

The Mail Bag

CO-OPERATIVE THRESHING

Editor, Guide:—With reference to Mr. W. G. Inman's letter published in your issue of the 19th inst. in which he asks for information relating to the formation of a company for the purpose of buying and operating a threshing outfit. Such a scheme as Mr. Inman suggests is certainly practicable. The farmers in this neighborhood have already put the scheme into practice, having formed a limited liability company under provincial letters of incorporation and purchased a threshing outfit ready for work this fall. If Mr. Inman will send fifty cents to the Government Printer, at Edmonton, for a copy of "The Companies Ordinance" he will get all the information necessary to enable the farmers in his neighborhood to form an incorporated company. He will find it cheaper and more expeditious to instruct a lawyer in Edmonton to put the matter through, as much time will otherwise be spent writing to the Registrar of Joint Stock Companies, drawing up the articles of Association, etc. Lawyers' fees and disbursements, registration fees, etc., will not total more than \$40.00.

Our company is capitalized at fifty-five hundred dollars divided into fifty-five shares. The work of incorporation was just the matter of a few weeks in spite of the fact that we were forty miles from a railway and had only a weekly mail service. If Mr. Inman and his neighbors decide to proceed in the matter I will be glad to furnish them with all the information at my disposal, including the name of our lawyer, who would be willing no doubt to draft memorandum of association for them along the same lines as the memorandum and articles of association used by our company.

J. STOKOE, Sec'y.

Wilhelmina, Alta.

SOCIALISM AND PUBLIC UTILITIES

Editor, Guide:—I would like to be permitted space for a few statements in regard to Socialism. I think that if people would study this question carefully they would come to the conclusion that the great aim of Socialism is to relieve the working class of the bloodsuckers and exploiters, who only want the votes of the workers to enslave them for the enrichment of a few. As long as one class owns the means by which another class gets its living so long will mankind be divided into masters and slaves. Now take the railroads. Most of our private owned railroads were built by the people and now belong to the capitalists. It is pretty safe to say that our railways never cost the original owners one cent. The promoters bought a charter and the Government furnished the bonds, free townships and large tracts of land. Now the people who built the railways do not own them. The Socialist aim is to have the Government take over the railroads and other public utilities, to operate and run them. But the trouble is the Government belongs to the railway corporations and special interests and is, therefore, bound to work for them. There are a lot of people who insist that we cannot do without the capitalist to equip our industries, etc. It takes equipment to run the postal department and the school system but it does not require the capitalists to take a rake-off. It takes equipment to build roads and bridges but we have done away with the capitalist who formerly collected the toll. Why not run all our public utilities the same way? If the Dominion Government can carry mail there is no reason why it should not carry male and female also. Socialism then, means the ownership of the trusts by the Government and the ownership of the Government by the people, by means of universal suffrage, the Initiative, Referendum and Recall. We have social production and co-operative labor in all our great industries and without the brains and muscles of our workers all the wheels would stop, and until we get social ownership there will always be strife between capital and labor. Therefore, b. other farmers, organize and co-operate to the fullest extent and use your votes as becomes free men and not those who are tied to the party stake.

G. C. BENNETT.

Riddellvale, Alta.

OPPOSES DIRECT LEGISLATION

Editor, Guide:—In a recent issue Mr. F. J. Dixon, of the Direct Legislation League, answers, or attempts to answer, Mr. Austen Dronney's objections to that policy. Mr. Dixon must possess an exceptionally fertile imagination to assert that Direct Legislation has stood the test of time and experience. Will he kindly answer me how, when and where? The first nation to adopt the policy of the Initiative, Referendum and Recall was Switzerland. For twenty years it has stood upon her statute books and twenty years is a very short period of the life of a nation on which to base an assertion that such a drastic change in her form of Government has stood the test of time and experience. Whatever may be said for the efficiency of the Referendum in Switzerland, one thing is certain, the Initiative has proved a complete failure, for in the twenty years of its existence

a very few rich men to exploit the whole community." In other words, to dissolve the trusts and combines. Could anything be more democratic, more conducive to the welfare of the masses? It is precisely what we Westerners are fighting to obtain today. And yet that magnificent advance of democracy was beaten back by the Referendum, by Direct Legislation; and the democratic statesmen of Australia are most emphatic in their opinion that the people were swayed by prejudices and spellbinders. Mr. Dixon also states that the adoption of Direct Legislation in this country will have the effect of "driving out crooks and inducing better men to enter the political arena." In opposition to that statement I will quote Premier Asquith, one of the greatest democratic leaders and scholars of this or any age: a man who desires to see practised to its fullest extent, Government of the people, for the people, by the people.



OUR DAILY PREDICAMENTS.

