

SEED GRAIN RATES GRANTED

The railway companies have decided to grant the usual half rates on seed grain, to become effective on February 15 and terminate on May 31. This year the half rate will apply to shipments of seed grain over two different lines the same as on one line. This provision was not made in past years and the result was considerable confusion and consequent hard feeling. This year, however, seed grain may be shipped for actual seeding purposes from any point in the Prairie Provinces to any other point in the Prairie Provinces at half the local rate, whether in car lots or less than car lots. This rate will apply on wheat, oats, barley, flax and grass seeds. From information to hand we gather that there will be a very large demand for seed grain this year. Farmers who have good seed to sell should advertise the fact as early as possible and should be careful that they are able to produce an article quite equal to the statement in their advertisements. Our special seed and poultry number on February 25, should contain the advertisements of every farmer who has seed for sale. Such advertisements must reach The Guide office, accompanied by a money order, not later than the 18th.

TITLES FOR SALE

As all the titles and honors bestowed on Canadians come theoretically from the crown and the procedure is modelled after the British system, it should be interesting to see how they do things over there. Sir George Kekewich and D. A. Thomas have recently made some startling revelations concerning the purchase of titles. These charges have been corroborated by Thomas G. Bowles, a former member of Parliament. Of a fearless and independent turn of mind, Bowles has at different times supported both parties, so he is able to give chapter and verse in support of the charge that there is a regular system of buying and selling titles. The "tariff for honors," he asserts, is £50,000 for a baronetcy. Peerages come higher, anywhere from £150,000 to £400,000 being paid. These amounts, of course, go into the campaign fund of the party in office. No wonder that the Liberal funds, according to Mr. Bowles, rose from £7,000 in 1907, shortly after coming into power, to £500,000 a few years later. Another of Mr. Bowles' spicy revelations discloses the fact that a would-be peer refused to pay the customary contribution for his title, whereupon the party whip intimated that the peerage would not be forthcoming. The would-be peer, however, threatened to publish the correspondence unless his name were included in the next birthday list of honors. The threat worked and, sure enough, the name appeared among those whom His Majesty had been pleased to honor! What a fraud and a humbug. The only reason the custom survives is because the people do not yet know how those titles are obtained and how little they really mean. All titles, of course, are not auctioned off in this way, but recent Canadian experience seems to show that a man has a much better chance of being knighted or otherwise decorated if he has a few million dollars behind him. How little esteemed such titles are by the men who know most about them, and who have the granting in their own hands, is shown by the fact that Asquith, Lloyd George, Balfour and Premier Borden do not take any such honors for themselves. People are beginning to find out that a title, even to the peerage itself, is an article of commerce, to be bought like other commodities. What effect is likely to be produced on the public mind when it is learned that Lord Blank, whose title was supposed to honor a worthy life of unselfish patriotism, actually bought his honor with a cool million or two million dollars? This traffic in titles, casting

its reflection on the worthy as well as the mercenary men in public life, must have an evil influence on politics, social life and the morals of the people. No one respects or looks up to a man whose only distinction is having money enough to buy a high-sounding title. In a democratic age and country all men should be on an equal footing. The highest honor must always be the respect and devotion of the people. And nothing can entitle a man to this respect except his own life and work.

