

## IT RESTS WITH THE C.P.R.

Today the Prairie Provinces are completely at the mercy of the Canadian Pacific railway. This giant corporation holds in its hands a greater power than any Canadian government ever wielded. The entire West is suffering from the inadequacy of railway transportation. Relief is urgently needed, and to be effective must be immediate. Such relief on such short notice can come from only one source, namely, the Canadian Pacific railway. Will the Canadian Pacific railway shut its eyes to the needs of the people whom it now holds at its mercy? Immediate relief can come only by opening up the southern route and allowing the grain from the Prairie Provinces to reach the markets of the world over American railways. The Canadian Pacific railway holds the key to the south. By enforcing its present "local" rate, the door remains closed, but by giving a through rate the congestion will be relieved. The capacity of the country elevators in the three Prairie Provinces is practically 57,000,000 bushels, but owing to the multiplicity of grades, it has never been found possible to utilize within several million bushels of the total capacity. Today the country elevators are full. There probably yet remains in the hands of the farmers, threshed and ready for market, 50,000,000 bushels of the various kinds of grain. In many places wheat is piled on the ground in the open. In addition, it is a fairly safe estimate that there is 30,000,000 bushels of grain still unthreshed, and though the threshing machines are still running in some places, a large portion of this will never be threshed. The total capacity of the elevators at Fort William is about 26,000,000 bushels. There are also 39 boats that will remain in that port for the winter and will accommodate over 3,000,000 bushels, though what is stored in the boats must be in prime condition. On account of the many varieties of grades, it will not be possible to put in the terminals within several millions of the capacity. On Friday, December 22, the stock in the terminals was 11,500,000 bushels, so that the total available accommodation at the lake front is probably about 13,000,000 bushels, and the grain is pouring in at the rate of over 4,000,000 bushels per week. The only outlet to the East is over the Canadian Pacific railway, and this road cannot hardly carry grain north of the lakes to equal half this per week, so that even under the best circumstances the terminal accommodation is decreasing by a large amount each week. This will mean that by the end of January congestion will be complete. The newspapers on December 19 contained the report of a conference between the Canadian Pacific railway officials and leading grain men, which was held at Fort William on that day. It was stated as a result of the conference that there would be no congestion in through wheat traffic, and that there would be none of the export trade diverted to the south, but that it would all "proceed to the Canadian seaboard, over Canadian tracks and through Canadian territory." This, of course, was a pure bluff on the part of the Canadian Pacific railway, intended obviously to forestall any demand to give through rates to the south from the Prairie Provinces. But even if there were plenty of room in the terminals, the Canadian railways cannot begin to handle the traffic in the country. Between the two fires the farmer gets burned. The farmer stands the loss while the railways gather in the profit. With the situation as we have given it above, is the Canadian Pacific railway going to maintain its "dog-in-the-manger" policy while the farmers in the Prairie Provinces suffer grievous losses through inability to market their grain? By making a through rate to the south at the present time, from 2,000,000 to 3,000,000 bushels of grain could go out immediately from southern Saskatchewan over the Soo

and Arcola lines, and probably 1,000,000 bushels from Manitoba. Recently a large number of cars have brought coal and implements into Saskatchewan over the Soo line and returned empty because of the high freight rates. This would afford immediate and greatly needed relief and would still leave all the traffic the Canadian railways could handle. If the Canadian Pacific railway takes the initiative in granting a through rate, the other railways will be compelled to follow suit. The C.P.R., a few weeks ago, aided materially in relieving the coal situation and deserves credit for its prompt action in that matter. Today there is greater need for the C.P.R. to come to the rescue by adopting a reasonable rate north of the boundary. If the people of the West consider that we have made out a case against the Canadian Pacific railway, then they can back us up and help themselves by placing their demands in the hands of the officials of that company. Every individual farmer with grain to ship and every local association in the three Prairie Provinces feeling the need of better transportation facilities, should write at once to Mr. George Bury, general manager, Canadian Pacific railway, Winnipeg, and urge that the Canadian Pacific railway take immediate action in giving through rates to the south. If this action is followed by the farmers' organizations and farmers individually, it will bring tremendous pressure to bear in the right quarter. It might be well to point out that the present conditions will have a very detrimental effect when advertised abroad, as is sure to be done in thousands of letters sent to friends in other countries. Now is the time for the C.P.R. to show its mettle.

