

The Grain Growers' Guide

Winnipeg, Wednesday, January 3rd, 1917

SIGN THE CARDS

This is National Registration Week. The government is taking a census of the man power of Canada. Every man will receive a card with questions to be answered and returned to the government. It is highly desirable that these cards be filled in and returned promptly. Even tho we may not be in full accord with the scheme, it is our duty to aid the government in everything that will help in bringing the war to a successful issue.

THE FARMERS WIN OUT

The decision of the Federal Department of Justice published elsewhere in this issue is a decided victory for the organized farmers in their controversy with the elevator companies over the question of "substitution of grain." It will be remembered that the elevator interests claimed that as soon as a farmer stored grain in their house it became their own property and they could sell it or do whatever they liked with it, provided that they supplied the farmer with the same amount of grain whenever he called for it. Under that system the elevator companies admitted that they actually sold the farmer's stored grain while the farmer thought it was still being held for him. They also charged the farmer interest on his advances, while in the meantime they had received the entire proceeds of the sale of the car. Under the ruling of the Department of Justice (which will no doubt be adopted by the Board of Grain Commissioners) this method of grain marketing must cease. When a farmer stores grain and pays the storage charges he has a right to know that his grain is being held for him. If there is any advantage to be derived from marketing the grain leisurely the farmer is entitled to that advantage.

PROTECTIONIST COMPETITION AWARDS

Some months ago The Grain Growers' Guide offered \$25 for the best argument that could be advanced by any protectionist in Canada to show that the protective tariff is a benefit to the Western farmer. After advertising this competition widely we received but fourteen replies, nearly half of which were written by free traders who tried to present a protectionist argument. Several of the balance were fairly good protectionist arguments. Finally we have decided that there are two of equal merit to which we have awarded first prize, and divided the prize money. One was written by a member of the Canadian Manufacturers' Association in Eastern Canada, who does not permit his own name to be published and the other by Walter Carter of Calgary. Both of these will be published in The Guide shortly.

THE ISLE OF PINES

In this issue we publish the other side of the Isle of Pines question. In justice to our readers we have presented both sides of the picture as fairly and fully as possible. We still consider that Canada is a plenty good enough place for anybody to live in, but if people are seeking for warmer countries and can afford it they naturally will like to get away from Canada for a few months during the winter at least. To people who intend to make such moves we would suggest that they investigate mighty carefully before they purchase and decide to settle in their new home. There are undoubtedly many beautiful spots in the warmer climates, but like this country they also have their drawbacks. Success and failure go side by side in nearly every country.

FARMERS' PLATFORM SOUND

The Nor' West Farmer finds fault with the National Political Platform issued by the Canadian Council of Agriculture, the ground of complaint being that income and corporation taxes are alleged to be illogical, unfair and not in accord with Adam Smith's maxims of taxation. The Nor'-West Farmer claims that it is illogical because the Council also advocates taxing unimproved land values. It is difficult to discover any good reason why the two forms of taxation should not be combined. Land value taxation is just and fair and the income tax is necessary to secure a revenue from those drawing large incomes, or in other words it taxes people somewhat in proportion to their ability to pay. If equitable conditions prevailed thruout the country and every citizen had an equal opportunity before the law, there would be some ground for opposing an income tax. But a comparatively small group of people, largely thru special privileges, are amassing great wealth and are becoming a decided menace to democratic development. Land value taxation will not curb this concentration of wealth to any marked degree. The income tax is the best instrument yet designed to accomplish that purpose. Even should great wealth be acquired by a few without any special privilege, if that be possible, it would still be a menace and the state should recognize this fact by taking a good slice of the income. The same principles apply to the corporation tax. As for Adam Smith's maxim we need not worry about it. What we want to do is to raise the public revenue and prevent as far as possible the wealth of Canada being concentrated into the hands of a few. The Farmers' Platform from the standpoint of taxation is the best and fairest that has ever been proposed by any important organization in Canada and the organized farmers will be wise to adhere to it rigidly until some good reason is advanced why it should be departed from.

