions as have existed during the harvest rush of 1908. Lack of sober consideration of the true state of affairs in the West is the greatest factor in causing trouble. Nor is this lack of consideration confined to railway company or harvest hand or Western farmer. Each of these three parties is responsible, and until they co-operate in such way that the excursionist has confidence in the other two, trouble will continue to crop up.

There usually is plenty of work. The railway company is in best position to know approximately how many laborers are required at the various points. They make a report, but the excursionists are not sufficiently informed, or have not confidence in the reliability of that report. The average excursionist from Eastern Canada is willing and able to do the work required, but he has been over-impressed with the demand for laborers, and is not content with ordinary wages, which fact, combined with a desire to see as much of the West as possible, results in reasonable offers being turned down all along the line from Winnipeg to Moose Jaw. In a very few days hundreds of able-bodied men are stranded at the latter point, sorry they did not accept offers made to them some time previous. While they remain in Moose Jaw or vicinity, the harvest has ripened further east, and in many parts of Manitoba cutting is in full swing two weeks before a start is made in the Moose Jaw district. The Western farmer adds to the trouble, and frequently inconveniences himself later by taking advantage of the large number of harvesters that arrive, and, after concluding there will be more help in the country than is needed, refuses to engage a man until his crop is ready for the binder. The consequence is, in most cases laborers have gone elsewhere, and valuable time is lost hunting for harvesters that should be spent in the wheat fields.

Until, therefore, co-operation exists, and confidence is established, trouble is sure to exist. To the railways falls the task of providing reasonably accurate figures showing the call for help, and also of arranging for a distribution in keeping with those figures, if at all possible. The excursionists can be prepared for such distribution by a broadcast sowing of sheet literature on the