

largest cause. This is a rather serious charge against buttermakers in Western Canada, but the unanimity of opinion on this point among a score or more dairymen and butter-makers who contribute their ideas, leaves little ground for doubting that the charge in a large measure is true.

Absolute cleanliness in every detail, in feeding and managing the cows, milking, caring for the milk, cream, butter and dairy utensils is essential for the production of a high class, long keeping product. The hints given in the articles on the question in this issue are worth considering by readers interested in the subject of buttermaking.

British Taxation Proposals

Not since the days of the Reform Bill, or the agitation for the repeal of the corn laws, has political excitement in Britain reached such pitch as it has been keyed to for the past few weeks. What will be the affect of the Lloyd-George Budget? What will happen if the Lords reject it? What will be the result on the country if they don't? Britain has reached a point where something has to be done. Revenue must be found and taxes of some sort must be levied to raise it.

Protection is the solution, say some; protect the industries as Germany and the United States have protected theirs. But protection is a hard pill for the laboring and middle-class Englishmen to swallow. They want free food. Protection appeals to the aristocracy and landed class, and farmers even seem to be favoring it. But England at heart seems to be for Free Trade. Then comes David Lloyd-George, a Welshman of the middle class, an out and out free trader; some say of socialistic tendencies. He proposes reforms in taxation as one of the first remedies and aims to shift on to the ultra-rich a larger portion of the taxation burden. He proposes to tax land on such basis that landowners will have to put their holdings to better use than merely as game preserves; to increase the tax on the incomes of the wealthy; to increase the inheritance tax and the tax on luxuries. His theory is that what the British people needs is not protection from the outsider, but protection from the wealthy, and particularly the land-owning classes at home. And his proposals, embodied in the now famous budget of 1909, have been sanctioned by the House of Commons.

What will be the affect of the measure? Some say it will drive capital out of the country, and increase poverty and the industrial depression; some say it is the opening of the way for Socialism, and the great body of common people seem to think it will mean lighter taxes, and less grinding labor to win a bare, precarious subsistence. At all events the measure seems likely to become law. If the Lords reject it they will raise grave constitutional questions. If they pass it the government is almost certain to go to the country on the issue. The people then will have an opportunity of expressing an opinion on some of the most radical taxation proposals ever made by a British government. If they reject them the alternative seems to be protection on the lines laid down some years ago by Joseph Chamberlain. So there is reason for some excitement. Britain is facing a grave national crisis.

The Grading of Grain

EDITOR FARMER'S ADVOCATE:

Nothing connected with the marketing of grain more vitally affects the grain grower than the work of grading. It is important to the individual farmer directly, because an error in classifying the farmer's single car may mean a loss to him of a hundred dollars or more; and it is not less important to all the grain growers indirectly, as the reputation of our grain upon the British market depends in no small measure upon the way the grain is graded.

Western Canada has been very fortunate in this. At least that during the years of its rapid development as a grain producing country this important work has been presided over by a man possessing high qualities of character. Grading grain work is of such nature that satisfaction to all parties is impossible, and yet it is hardly conceivable that any man could have given greater general satisfaction than the present chief inspector at Winnipeg. To say that mistakes — serious mistakes — have not been made would be absurd, but the interests of the individual farmer and the well being of the grain growing interests generally have been well served.

It is a matter of regret that in the war that has raged with more or less bitterness between the organized farmers and the grain dealers the latter should have stooped to make capital by seeking to discredit the work done by Mr. Horn's department. Some allowance must, I suppose, be made for the position the elevator man finds himself in. Every farmer who ships his grain directly is a customer lost to the elevator, and it is perhaps only human that elevators should try to convince the shipping farmer that if he gains five to eight cents a bushel by loading the wheat directly into a car, he will lose as much or more by having the grade of his wheat lowered, and so we occasionally meet a farmer who tells us his car of wheat only graded No. 3, while the local elevator gave him No. 1 for the remnant he had over the car load. I read a letter written by a farmer to one of the papers, in which the writer stated his car only went No. 3 Northern, while some screenings he had out of his seed (the same wheat) was graded No. 2 Northern at the elevator, and the farmer, not being versed in elevator methods, asked if something was not rotten in the state of Denmark.

The foregoing will, I think, convey the impression that I am not inclined to criticise unfavorably the work of the inspection department; but no man can look at the work that has been done, at its rapid growth, and then look forward to its possible development with any reasonable confidence or satisfaction. The inspection department today is not so much a system as a man, and what is wanted is a system that shall be superior to and in the main independent of any man. To that end at no distant date it will be necessary to completely overhaul and reorganize the whole thing.

