

The Mail Bag

CANADIAN IDEALS

Editor, Guide:—I wish to express a few sentiments under the above heading. The ideals of a nation are important, because they represent, first, individual opinion, then public opinion, or sentiment, and in a broader sense public sentiment may become national sentiment and policy. Every citizen of this country is influencing public sentiment in greater or less degree, according to his or her influence, so we see the responsibility that is resting on each one of us. This applies more particularly to Canada, because she is a young nation in her formative period, so the responsibility is all the greater, and we should regard it not only as a duty, but a great privilege to be alive and a citizen of a growing and what we believe will ultimately be a great country and to have a share, be it small or great, in its upbuilding. What, then, kind of sentiments and ideals should we cherish? In this new country we should cherish ideals that are as broad and free as our magnificent prairies, as high, strong and rugged as the mighty Rockies to the west, and as lovely and beautiful as our virgin forests and our beautiful lakes and rivers. The sentiments and superstitions, the cramped and selfish views of life, inherited from other countries or past ages, or even allowed to grow up in this country, should be swept away, by force of public opinion or sentiment, and nothing tolerated that does not embrace a universal brotherhood of man and the fatherhood of God. In the education of the people and the spreading of the ideals of equal rights, justice, love and purity The Guide is doing a great work and is a paper of which Canadians will be increasingly proud as they come more and more to see its value. I like The Guide for its straightforward and fearless manner, its transparent fairness, its freedom from all party trammels, or influence of the big interests; indeed I will venture to say, it is the leader among Canadian journals in its independence of thought in the interests of Democracy and one which should have the deserving support of every farmer and city worker. Selfishness is the great evil of the world today and it should be condemned and brought into the limelight wherever encountered. The test of a person's patriotism for his or her country is the amount of sacrifice they are willing to make for its highest good, and the same will apply to corporations, which are made up of individuals. The big interests or small interests make a big mistake in being too selfish and grasping; selfishness always acts like a boomerang and returns to strike the thrower. The motto of every corporation should be—The greatest service for the least remuneration possible, or service first, profits second. With such policies as these the resultant development and prosperity in the country would react upon themselves and they would prosper infinitely more than under a policy of profits first, last and all the time. The Direct Legislation campaign is going on in Saskatchewan and we believe will be successful and be a great factor in educating the people in Democracy and self-government. As to woman suffrage, I think the men of our country should feel themselves honored if the women of Canada want the vote, and the reason often given that women are not intelligent enough is not the real reason, which is, that the men know only too well that many things they sanction would be soon swept away if the women could vote, and I see no moral reason why they should not.

Yours very truly,

JOHN G. HENRY.

Regina, Sask.

SHOULD STOP KICKING

Editor, Guide:—I see by a jeweler's advertisement that diamonds are admitted free into Canada! Then what are we farmers kicking about a little duty on agricultural implements and a few other necessities, when we, and other millionaires, can use diamonds absolutely free of duty? I am experiencing the evils of Protection in another form at the present moment. The U.S.A. protect their shipping by forbidding foreign ships carrying passengers from one U.S. port to another, consequently I am on a

miserable boat, unfit for passenger service, because the American owners are protected against good, Free Trade, British ships.

F. W. GODSAL.

OPPOSES INTERIOR STORAGE

Editor, Guide:—Lately we have heard but little of the scheme of the Grain Commission to establish interior storage elevators at certain points in the West, for which it is understood that sites, in some cases, have been secured. Fortunately, so far as the public knows, the matter has gone no further and it is to be hoped, now that the railway companies have proved (largely owing to the force of competition) that they can handle the crop practically as offered in a season of heavy shipments, that no more public money will be spent on the scheme.

The sole reason for the construction of this additional storage has been to relieve the railway companies from some of their duties as public carriers, and it is coolly proposed that the cost of this shall fall upon the public instead of upon those who would be benefited by the change, namely, the railway companies.

In addition to the initial cost of the scheme there is also the probable ultimate loss to the farmer—as I have pointed out on a previous occasion—of a lower price for grain thus stored, as it may very easily happen that the stability of the "futures" market (with its consequent reaction upon "cash" prices) will be weakened should it be thought that the railway companies would fall down in their deliveries from

But what have Mackenzie and Mann done to earn their titles? They are millionaires, owning the street railway in Winnipeg, Toronto and other cities, and in the West Indies; have they not a big holding in the enormous profits of P. Burns and Co., butchers and cattle dealers? Why are not their own millions used to build the C.N.R. and save the credit of Canada, which they are risking? Have they put up a cent of their own in the C.N.R.? The country does not want to take over the C.N.R., it is too cheaply built, and is not where it is most wanted, and the country was not consulted as to where it should be built. Let Mackenzie and Mann finish it, without Canada giving them any more millions; they have exploited us enough. And let them resign their titles till they show that they honorably deserve them. Is it not time for Canada to give up accepting ill-bought titles from England? Men who have deserved well of their country in the United States are not less noble without a title. Yours truly,

"HONOR MAKES THE MAN."

TAXATION OF LAND VALUES

Editor, Guide:—The Taxation of Land Values is a prominent reform advocated by the organized farmers and it should be interesting to know how it works in practice.

