

IS IT A LIVE ISSUE?

Souris, Sept. 26th, 1908.

The Editor,
Grain Growers' Guide.

Dear Sir:—

Most farmers in the west believe that when they sell their wheat on track, at the quotations of the day they are receiving the full value for their grain; the following illustration which I can vouch for will give you an idea of what a competitive market would do for us. As I passed through Minto on Sept. 24th, the elevators on the C. N. R. were both closed, those on the G. N. Ry., giving about two grades better; and a better price. At Boissevain, a farmer took wheat to an elevator on the C. P. R. and was offered 4 Nor. He thought it might go 3 Nor. or perhaps 2 Nor. Taking it to the elevator on the G. N. Ry., he received 1 Nor. and on the same day the elevators on the C. P. Ry., were paying, or at least would have paid, had any been offered, 87c for track wheat, those on the G. N. Ry., were paying 93c. The deduction I draw from this is that all the wheat in the west grading 3 Nor. or 4 Nor. is just losing from 15c to 18c per bushel. What a boon it would be to us farmers if the British and Canadian millers were placed on an equal footing with the Western millers, where all alike would have to go to a sample market and buy what they required for their mills. The only way to bring this about is a complete system of Government Owned Elevators. The question is are the farmers of the West in favor of such a move? Is it a live issue? Mr. Roblin's Government don't think it is, else a move would have been made in that direction, for Mr. Roblin's policy is to accede to the wishes of the majority. Now, Mr. Farmer, if you are in favor of such a policy sit down as soon as you read this and write him a letter giving him your views. By the time he reads all your letters he will come to the conclusion that it is a "Live Issue" indeed.

Yours truly,

J. G. Moffat.

OUR FRIEND THE ENEMY

Winnipeg, Man.

Dear Sir:—

As the wheat shipping season has again rolled around, we find ourselves once more face to face with our friend "The Grain Dealers Association." And although we have tried in every legitimate way to persuade them to give us some kind of a square deal, they still seem determined to give us anything else. We have asked the Government to intercede in the form of legislation and they have acceded to a number of our requests. But we no sooner back the enemy into one hole than he bobs out of another and attacks us either in a fresh spot or defies the law and the government and reverts to the same old tactics in, if anything, a more aggravated form.

As far back as 1900, we were granted legislation requiring elevators to provide special bins. Said privilege has been abused more or less ever since, till this year they conclude to take the bull by the horns and cut out that privilege entirely, substituting therefor a system of grading by the local operators which would completely annihilate the majority of farmers in this district as each one has six or seven different grades of wheat, and if compelled to put these in as many different bins would not have a car-load in any. Of course he has the pleasing alternative of selling by the load to the elevator company. But at what price? Anywhere from 7 to 22c below the value of the same wheat on track. Later on in the season, when cars get scarce, the Elevator companies tell us they are compelled to buy on a May basis because they are not sure of getting it out till May.

But although we have had all kinds of cars at this point up till last week, we find the spread in price between street and track as above stated, between 7 and 22

cents. From 7 to 14 cents when allowed proper grade, but in very many cases at least, the operator, in order to be perfectly safe, calls it a grade lower than it actually is. Last week I offered a sample of old wheat which I knew graded 5 last year, but the operator could only buy it at 6, at just 22c below the track price of 5, or about 35 p.c. of the value of the wheat for the trouble of running it through the elevator and I could have the other 65 p. c. for the very slight cost of producing it and delivering to the elevator.

Another great advantage they have over us is in the dockage. Even when they condescend to special bin stuff they must have an average of 30 to 50 lbs., straight dockage. The warehouse commissioner tells us we should not allow over 10 lbs., dockage, and tells the operator he must not take more. But the company from whom he gets his bread and butter tells him if he can't make up enough in dockage to pay his wages he is no good, and they will not need him any longer. Then if he happens to load some of the surplus dockage into the car when clearing out the special bin, they instruct him to write them a letter stating that one of the spouts became clogged and ran some of our wheat into Mr. Farmer's bin.

These Mr. Editor, are no isolated or assumed cases, but positive facts which are being practiced every day at every shipping point where there are line elevators without an independent competitor. And from all our past experience we are driven to the conclusion that until we can get the initial elevators out of the hands of the Grain Dealers' Association, into the hands of the Government we may never expect even a fair measure of justice.

I am much disappointed to see no further action taken by the three western Premiers in regard to this matter. Surely the case was presented strongly enough to them last spring. If not we will have to make the dose a little stronger and make it for both internal and external use. It is bound to take effect in the near future with the circulation to the Grain Growers' Guide added to the acknowledged strength of the association. We should be able to largely increase our membership and as soon as we get a majority of farmers to become members of the Association the rest is easy.

With best wishes for the success of the "Guide," I remain,

Yours faithfully,

H. A. Fraser.

Hamiota, 28-8-08.

THE BANKING "GAME"

Editor "Guide."

Your exposure of the way the bankers use our own money to help the combines, is causing the farmers to think. I for one see things in a different light and with all my might say "Brother Farmers, now is the time for us to rise to the occasion. Come forward and put this wheel of progress in motion by taking stock and placing our deposits where we can get results from the concentration of our capital."

I am pleased to see the movement put forward by the Grain Growers' Grain Co., whereby we have the opportunity to make the Home Bank of Canada the Farmers' Bank of the Great West.

The co-operation of our capital,—(that is, our money) by ourselves, is just as essential as co-operation in trade or labor in the matter of protecting our interests and our individual liberty, in getting the best value possible from our labour and products of the soil. The co-operation of our capital by capitalists and corporation means capitalistic power, and the monopolizing of the profits of the great plain people for the benefit of the rich.

Now we can beat this monster of co-operation of our capital and placing same in our own bank where it will be systematically and properly devoted to our interests