It is greatly to the credit of the chief inspector that things have run so smoothly up to now, because the first condition of a successful system of grading is the admission that mistakes may possibly be made. If that is granted then it follows that a system of checks must be adopted by which the mistakes may be corrected. The assurance we often hear from officials that mistakes cannot possibly happen amounts to just nothing at all. When a foreman and three or four men go out to sample a series of cars there is always the possibility that the wrong car number may be put into the sample bag, entailing the necessity of consequences the most undesirable, under the present method of doing business. There is hardly any possibility of such a mistake being discovered in time to correct it — the less so if the owner of the car is not acquainted with the conditions of shipping.

While staying at Duluth and enquiring into the method of handling grain there, Mr. McKenzie and myself found a system in operation which rendered such mistakes next to impossible. This was done by what is known as a sampling bureau, semi-public, semi-private undertaking, by which all cars sampled by the state inspector were sampled a second time independently. This work at Duluth is undertaken by a Mr. Pugh, who has his office in the board of trade building. The samples taken by this firm are sent directly to the commission firms who have charge of the wheat, and there is a friendly co-operation between the state inspector's office and the commission agents which works out this way: As soon as samples are received in the

office of the state inspector the grading is proceeded with with all possible dispatch, the number of the car and the inspector's decision are set out on a tabulated form, no name indicating either sender or destination being permitted. This form is hung in the inspector's office and is accessible to the public during the whole of the day. The bureau's sample in the meantime will have reached the commission agent. He too will have graded the grain — I am presupposing he knows how to do so. He has no business there if he does not know, and by passing from his office to the inspector's he can at once learn if there is any serious discrepancy between his own sample and the inspector's. Although very careful enquiry was made it was not discovered that the dual system caused any kind of offence or created any kind of unpleasantness, while it gave to the farmer shipping his wheat a positive assurance that possible error would be detected in time to be corrected.

With such a system established in Winnipeg we should do away with a large part of the uncertainty that at present attends the sending forward of a car of grain by farmers whose lack of experience places them at a disadvantage. The grain growers' delegates to Ottawa this year called the Ministers' special attention to the fact that at present on a car being re-inspected the name of the shipper was known to the inspector, and an assurance has been received from the Minister that this condition of things shall be done away with before the next crop is handled, making it certain the grain would be graded entirely on its merits — as it should be.

A further alteration, and of much more importance, is the need of determining the true standard of quality in the grain. At present the inspector's decision is given on physical appearance entirely. It is getting too late in the day for this to be much longer continued. Under it in many cases the miller gets a value to which he is in no sense entitled, while the farmer loses a proportionate amount. In no part of the world where wheat is grown is it so much affected by climatic conditions as in the Canadian West, and, consequently, there is the greater need for the utmost care being taken that a correct estimate shall be made of what is real and what is only apparent damage. Today the means of determining the real value of wheat for flour and bread-making has been reduced to an exact science, and the farmers have a right to ask that the fullest possible advantage shall be taken of this to make sure that money which rightly belongs to them shall not be put into the pocket of someone else.

One last point is the crying need for the reconstruction of the survey board. As at present constituted it is an anachronism. It represents nobody and is responsible to nobody. Various interests are supposed to be represented in its makeup, but, as those acquainted with its working know, this has no meaning at all. In practice when a survey is called for, three gentlemen connected with grain trade are called in, and though they may be Tom, Dick and Harry they are set to perform this important work for which, if the work was well done, they are paid a most inadequate fee, the whole performance bespeaking a misappreciation of the work to be done, and a misconception of the ability required to do it.

The survey board should be a body of men permanently engaged, chosen with the special view of representing and protecting the interests of the farmers. I would suggest that a survey board be made up by the appointment of a man from each of the western provinces, chosen for their special fitness for the work, and preferably chosen by the local governments, who, in the nature of things, know more of what is required than the Dominion Minister of Trade and Commerce. Having these men so selected, the friction of a not unfriendly rivalry between the inspector's department and the appeal board would incite each to give the best service of which they were capable.

When we bear in mind the great development of the grain growing industry that is going on, the certainty that there will be for the next ten years an average increase of not less than twenty million bushels a year, any expense for placing the work of grading the grain on a satisfactory basis, will be as nothing compared to the result of giving to the farmers an absolute assurance that everything is being done to give to all alike a square deal.

Sask.

GEO. LANGLEY.