PATRONAGE OR PRINCIPLE

John Stanfield, M.P. of Truro, N.S. has tendered his resignation as member of parliament as a protest against the method of making appointments on the Intercolonial Railway. It is difficult to ascertain from press reports the basis of Mr. Stanfield's protest. If he, as some of the despatches assert, demands the patronage right to make appointments he will get mighty little public sympathy. But if he is maintaining the general principle that local men of equal merit should not be side-tracked in favor of imported officials he has excellent ground to stand upon. Patronage and incompetency has long been the ruling feature of the Intercolonial Railway. It used to be said that the three great events in the life of a resident of the Maritime Provinces were birth, marriage and the first free ride on the Intercolonial Railway. The Maritime Provinces got mighty little out of confederation when they were shut off from the American markets. In the administration of the Intercolonial Railway they have also been discriminated against in the appointment of officials. Mr. Stanfield is perfectly right to demand that local men be given precedence over imported men where merit is equal, but it would be a very dangerous precedent to admit that a member of parliament should have any authority to make appointments to government positions. No doubt the situation will be made clearer when the House meets in a couple of weeks.

Take a week off if you possibly can, and attend one or more of the farmers' conventions being held at this time of the year—and be sure to take your good wife along too.

OCEAN STEAMSHIP CONTROL

The recommendations of Sir Henry Drayton that there be public ownership and control of ocean steamship lines after the war is in keeping with the new spirit that has developed since the war broke out. Thru public ownership of transportation facilities Germany has been able to throw her armies against any section of the allied forces in the minimum of time and it has counted tremendously in favor of the Germans in the struggle. Britain recognized that public ownership and control was necessary when she took over the railways on the outbreak of the war. Public ownership and control to a greater degree than ever was dreamed of has been brought about by the war and it has come to stay. Public ownership, honestly and efficiently managed is by far the cheapest and best method of handling public utilities. The day of competition which will bring any benefit to the public in big capitalistic organizations is long past. Amalgamation and combination is the new order, which left to private control will be used as an instrument of extortion, but controlled or operated by the government will produce great benefits in the interest of all the people. If Sir Henry Drayton would follow up his proposition by advocating public ownership and operation of railway, steamship, express and telegraph services in Canada he would be taking another big step in the interests of the general public.

CEMENTING THE PEERAGE

The elevation to the peerage of Sir Max Aitken of cement merger fame will not cause the House of Lords to rise in popular esteem thruout Canada. There certainly can be no basis of merit upon which this title was bestowed and it merely goes to show that titles are a good deal of a commercial proposition after all. If these titles are to be bought and sold it would be much better to have it done in the open. Let the public know what the price is and what goes with it. Then if a man wants a tin pot title and has money to pay for it, it wouldn't be so bad as it is now where honor is supposed to go with the title. It is not announced what Aitken's title will be, but probably it will be Lord Concrete or Baron Cement.

PROTECTION ON OILCLOTH

Every farm housewife needs oilcloth. But she pays too much for it. She pays too much because of the tariff of 42½ per cent. (35 and 7½ war tax). Here are comparative prices on a standard quality of this essential commodity with and without a tariff. It is sold in pieces 12 yards long and 1¼ wide. These prices are based on that quantity—

	With Tariff	Without Tariff
Price to Retailer at Winnipeg	\$2.64	\$1.99
Price to Housewife	\$3.43	\$2.59
Price per yard to Housewife	28.6	21.6

The tariff costs every housewife in Canada seven or more cents per yard on oilcloth. It is not only the manufacturers' extra price, but the added percentage which the wholesaler and retailer put on that helps swell the price to the consumer, but the "Protected" manufacturer gets practically all the benefit. How do you like "Protection" which costs you seven cents per yard of oilcloth, when Canada can only boast one factory making oilcloth and it is filled up with orders six months ahead?

TAX THE RICH ALSO

Sir Thomas White, Finance Minister, announces that he will tour Canada delivering a series of addresses on the need for national economy. He is also putting on a big adver-