MINORITY RULE IN SASKATCHEWAN

Complete returns of the special vote taken in Saskatchewan to decide whether or not the Direct Legislation Bill passed a year ago by the legislature of that province should be made effective show that the bill was endorsed by the large majority of 26,696 votes to 4,897. A majority in favor of the bill was given in every one of the 53 constituencies, ranging from 10 in Humboldt, where the vote was 344 to 334, up to 929 in Saltcoats, where the total stood 989 for and 60 against. In the constituency of Biggar only 6 votes were cast against the bill and 444 in favor. Altogether, 16.52 per cent. of those on the voters' list went to the polls and voted for the Direct Legislation bill, and 3.03 per cent. voted against it. But, strange to say, the opinion of the 3.03 per cent. prevails. A most remarkable election, truly. The "ayes" were more than five times as many as the "nays," but nevertheless the "nays" had it. This extraordinary reversal of the principle of majority rule was brought about by the requirement imposed by the legislature, that unless 30 per cent. of those on the list recorded their votes in favor of the bill it should not become law, no matter how small a contrary vote might be cast. Considering the fact that no candidates for offices and no other question was being voted on at the same time, that a considerable portion of the voters had to travel several miles to the voting place, that many of them were left in ignorance as to where the polls were to be held, and that the government candidates in the last provincial election, after an exciting campaign, in which many thousands of dollars were spent, could only induce 34 per cent. of the electors to go to the polls and vote for them, it is certainly not to be wondered at that only 16.52 per cent. of the voters on the list went out and voted for Direct Legislation. Taking the circumstances into consideration, in fact, the vote should be most encouraging to those who believe in the rule of the people thru the Initiative, Referendum and Recall. It shows that the people of Saskatchewan are in favor of the reform, and there is little doubt that eventually the pressure of public opinion will secure its adoption. All believers in true democracy, however, will hope that when next Saskatchewan votes on Direct Legislation the bill submitted will be a real Direct Legislation Bill and will give the people control of the expenditure of public money which they would not have secured under the bill of 1913.

FINANCIAL STRINGENCY EASIER

During the past few weeks information in financial circles is to the effect that the money situation is improving. The Bank of England discount rate has dropped to three per cent. and the Canadian bank statements indicate that the bankers are loosening up somewhat on their reserves. Mortgage money is also stated to be somewhat easier, and more of it in sight for investment. The general public, or that portion of it inclined to borrow, has had a pretty bad scare during the past year and will undoubtedly be very shy about assuming fresh obligations, even tho money is easier. Those who have felt the financial pinch in the past year will, in the majority of cases, register a firm

resolve to avoid borrowing on uncertain time and terms in the future. The result of this hesitancy to borrow money during 1914 will have a very salutary effect in reducing interest rates, and increasing the supply of money available for business.

The tariff on foodstuffs is an excellent device to keep up the cost of living. A steamer recently left New Zealand for Vancouver containing a big cargo of veal, mutton and butter, according to Mr. Beddoe, Canadian trade commissioner for New Zealand. But before the British Columbia consumers can touch any of this cheaper food, the 17,500 cases or 1,050,000 pounds of butter must pay a tariff tax of 4 cents a pound or \$42,000; the 278 carcasses of veal, or 16,680 pounds, must pay 3 cents a pound, or \$500.40, and the 1,250 carcasses of mutton, or 56,250 pounds, must pay 3 cents a pound, or \$1,687.50. By the time this \$44,187.90 tax has been added to the original cost and the middlemen's profits have been calculated on the whole, the poor consumers will not be much better off after all.

Readers of The Winnipeg Telegram must have been amazed the other day to read in large letters on its front page "Women May Vote." No doubt the hidebound party follower shivered as he thought that this newspaper, in a moment of independence, had broken with the Roblin Government. But The Telegram story did not say whether or not the Manitoba Government was still against woman suffrage. It simply stated that women would be allowed to vote in its circulation contest. "Equal rights for all" would prevail. The Telegram is very anxious to give the women a ballot, when it means money for the paper. When it only means giving women a just voice in the government of themselves, their homes and their country, The Telegram follows the Roblin Government in pooh-poohing the very idea.

A carload of alfalfa seed, which it is hoped will be the foundation of many fields of this rich fodder, is being brought from North Dakota by a syndicate of public spirited business men in Brandon, and is to be distributed to the farmers of the district at cost. The success which has been achieved by Jas. D. McGregor in producing world's champion steers, fed on alfalfa grown in the Brandon district, has led Brandon business men to take this matter up, and they are deserving of great credit. The government, by the way, will collect a duty of 10 per cent. on the value of the alfalfa, or nearly \$3,000, when it crosses the line. That's the way the tariff encourages the agricultural industry.

We are receiving a very large number of enquiries for information in regard to co-operation to assist in preparing addresses to be delivered before local associations. All the best information we have on this subject is published in The Guide from time to time, and our readers should keep their copies for reference, as we do not keep back copies on hand and cannot supply them when requested.

We hope that every local association, or any other farmers' organization, that has been doing co-operative or collective buying during the past year will send a complete report of their work to The Guide for publication in our Co-operative Number.

As announced on another page, The Grain Growers' Grain Company will not operate the Manitoba Government elevators during the next grain season, as they found it to be a losing enterprise financially.