

The Grain Growers' Guide

Winnipeg, Wednesday, September 20th, 1911

LEND A HAND

Now that the elections are over and done, we want to ask the assistance of our readers in another very important work. We want them to take hold with us and put their shoulders to the wheel in a campaign to increase the strength of the farmers' organization and its power for good. The history of Canada shows no parallel of the farmers' organization of the Prairie Provinces. It is because of their organization and the educational work that is being done that they have such an influence in public affairs. No single factor has done more to forward the cause of the farmers and to assist them in their struggle for a square deal than The Grain Growers' Guide. The Guide has done all in its power to disseminate information upon all matters of interest to the farmers and has conducted investigations to show how present conditions militate against the common people. No large organization can do its work properly without a medium of information, and The Guide has occupied that place in the farmers' organization. No other journal gives the news of the organization and no other journal has fought the battles of the farmers in the way that The Guide has done. The value of The Guide is limited by the number of its readers. No man can keep closely in touch with the work of the organized farmers in Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta unless he reads The Guide every week. Wherever The Guide is most widely read, the association is most active. The Guide and the associations must work together for their common good. We appreciate the valiant work that our readers have done for us and themselves in the past, and we urge them for still further aid. We are laying plans for a lot of good things for the coming winter. We will publish information for the benefit of our readers that can be found in no other paper. We will show up many injustices in the present economic, social and political system. We will endeavor to justify our name as "the farmers' friend." As in the past, The Guide will favor no political party, but will deal with principles and exercise neither fear nor favor in its campaign of education. Now, we want to ask our readers to give us a hand for the next few months to increase the number of our subscribers. We want to see every live farmer in the Prairie Provinces become a regular reader of The Guide. Every one may not agree with all that we publish. That would be impossible. We can only do our best. Our columns, however, are always open to any sincere criticism of any opinion we express. We want every reader of The Guide who believes in the value of the paper to see that every one of his friends becomes a subscriber. We have, in the past, paid agents to do this work for us, and we have also offered prizes to induce our friends to help us, but such methods have been only partially successful. Now we are not offering any reward, but we are appealing to all friends of good government and the square deal. We are now sending The Guide to any address in Canada till the end of the year for twenty-five cents, but we will send The Guide till the end of the next year to any address for \$1.00. In addition to giving The Guide for fifteen months for \$1.00, we will send to each subscriber who sends us a dollar, a copy of the "Siege of Ottawa," free. This book sells at twenty-five cents and is the complete story of the great delegation of farmers that visited Ottawa last December. This book will only be sent to those who send us the whole dollar, and will apply in the case of renewals as well as new subscriptions; but we will not send the "Siege of Ottawa" unless we receive the entire dollar without any deduction. Every farmer should have a copy of the "Siege of Ottawa" in his house and we give this oppor-

tunity to secure it easily. Any person who has already paid his subscription can secure a copy of the book by sending in another dollar to have his subscription extended for another year.

ELECTION DAY IN OREGON

In the State of Oregon where the people have the power to make their own laws by the Initiative and Referendum, elections are much different from the one, now being held in Canada. They have laws in Oregon that mean something. Burton J. Hendrick, writing in McClure's Magazine, says of elections in Oregon:

"Under the new regime, elections in Oregon today are as clean and orderly as they are in England itself. Money has ceased to play any part in the proceedings. Its use, even in the most remote and roundabout ways, is made a crime. The candidate for public office can spend, in election expenses, twenty-five per cent. of a year's salary of the office for which he is running—but no more. The most detailed account of expenditures must be kept and sworn to. The law provides that no descendant, no ascendant, no brother, sister, aunt, uncle, wife, partner, employer, employee, fellow official or fellow worker of a corporation can contribute in excess of that amount. No corporation or anything resembling a corporation, can contribute a penny. Anyone who asks a candidate to buy tickets to any entertainment, or to make any contributions for any charitable or religious purpose, commits a crime. The candidate cannot furnish any person with 'food or meat or any other entertainment, or clothing, liquors, cigars or tobacco' with the idea of predisposing one favorable to his cause. He cannot 'hand out' anticipatory jobs before elections. He cannot buy 'reading notices' in newspapers or pay editors for friendly comment; whatever space he uses must be openly designated as paid advertising, and the source from which it comes must be specifically indicated. All ministers of the gospel, all preachers and all priests are prohibited from inducing members of their flock to vote for or against any candidate as a religious duty, and the threatening of 'spiritual injury' is in itself a corrupt practice. Outside of these prohibitions the election is made free to all. Anyone may talk, argue, speak or write in behalf of one candidate, so long as he is not compensated for doing so. The State of Oregon pays part of the candidate's expenses. It publishes a pamphlet—modelled somewhat after the Publicity Pamphlet for the discussion of proposed laws—in which the candidate may print his picture and his claims to official honors. It charges a sum for this which represents actual cost and mails a copy to every registered voter."

