

The Mail Bag

FOR AN INDEPENDENT PARTY

Editor, Guide:—Some weeks ago the writer, as secretary of a local U.F.A. union, drafted a resolution, which was approved by the members of that union, and which was forwarded to our provincial secretary, dealing with the need for an independent farmers' party in Dominion politics. To the writer's surprise, the provincial secretary informed him that such a resolution was contrary to the rules and regulations of our organization, that such action, if persisted in, would lead to our own destruction and that with such a party organized we could obtain nothing from the party in power, for that party would tell us to "Go to your own party for what you want." Well, in spite of Mr. Woodbridge's views in the matter, I am as firmly convinced as ever that one of our greatest needs, if not the greatest, is just such a party which, in our own legislative halls, shall look after the farmers' interests first, last and all the time. If, like the Irish Nationalists, we were strong enough to hold the balance of power and would stand together for our common cause, we might see legislation passed that would greatly help us. As it is now, the manufacturers, the banks and the railways have everything their own way because this triple alliance not only have a strong representation in Parliament, but in the lobby they get next to the fellows who, like so many rubber stamps, register the will of their respective leaders. As farmers we have the strength and the numbers to remove the grievances from which we suffer, but just as long as we divide on the old party lines we shall be helpless and impotent to attain our ends.

What have we obtained from either Grit or Tory Governments in the past? Little or nothing. We asked for fish and we got a serpent. We asked for bread and we got a stone. I remember quite well the promises made by the Liberal leaders prior to 1896. We looked upon Sir Wilfrid Laurier as the Moses who would lead us into the Canaan of free trade and other kindred blessings. But once in power they compromised with the Big Interests and steered a middle course, forgetful apparently of their former pledges and promises. The reciprocity measure was purely a compromise one and as such met the fate that it deserved.

Turning to the party in power, their record is even worse. There is no need to enumerate their misdeeds. Every reader of The Guide knows of their class legislation, of how the triple alliance has obtained everything they sought during the last session, and of how MacKenzie and Mann have got another grant of \$15,000,000. Mohammed once said that the greatest thing in the world was action. Surely it is time for action, independent action on the part of the long suffering Canadian farmers. Were the Borden Government to go to the country with their naval bill, which the Senate has rejected, how could the Western farmers truly voice their sentiment in the matter with only a Tory or Liberal candidate to choose from? Both? would undoubtedly be pledged to their respective leader's policies, which, in either case, would mean a grant of \$35,000,000 to build warships. We know that the Western farmers, and perhaps the farmers of the East as well, are strongly opposed to both these policies, as witness their stand at the conventions at Brandon and Calgary, yet, without independent candidates in the field to represent their views, they must either vote for the Borden or Laurier policy or fail altogether to exercise their franchise. As is well known, only three of our Western members voted in favor of submitting the naval bill to the people and if they continue getting out of the traces they will surely hear the crack of the party whip. Candidates sometimes come before the electors as Independent Conservatives or Independent Liberals, but when once in office the first two letters of their title is quickly dropped and from their party leaders' standpoint they become dependent and dependable. There is probably only one independent man in our present House of Commons and that is Mr. Maclean, member for South York. He has the courage of his convictions and deserves the gratitude of

every Canadian citizen who is not blinded by partyism. But instead of one we need a hundred such men in Parliament and then things might come our way.

When we talk to some men about the need of an independent party, they shake their heads gravely and say, "It is no use, it can't be done. Look at the Patrons of Industry in Ontario." Well, when the Patrons of Industry ceased to exist, their platform had become the platform of the Liberal party in Ontario and as such some of the measures at least for which they labored were crystallized into legislation. It is true that most of the members of that organization went back to the old parties, but we of the West are not as strongly bound to those parties. In fact, many of us, coming from other countries and free from the traditions and prejudices that blind so many, can say we never did owe allegiance to them and we will not be bought by them or bound to them now.

It is an evident fact that many farmers need enlightenment in regard to public questions and their duties as citizens.

Again let me say, what we need above all is a strong independent farmers' party, the members of which, sitting in the House at Ottawa, shall make our interests their own, first, last and all the time. The time is ripe for action. Let us act.

MORLEY L. SWART.

Lake Thelma, Alta.

GRAIN GROWERS AND CO-OPERATION

Editor, Guide:—Co-operation is coming in retail business and also in wholesale. I have just read the report of a meeting of the local association of the Dominion Retail Merchants' Association, at Saskatoon, and it carried me back to the time when George Stephenson, the father of railways, was before a committee of the House of Lords and in answering a question, "if a cow got in front of his train would it be very awkward?" "Yes," said George, "very awkward—for the cow."

I did not think so much ignorance existed about co-operation as the secretary is reported to have shown, but I thank him for the following information: That

will soon be done that way, and Mr. Trowern seems to know it, for "it's the stuck pig that squeals," hence his outcry, and that he can keep both his retail and wholesale business, as we can do without either, the way they have done in Great Britain, with their millions of turnover and fine buildings.

Now, Grain Growers, you see what fools they think we are. It's up to us to show the world that you will not take Mr. Trowern's taunts. As for me, I am ready to give time and experience to the cause. How about you? Let me know through The Guide.

