The Grain Growers' Guide

Winnipeg, Wednesday, March 3rd, 1915

On April 1 the price of The Guide will be increased to $1.50 per year, both on new subscriptions and renewals. Renewals and new subscriptions will be accepted at $1.00 per year for the next three weeks.

SECRET TARIFF INCREASES

A striking example of the way in which the people are exploited under the Protective Tariff system is exposed to the light of day in a statement given to The Guide by one of Winnipeg's leading business men and published on page 7 of this issue. It will be remembered that in April last the Finance Minister of Canada and the Western supporters of the Government made a great fuss about the "boon" which was being conferred upon the farmers of this country by reducing the duty on mowers and binders from 17½% to 12½%. A good many farmers probably wondered why the price of binders was not reduced in consequence, and this fact has never been satisfactorily explained until now. H. W. Hutchinson, vice-president and managing director of the John Deere Plow Company, has cleared up the mystery, however, by the somewhat startling statement that when the rate of duty was lowered, the valuation upon which the duty was paid was arbitrarily raised, with the result that the duty collected on each binder and mower was just as high after the duty had been reduced as it was before. Mr. Hutchinson imports a good many thousand binders every year, and he states that at the present time he is required to pay duty on a valuation 22% higher than he actually pays for the binder or mower. The same thing applies to several other lines of implements used by the farmers. On a certain type of wagon the importer is compelled to pay duty on 20% more than the cost. Another importer has informed The Guide that on a certain article used on the farm, for which he pays $28.75, he is compelled to pay duty on $40.00. Another article which costs $33.90 is valued for duty at $50.00. This overvaluation of imports is not authorized by law, but it is done arbitrarily by a body known as the Board of Customs Appraisers, which works under the direction of the Minister of Customs. Thru this secret method the Customs Department is able practically to increase or decrease the tariff at will. It can go behind the back of Parliament and, at the suggestion of the representatives of the Canadian Manufacturers' Association, or any other interested party, allow certain goods to enter the country at a lower rate of duty than should properly be paid, while inflicting a penalty upon goods of another class. We submit that to place this power in the hands of the Board of Customs Appraisers is to usurp the powers of Parliament and to invite corruption of the public service. No words are strong enough to condemn this deliberate robbery of the farmers of Canada.

During war times the history of the world shows that the patriotism of the people is always seized upon by selfish interests to fasten more tightly their grip upon the people.

SEAGER WHEELER'S ARTICLES

It is scarcely necessary to again emphasize the importance of proper soil tillage methods in order to ensure a good crop during the coming season. Object lessons were noticeable on every hand last fall in each district thruout the West in the shape of fine, uniform, heavy yielding crops on well tilled farms in the midst of districts where the majority of the farmers harvested little or no crop. No better object lesson could be found than that of Seager Wheeler's farm at Rosthern, Saskatchewan, where, in spite of the heat and drought, yields of all crops were uniformly good, and in the case of some, particularly that of potatoes, were even higher than ever before. Seager Wheeler needs no introduction to the grain growers in Canada, and in this and the next issue of The Guide articles will be found outlining the methods by which his grain has gained for him an international reputation. It is unnecessary to emphasize the value of these articles and it is hoped that they will be very helpful to all of our readers.

LOOKED AFTER HIS FRIENDS

It must be admitted that in planning the new tariff the Finance Minister was very careful to safeguard the interests of at least one class of the Canadian people, namely his friends the manufacturers. Besides increasing their protection and giving them additional power to exploit the consuming public, he continued the provision by which the public funds may be used for bonusing manufacturers who export a portion of their product. Under the new tariff a duty of 7½% is placed upon raw materials which were hitherto imported free, while on those which bore a duty hitherto, the rate is increased by 7½%. By an Order-in-Council put in force on the 1st of July, 1904, Canadian manufacturers are allowed a drawback of 99% of the duty paid on materials used in the manufacture of articles which are exported from the Dominion. This means that when materials are imported by our manufacturers—and many of our manufacturers, for some reason or other, choose to secure their steel from the United Steel Trust, their coal from Pennsylvania mines, and their timber from American forests, rather than "encourage the development of Canadian natural resources and give employment to Canadian workmen"—the duty is paid in the ordinary way. If these goods are sold to the people of Canada the duty remains in the treasury, but if the goods are sent abroad for the use of foreigners, the Dominion Government hands back to the manufacturer 99% of the duty which he has paid, thus presenting the Canadian manufacturer with a bonus to enable him to sell as cheaply as possible to the foreigner, while giving him protection to enable him to charge Canadian consumers as high a price as he can get. If it is desirable to give a rebate of duty to the manufacturer for export, we would like to know why the farmer, who also produces for export, and who sells his product in the open market of the world, should be penalized and placed in a position where he has to pay tariff enhanced prices for practically everything that he uses in the production of his crops. This does not appear to us to be either just or consistent, but it is useless to expect either justice or consistency in a system of taxation which is deliberately designed to give to one section of the community the privilege of exploiting the rest of the people.

MADE IN CANADA TITLES

As Finance Minister White is devising new schemes for the much-needed increase in revenue, we have a scheme which is certain to produce a large revenue, and we offer it to him herewith freely, asking nothing in return. There are a large number of men in Canada who would give anything they possess, and would almost be willing to sell their souls if they had a title hitched onto their names. There is a fair sprinkling of these titles in Canada now, but they are all "Made in England," and the supply is not by any means equal to the demand. The Government, the Manufacturers' Association, the Bankers' Association, the Railways and even the pulpit are vigorously prosecuting the "Made in Canada" campaign. Here is Mr. White's opportunity. Let him prepare legislation creating a series of these titles all "Made in Canada," which any of these hungry seekers after honors could purchase at a fixed price. We would suggest the following schedule: Any man should be permitted to call himself a Knight, and have "Sir" tacked onto his name, on payment of $25,000, with an annual license of $5,000. A Baronetcy, which would permit a man to put "Sir" on the front of his name and attach "Bart" to the rear, should bring at least $75,000, with an annual license of $7,500. In order to be a real live "Lord," a man should pay at least $100,000 and an annual license of $10,000, and this title, as well as all higher titles, should give the holder a seat in a new legislative body called the "House of Lords," which might be permitted to legislate on the weather and other questions of equal national importance. The title "Viscount" should bring $150,000 and $15,0000 a year; while "Earl" should be worth $200,000 and $20,000 yearly; "Marquis" $300,000 and $30,000 yearly, and "Duke" $500,000 and $50,000 yearly. Estates could be provided for these higher dignitaries by giving them each a free homestead and pre-emption in the unorganized territory in Ungava, where they would be exclusive and not forced to mingle with the ordinary common people. A school of deportment might be established in connection with the Department of Finance, where the new nobility might be taught how to conduct themselves in public, so that they might act as tho "to the manner born." There should be a graduated scale of the number of servants which each should maintain to properly support their dignity, and each title should carry with it the privilege of wearing a distinctive dress, both on public and private occasions, in order to mark out these dignitaries from the common herd. All of them should wear silken doublets, ornamented with gold or silver buttons, according to their rank, tight silk breeches, silk stockings and silver buckled shoes. A long sword would, of course, have to be suspended from the belt of each, and a large bonnet with a graduated number of ostrich plumes should ornament their upper ex-