"Under the new regime, an election in Oregon is a solemn and God-fearing occasion. Even in the cities a sabbath stillness prevails. The town is closed tight. The voter casts his ballot, not in a dirty room back of a barber shop but in a neat, white, municipally-owned tent. These tents are pitched in the open streets, with all sides exposed, so that everybody may have a full view of what is going on. On his way to the polls the voter does not have to run the gauntlet of a line of bleary-eyed 'workers.' Election day under the new law, is strictly given up to voting, not electioneering. It is made a crime for anyone on that day to so much as to solicit any man's vote. One may answer questions provided the voter asks them, but no one may volunteer information or advice. There are no hired 'workers' at the polls, except the challengers, watchers and counters of the votes. Badges, campaign buttons or other insignia are illegal on election day. An especially serious offence is to transport the voter to the polls in a hired carriage, automobile or other conveyance. He must get there himself or he cannot vote. Thus in a few years, by the enactment and enforcement of a plain matter-of-fact law, elections in Oregon have been transformed from riotous mobs into proceedings as quiet and dignified as ordinary church services. And this change—it may be repeated—is the result of a law which the legislature refused to enact and which the people themselves had to enact at the polls."

Compare this with our elections in Canada and then say if the people should not have the Initiative and Referendum in Canada. How much longer will the people permit such scenes as we have witnessed in the recent election?

MODERN JOURNALISM

The present time is very suitable for the consideration of some of the aspects of modern journalism as we have it in Canada. With few exceptions practically every leading newspaper in Canada is devoted to the interests of one or other of the political parties. Those who have been reading both party papers from any part of Canada during the campaign, have been assured by these papers that both parties would win the election with an overwhelming majority. Reports of political meetings have been colored to suit the party which the paper represents. The honest-minded reader has found it impossible to ascertain by reading a party newspaper an accurate account of the happenings at any political meeting. Anti-reciprocity papers report that every single political meeting in Canada was strongly anti-reciprocity, while the papers in favor of reciprocity report the exact opposite. It is borne home to the reading public that partisan newspapers are not only unreliable and misleading but that they are a positive danger to the country. They deliberately misrepresent facts for the purpose of deluding their readers, and they publish fake dispatches that are written in their own offices. The policy of all newspapers should be to purvey the truth and nothing but the truth in its news columns. They should be wells of truth, pure and undefiled. Its editorial columns are devoted to the expression of opinion which its readers may or may not agree with. But there is no justification for any newspaper deliberately publishing false reports in its news columns, and the laws of the country should provide severe punishment for such an offence. When a man offers himself as a candidate for a public position it is only fair and right that his public record should be thoroughly inspected, but the mud-slinging and misrepresentation of his private life is something deserving of the severest condemnation. There are some journals in Canada that do not stoop to the methods employed by such organs. The only way that newspapers will be forced to tell the truth and adopt better methods is to be rebuked at the hands of their readers. It is not necessary for a reader to cancel his subscription, because by so doing the reader often does himself more injury than the journal. But by setting facts clearly before the management of the journal they will be brought to understand that their tactics are not satisfactory to their readers, who want only the truth and nothing but the truth. It would also be a very wise provision if every newspaper were compelled to publish in every issue the names of its owners. A list of the stockholders of some of the leading newspapers of Canada would be the most significant utterance that could be published in their columns, and would explain many things that their readers are very anxious to know. There is no better field of labor for reformers than Canadian journalism. One of the reasons why Special Privilege and unscrupulous politicians flourish in Canada is because they control the press. The freedom of the press in Canada is a myth.

PARLIAMENT AND THE TRUSTS

Whatever may be the result of the general elections which are taking place to-morrow, one of the first duties of the new Parliament will be to deal with the trusts, combines and mergers which have been formed in Canada in recent years, and which through organized monopolies have been able to raise prices out of all proportion to the cost of production and make exorbitant profits. Free trade, and the competition which would result, is undoubtedly the only real means of frustrating the greed of the monopolists, but even those

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