## PUNISHING THE MERGER

The city of Winnipeg gave the cement merger, and other mergers in general, a well deserved rebuke last week, when it placed an order for 25,000 barrels of cement with an American firm. The city will thus save \$3,500 over and above the duty of \$15,000 that must be paid into the public treasury. The cement merger claims that on account of high Canadian freight rates it cannot compete with American firms. The high freight rates are not the fault of the Canadian consumers, and the "water" in the merger is another item which is hardly chargeable to the people. Cement can be manufactured in Canada as cheaply as in the United States under fair conditions. The fact that the city of Winnipeg can pay \$15,000 in duty and still save \$3,500, gives some idea of the plunder which the protected Canadian manufacturers are piling away in their coffers. By purchasing from foreign manufacturers, this plunder is diverted from the pockets of the manufacturers to the public treasury. The cement merger promoters have secured a high wall of protection around the Canadian people and have proceeded to levy their tribute to the full limit of the law. If Canadian consumers refuse to buy from the merger, they are "unpatriotic," but it is gratifying to know that even the city of Winnipeg has finally refused to swallow the "patriotic" buncombe which the manufacturers have been circulating. When we consider that on this one order of cement there would have been \$15,000 in tariff tax to divide between the manufacturers and the railways, the enormity of the annual toll they thus levy upon the Canadian people can be imagined. The government, by maintaining the duty on cement, is retarding building operations in every city in Canada. The best way to promote building and development is to make the necessary materials as cheap as possible. The city of Winnipeg knows this and has repudiated the cement merger. How about the farmer who pays tribute on his agricultural implements? The

tariff tax upon implements is hindering the development of the West most seriously. Upon Canadian made implements the tariff tax is divided between the manufacturers and the railways. Under free trade in farm implements, the price would drop at once and the Canadian tariff barons and the railway magnates would be forced to content themselves with a reasonable profit upon their business.

Correspondents occasionally complain that The Guide favors either the Liberal or the Conservative party too much to suit them. A blind party man never sees anything but his party. He would give up almost all he possesses when somebody shouts "Grit" or "Tory." How long will the people continue to allow the politicians to fool them? The interests of all the Western farmers are identical upon the big national questions. But they kill each other at the ballot boxes. Every Western farmer knows how greatly certain reforms are needed. What is the sense in worrying over the "Grit" or "Tory" parties? The highest aim of both parties is votes. The welfare of the people is largely a side issue.

The new elevator bill will be introduced in the House of Commons early in the New Year. To give adequate protection at the terminals, the government should take over all the elevators at the lake front. Half measures will not prove sufficient. The only way to stop the graft is to remove the opportunities of the grafters. It is to be hoped also that facilities will be provided by which a sample market may be developed in the near future.

Criticism has been made of the reference to the conditions in Western Canada as shown in our Progress number, under the caption, "Why Not Change It?" It has been charged that The Guide is keeping people off the farms by such statements. That is hardly the point. The main thing to decide is whether or not our statement is true. If so, then it should be remedied. Why should there be a criticism of publishing the truth about such matters?

Reports are coming in from various parts of the West that local associations are not holding meetings because, in some cases, the leading officers will not take action. When this occurs it would be wise for the rank and file of the members to call a meeting over the heads of such officers. It is necessary if the cause of the organized farmers is to progress, that its officers should be not only in sympathy with the movement, but also active and energetic.

Mr. Borden was reminded by many Western farmers on the anniversary of the "Siege of Ottawa" that they were looking to him to raise the tariff burden from the people. No political party will raise the tariff burden until the people are sufficiently strong and united to demand it.

When one man puts his hand in his neighbor's pocket and lifts his purse that is called theft and the offender is punished. When the law authorizes a protected manufacturer or a railway magnate to do the same thing that is called enterprise and is rewarded by a title.

Premier Borden last summer gave the Western people a definite and distinct promise that a co-operative bill would be passed if he was elected. Let us hope that he will not forget.

Farmers should begin early to procure their seed grain, as there will be a very heavy demand this year. Half rates for seed grain will be in force on all railways after January 1, 1912.