

The Grain Growers' Guide

Winnipeg, Wednesday, April 28th, 1915

SEEDING CONDITIONS GOOD

Reports from the three Prairie Provinces indicate that the weather has been exceptionally good during the wheat seeding season, and that the land has been more carefully prepared than in any previous year. There is undoubtedly more land seeded to wheat than ever before and we believe that greater care has been taken in the selection and testing of the seed. The recent rains will provide the much-needed moisture and give the new crop a splendid start. Nature has been very kind to the Western farmers this spring, and if the farmers themselves have done their part to the best of their knowledge and ability there will be an immense crop of wheat harvested this fall. The leading market experts of the world are unanimous in predicting high prices for grain harvested in 1915. The prospects are that this will be the best year financially that the farmers of Western Canada have ever experienced.

BOTH PARTIES GRAFTING

A piece of graft which neither political party is likely to make much fuss about is at present being practiced by permission of the Postmaster-General of Canada. Neither party will expose this graft because both parties are practicing and benefiting by it. We refer to the fact that campaign literature is being sent out from Ottawa thru the post office and distributed all over the country without the payment of postage. This has been made possible by the extension of the franking privilege after the closing of the parliamentary session at Ottawa. The postal regulations permit members of Parliament to receive and mail letters at Ottawa, during the session of Parliament without stamps being affixed, their initials on the letter taking the place of the postage stamp. The privilege is granted to members of the House of Commons and the Senate in order that they may be able to carry on the correspondence necessary to the discharge of their parliamentary duties without personal expense, and they are also provided at the public expense with stationery and the help of stenographers. The privilege, however, ceases as soon as Parliament prorogues, but it has now been extended so as to allow the campaign literature of the two old parties to be carried thru the mail at the expense of the people without the payment of any postage. A few weeks ago Parliament passed a law requiring the people to pay a one cent war tax on letters and post-cards, in order to increase the revenue of the Dominion and it strikes one as being somewhat incongruous that, after this, the government should permit tons and tons of matter to go thru the mail absolutely free of charge. If the party political machines were compelled to pay for the postage of their campaign literature it might not have been necessary to raise the rates of postage to three cents on letters and two cents on postal cards. There is no reason why the Grit and Tory parties should have the free use of the mail, any more than the Grain Growers' Association, The Guide, or any business concern. The fact that both parties have this privilege does not make it any better. It is nothing but robbery of the public treasury.

THE DEADLIEST FOE

David Lloyd George, the British Chancellor of the Exchequer, has been the author of many striking phrases, but it is doubtful if he ever uttered a truer or more significant sentence than that which he made use of when in conference with representatives of the British shipbuilders recently. "We are fighting Germany, Austria, and drink," said Lloyd George, "and so far as I can see, the greatest of these deadly foes is drink." Lord Kitchener and Sir John French do not underestimate the strength of the German and Austrian foes, but nevertheless they agree with the Chancellor in this statement. The demon-drink, moreover, has been fighting Britain, indeed, every civilized country in the world, not only since the month of August last but day in and day out for centuries. It has sapped the strength of a large portion of the people physically, mentally, morally and in every other way. Now in a life and death struggle the leaders of the people realize that before they can defeat the foreign foe, who fights with shell and submarine, they must first conquer the enemy at home who deals out death and destruction thru alcohol. Russia, perhaps because she suffered more thru drink than the other nations, was the first to wipe out this enemy. Now it looks as if Great Britain may follow the example of her ally. Needing every ounce of her strength in order to bring the war to a speedy and successful end, Great Britain finds that drink has impaired the efficiency of thousands of men who would otherwise have been good soldiers, wasted resources needed for national defence, and now is hindering the manufacture and transportation of ammunition and supplies needed by the army in the field. It is the last-named fact that is likely to bring prohibition to Great Britain. It has been a common thing in the past for men employed in all kinds of occupations to be absent from work for a day or more "on the spree" after each pay day, and this has frequently been a cause of complaint by the proprietors of factories and other large works. Now, with ship-building yards, engineering shops and factories of many kinds working to their utmost capacity to turn out war supplies, this bad habit is having the effect of seriously curtailing the output and transportation of guns, ammunition, food and other equipment needed for immediate use at the battle front. The present is no time for half measures, and there is good reason to believe that the British Government will handle this question with the same courage it has displayed in all its undertakings in connection with the war and prohibit the liquor traffic entirely. British fair play will require that prohibition shall apply to the champagne of the wealthy as well as to the beer of the working man, and King George and Lord Kitchener have both shown their willingness to become prohibitionists by giving orders that intoxicating liquors shall not be served in their households.

Now is the chance for the farmers. Both the Grit and Tory parties are rotten with graft. Let us put some honest Free Traders in Parliament to protect the interests of the people.

FORGET THE OLD PARTIES

The organized farmers of the three Prairie Provinces have year after year declared for the abolition of the protective tariff and the taxation of land values as the most equitable means of raising the revenues required for public purposes. Year after year these resolutions have been placed before both political parties at Ottawa. The Conservative party has absolutely ignored the western farmers and their proposals, and their representations were never so much as mentioned by the Finance Minister when he arbitrarily increased the protective tariff all round a few weeks ago. The Liberal party, when in power, declined to reduce the protective tariff, and, in fact, continued the policy of protection inaugurated by the previous Conservative government. The Reciprocity Agreement proposed by the Liberal party was for the free interchange of natural products, but would not have reduced the protective tariff on manufactured goods except on a few items. When Finance Minister White increased the tariff a few weeks ago, the Liberal party criticized the increases, but their leaders gave no indication whatever that they would reduce the tariff if returned to power, or that they would even bring forward the Reciprocity Agreement again. Unbiased judgment must conclude that the Liberal party is no more likely to give tariff reduction or free trade than the Conservative party, and also that the Liberal party has forsaken its policy of Reciprocity. What, now, are the western farmers going to do? The protective tariff is draining the life-blood out of the farmers of Western Canada and without even producing the revenue required to run the country. The organized farmers of the West constitute the largest body of organized producers in Canada, yet, with the exception of the Reciprocity Agreement, they have been absolutely ignored by both political parties. It is said that if Independent candidates are nominated, who will honestly support the farmers' demands, they will not be elected, because the farmers will not support them as they should, but will continue to vote for their two old parties as they have done in the past. It is also said that the right thing to do is to try to reform their two old parties as they have done in the past. It is also said that the right thing to do is to try to reform the two old parties from the inside. The supporters of this idea are not familiar with history, or they would know that it has never been accomplished in any other country. The Free Trade movement in Great Britain in 1840 to 1846 was only successful because the Free Traders elected candidates absolutely independent of both of the two old parties. Many of their candidates were defeated, but they were not discouraged, and soon they had a vote in parliament that could not be disregarded. The hope of the Western farmers lies in forgetting their allegiance to the Grit and Tory parties and in nominating and electing independent men with the courage and backbone to fight for the farmers' rights. Many such candidates will be defeated. Many farmers will still vote for their old party. But what of that? Reformers in every age have contended against the