Wife (to husband, who is nailing up a few creepers for her): "Oh, Arthur, here come Sir Thomas and Lady Stickler to make their first call. Will you come down, or shall I just say you are the jobbing gardener?"

as a law of the land it has only been nine times applied, and is at the present time practically extinct. And will Mr. Dixon kindly inform me of any question of great national importance that has agitated the Swiss people during the past twenty years on which the Referendum has been operated with success? Mr. Dixon states that the people are "far less likely to be swayed by prejudices, party politicians and spellbinders under Direct Legislation because the life of the political parties will not depend upon the success or failure of particular measures at the polls." Direct Legislation obtains as a law in Australia. Last year the Federal Government in that country submitted to the Referendum a great democratic question, on the solving of which the future welfare of the whole people, and especially the working people, depended, and Australia is essentially a working man's country. In their manifesto to the electors the Government stated that "they ask for power to nationalize those industries from which competition is excluded, and which enables

Speaking on the Referendum at Manchester, May 6, 1911, Mr. Asquith said: "Why do you send us to the House of Commons? I do not hold the view that we go there as mere automatic delegates. Nor do I hold the view that we go there as what I may call irresponsible plenipotentiaries. But we go there because you, the electors, the ultimate source of power and authority in this country, after carefully and deliberately canvassing and weighing the policies that have been presented to you, choose the best men you can get for the purpose of doing for you, in your name, upon the general lines of the policy which you have approved, the work of legislation and administration. That is the system—the great invention of modern political genius—that is the system which we in this country have developed or perfected with the admiration and imitation of the rest of the world. Are you going to throw it away? Are you going to make the General Election, that great clash and collision of rival arguments and policies, a mere empty gladiatorial

display? Are you going to say to us, your representatives in the House of Commons, that we are mere pawns on the chessboard, and that whatever we decide is a mere provisional decision which has to come back to you for ratification or disapproval? Because I can tell you that if you are, you will no longer get to represent you in the House of Commons the men you get now; you will degrade the character of your representation and destroy that which is after all, not only the most educative, but the most formative influence in our public life—the conflict on the floor of the House of Commons between the chosen representatives of the two great parties in the State, that great ordeal of dialectical battle, the result of which has been all the great measures which we have placed on the statute book and which have conferred freedom and justice on the people of this kingdom."

Now for one I am not prepared to admit that Mr. Asquith is the mental inferior of Mr. F. J. Dixon or his colleagues of the Direct Legislation League. Neither am I prepared to admit that the majority of the farmers in the West are supporting Direct Legislation in the "splendid manner" that Mr. Dixon would have us believe and I have travelled considerable through the West.

JOSEPH H. ANDREWS.

Langbank, Sask.

WHAT PROTECTION MEANS

Editor, Guide:—Would you kindly permit me the pleasure of reply, in part, to Mr. Alex Coleman's letter in the issue of April 17. Mr. Coleman's letter is so disconnected and touches on so many subjects that to reply in full would necessitate a very lengthy letter. I feel that The Guide cannot do better for the cause of free trade than to publish such letters as Mr. Coleman's.

Mr. Coleman has not grasped what our country and Empire really is. Our country is first, last and all the time the people living within its boundaries. So also is our Empire. Our people are all interested in business or should be, either directly as capitalists or indirectly as workers. Therefore it would be quite correct to say that Canada consisted of a vast collection of businesses. Protection permits certain favored businesses to charge other businesses more than it would under free trade. Therefore protection oppresses one business to the detriment of other businesses. A just protection would be a protection that caused every business to oppress every other business equally. Therefore a just protection would not be a benefit to any business. Therefore free trade would be as just and much better because the people (the country) would not be at the expense of keeping up an army of custom house officials. But what the manufacturers of Canada, and I regret to say the manufacturers of other countries, desire is a protective tariff by which they can oppress their fellow countrymen. They are not in any way actuated by loyalty or patriotism, as they claim to be, but are actuated by greed.

The large profits derived from protection are used, not to employ more men, or to pay higher wages, but to over capitalize. The result is that the protected industry cannot very well compete under free trade conditions. Neither can they export to any extent. The result is a country of protected industries that can only cater to the home market—small businesses. If Mr. Coleman desires a country of exporting businesses he should support free trade. It is reasonable to expect that the population of Canada will multiply many times its present population. Therefore the businesses of this country will multiply in proportion. Although free trade will be hard on the present protected

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NOTICE TO CORRESPONDENTS

This Department of The Guide is maintained especially for the purpose of providing a discussion ground for the readers where they may freely exchange views and derive from each other the benefits of experience and helpful suggestions. Every letter must be signed by the name of the writer, though not necessarily for publication. The views of our correspondents are not of necessity those of The Guide.

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