N. J. KERSWELL.

Makaroff, Man.

COST OF PRODUCING WHEAT

Editor, Guide:—May I chip in in this "cost of wheat" discussion?

It seems to me that the cost of house and sheds, etc., must not be taken separately. Breaking, fencing and so forth are all fixed improvements. No man can afford to pay such usury as 8% on his total outlay and no farmer needs to "write off" on his permanent improvements because upkeep and repairs offset that; so, given the C.P.R. price of land, we will charge the C.P.R. interest, which is a yearly diminishing sum, leaving ample room for new permanent improvements.

Now the turning point of the entire discussion seems to me to hinge on "method of cultivation and administration." Therefore, I will compare A and B taking G. E. Wainwright's figures, in the issue of last May 14, changing them to suit.

I might add that putting the cost of plowing, harrowing, etc., at a certain price per acre is foolish, since there would be no such prices paid if all farmers applied for hire instead of working their own land. As I have it then, farmer A has a very poor quarter section, not worth \$30 per acre. Since he only cultivates 100 acres, he evidently is one of those farmers who just grow wheat, plow when they can and disk and stubble in the balance, harrowing once when they get good and ready, and have no implement shed.

Farm A	
Capital Acct.	
160 acres at \$30	\$4,800
Horses	1,200
Implements	650
	\$6,650
2,000 bu. wheat at 85 cents	\$1,700
Fixed charges, int. 6%	\$399
Depreciation horses, 15%	180
Depreciation machinery, 20%	130
Fire insurance	35
Taxes	20
	\$764
Varying Charges	
Twine	\$ 25
Stooking	25
Threshing	200
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Farm B

Has 100 acres in till, and toolshed. Crops 75 acres and has 20 acres under summer cultivation. Three kinds of grain are grown to extend the period of seeding and harvesting so as to enable one man to do the work. The working teams are mares, so that colts may offset all depreciation and make the 60 acres waste land profitable.

Method of cultivation: The disk follows the binder, the grain is stacked, both to make room for the plow and to afford time for fall plowing; the packer and harrows following the plow each day.

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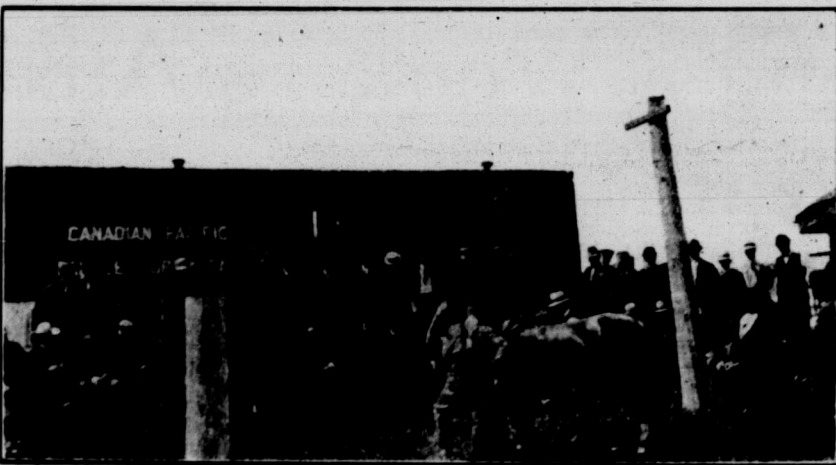
NOTICE TO CORRESPONDENTS

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.

ON THE "BETTER FARMING" TRAIN



Prof. Herner Giving the Children at Lyleton a Talk on Poultry



Dr. McGillvray Demonstrating the Methods of Discovering Unsoundness in Horses

This enlightenment and education will not come through a subsidized party press or from paid party heelers. Because of this latter influence and because many go no further for their information, their views are perverted and their ballots cast on the wrong side. We need more papers like The Guide, which presents "the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth."

Personally I feel it is a pity that the members of those two growing and influential organizations, the Grain Growers' association and the United Farmers of Alberta, should not be a unit on the question of a United Farmers' Party. Surely it is patent to all thoughtful men that we must take political action if we would attain the ends for which we have come together. The Big Interests learned the value of political action long ago and when it is a case of seeking more concessions, "they are not divided, all one party they." Let us learn from the enemy this lesson of united political action for our own benefit and profit.

his association "have gone to the government from time to time opposing co-operative societies," and also "have asked every wholesaler in the Dominion by letter what he thinks of the co-operative societies, and if he sells to them we will cease doing business with him." The statement that "the Grain Growers know no more about running a co-operative business than a cat knows of its mother" is only equal to saying that Mr. Trowern does not know what he is talking about, as there are thousands of old country co-operators in Canada who could give him facts and figures that would open his eyes, and could manage the largest retail store in the Dominion, like they do the largest grain business now.

The statement that co-operative societies are frauds is so wide of the mark, unless he means those concerns who copy the title, but that is all they do. I would like to tell Mr. Trowern that the co-operative style of doing business has come to stay and will extend to such proportions that the bulk of the business

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