In rural Alberta we have what may be termed a modified form of this system of taxation, and which has been in force long enough to show some results. One fault in the system is shown in the method of valuation, and on this point alone

of production, and many other kinds of produce also. The method of assessment in Alberta, according to the municipal act, should be on the actual cash value of the land without improvements. This sounds easy, but it is difficult to ascertain and especially in localities where all want to sell and no one to buy. Value is based upon the quality of the land, whether first, second or third class, and the distance from the railway shipping point, this point evidently being considered as the consuming point. This produces some peculiar results. The majority would readily sell for their assessed value and less, but as land is a drug on the market and no offers to buy, how can this be the actual cash value?

The actual value seems to have no consideration; that is, the amount that can be earned by intelligent labor applied to the land, taking into consideration the distance from final market, the nature of the soil, its adaptability to certain lines of farming, water supply, the restrictions of the protective policy, the price of necessities, and the nature of the access to, and the distance from the nearest railway shipping point, and also the community value, whether it is in a well settled locality, the distance from neighbors, whether the people are staying with the farms or leaving them. To ascertain that there are farm lands in Alberta that have at present a very low cash or non-speculative value is startling but true, then such land should pay no tax. Henry George's claim that his system of taxation is just is quite true and so would the system in Alberta be just if taxed according to actual value. Then farms in outlying districts or in localities not well adapted to farming would be paying little or no tax, which would be quite in line with the revenue earned therefrom and the hardships endured.

Some single taxer may start the protection and free trade argument, but it makes no difference, as it simply alters the basis of valuation; but that basis must apply to all lands. It is evident we must have taxes to build roads, but the expenditure should bear some relation to the real value of the country served. What need is there for a prairie boulevard when two plowed furrows or a prairie trail would do just as well? How many unnecessary and useless roads have been made, only showing that lavish expenditure on roads has not prevented abandoned farms or dwindling rural population. The claim that this system of taxation will eliminate the speculator has not yet been proved; it seems to be a benefit under an inflated valuation. To assess the speculator on the actual value of his land would be just, and more detrimental to his credit, or he may be surtaxed, but whether the latter is just is another question. High taxes on lands held by speculators will eventually be paid from the labor of some future tiller of the soil, and the speculator invariably gets value for his money in improvements. When taxes become a burden, they must be unjust, and that they are a burden, the assessment rolls of many municipalities will show.

Perhaps the answer is contained in a paragraph I read in the financial column of an Eastern paper commencing.

"The farmers of the West have just reaped a bountiful harvest, perhaps the best harvest the West ever produced," and the paragraph truthfully concludes, "And we are just receiving the proceeds."

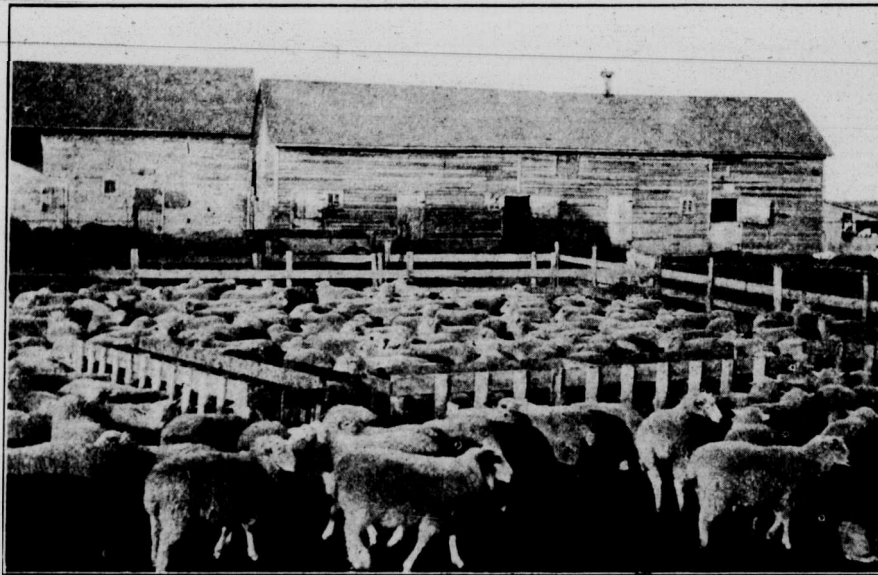
WM. ASHWORTH.

Kitscoty, Alta.

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.

There never did, and there never will, exist anything permanently noble and excellent in the character which is a stranger to the exercise of resolute self-denial.



Car-load Lambs (230 head) out of Western range ewes, and got by Leicester Rams. Sold Oct. 31, at 50c per cwt. above extreme top of market to Swift Canadian Co., of Winnipeg, and pronounced by their head buyer the best car of lambs on the Winnipeg market this year. Bred by A. J. Mackay, Macdonald, Man.

these interior storage houses from any cause.

The premature attempt of the Grain Commission to inaugurate sample markets, postponed only upon the representations of the organized farmers, should be a lesson to that body to act warily in matters of such importance and not be led away by the representations of interested parties. Yours truly,

F. J. COLLYER.

Welwyn, Sask.

RAILROAD KNIGHTS

Editor, Guide:—Can you tell me what Mackenzie and Mann got their titles for? In a piratical fashion they have been pushing badly-built railroads about Canada, in most places paralleling other lines, C.P.R. or G.T.P., or to grab new territory. After running alongside the G.T.P. from Edmonton through the Yellowhead Pass they drop south down the Thompson river, through an empty country, and then parallel the C.P.R. from Kamloops to the coast. They have thus threatened the good name of Canada and the credit of her banks by running heavily into debt, to save which the government has to donate them many millions without any terms whatever.

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