

The Grain Growers' Guide

Winnipeg, Wednesday, November 3rd, 1915

THE DEMAND FOR FREE WHEAT

It is very encouraging to note that the business interests of Western Canada are beginning to realize that the prosperity of the farmer means the prosperity of all other business interests. During the last two weeks boards of trade in different parts of the West have forwarded resolutions to Ottawa urging the government to accept the United States offer of free wheat. And it is stated that the Dominion Cabinet has considered the matter. Undoubtedly the government has the power to place wheat and wheat products on the free list by order in council and thus open the United States market. It is doubtful, however, whether the United States government would accept this action as the fulfillment of the conditions required. If there is any doubt (and it could easily be ascertained) a special session of parliament could be called at the cost to the country of approximately \$100,000, which is less than the farmers have lost in one single day this fall by not being able to ship their wheat across the line. Two members of the cabinet, Hon. Robert Rogers and Hon. Arthur Meighen, were recently in the West and are supposed to be looking into the question, tho what there is to be looked into we cannot clearly understand. The spread between Winnipeg and Minneapolis has narrowed recently and the opponents of free wheat have immediately pointed to this to show that it would be of no advantage to open the American market. This is merely an ostrich-like argument. The records of the last six or seven years show beyond a shadow of a doubt that the United States market has averaged from five cents to six cents a bushel over the Winnipeg market. The difference is far greater than this on tough wheat and smutty wheat, and the opening of the United States market would mean many millions of dollars every year extra to our Western farmers. In the reciprocity fight it was claimed that it would make us disloyal to ship our wheat and cattle across the border. The United States Congress voluntarily removed the duty on cattle and our cattle have been going into the United States freely for two years to the benefit of our stock breeders and without any loss to the loyalty of any one. The opposition to free wheat comes from some of the members of the Winnipeg Grain Exchange, the big milling interests and the transportation interests. Their argument is a peculiar one in which they state that the United States market will be of no benefit to our farmers, and yet at the same time they declare that it would divert our grain trade to the south. Any one with common sense will understand that grain will not go south until there is a higher price offered for it, and with the opening of the southern market there would be an evening up in prices offered as there was when the cattle market was opened up. The transportation companies would therefore not lose very much traffic and Fort William would still have all the wheat it could accommodate. Our milling interests would undoubtedly lose some of their profits, but they can afford it. In the past few months Canadian flour has been shipped to Minneapolis and paid the United States duty. This flour has been used for blending purposes by the Minneapolis millers. Canadian wheat has also been shipped to Minneapolis over the tariff wall for the same purpose. The Canadian government is figuring how much longer it dare refuse the demands of the Western farmers in return for the support of the opponents to free wheat. So long as the campaign funds and the political influence of the opponents of free wheat are more powerful than the votes of the Western farmers there will never be free wheat. If the Western

farmers who know what benefit they would derive from free wheat would one and all make a solemn vow, Liberal, Conservative and Independent alike, that they will vote against every member of the House of Commons who does not work and vote for free wheat, they could settle the matter. There are forty-five seats in the prairie provinces which the government cannot afford to lose. If the government is made to understand clearly that only free wheat candidates can be elected they will provide free wheat. Western candidates should be elected who will represent the West and not be under the domination of the political leaders in the East. Western Canada has been the stamping ground for the vested interests long enough and it is time the Western people got together in self-protection.

THE RED CROSS FUND

If there is one organization connected with the war which has a stronger appeal than all others to the hearts and pockets of the people of Canada it is the Canadian Red Cross Society. War will always be horrible, but without the devoted self sacrificing work of the Red Cross nurses and the Red Cross hospitals its horrors would be multiplied ten fold. A great many of the nurses who are caring for the wounded soldiers close behind the battle line are giving their services without pay, and many people in all the countries at war have given their houses to be used as hospitals and convalescent homes. Throughout the world women are sewing and working in various ways to help provide comforts and indeed necessities for the soldiers who have fallen in defending their country and their home from the foreign foe. Large amounts of money have also been given to the Red Cross Fund, but more and still more is needed if hospital accommodation, medical care and proper food and nursing are to be provided for all the soldiers who are being stricken day by day. The idea of allowing the soldiers of any nationality to suffer for lack of these things is impossible to contemplate. The farmers of Western Canada have already contributed generously, not only to the Red Cross Fund, but to the Belgian Relief and the Patriotic Funds as well, but we believe the present is an opportune moment to appeal to them to do still more, especially for the Red Cross. The West has been blessed with a magnificent harvest and there are few farmers who cannot afford to give something now. In response to an appeal from Dr. James W. Robertson, chairman of the Red Cross Society at Ottawa, which was published in The Guide in April last, we have received from our readers and forwarded to Dr. Robertson \$659. A donation of \$50 pays for a bed with the donor's name placed over it, and two beds have been provided by Guide readers, Mr. and Mrs. Rick, of Claresholm, Alta., and W. F. Redmond, of Edgerton, Alta., being the donors. We hope that a large number of such beds will be provided by Guide readers during the coming winter. Subscriptions from \$1 upwards will be acknowledged in The Guide and forwarded to Dr. Robertson. Checks and money orders should be made payable to The Grain Growers' Guide.

THE MILLERS AND FREE WHEAT

The three largest milling companies in Canada have each held their annual meetings within the last few weeks, and all were able to report a year of prosperity. Ogilvie had an extraordinarily profitable year's business, making a total profit of \$1,660,594.04, compared with \$581,943.62 for the previous year. The Lake of the Woods Milling Company's report shows a profit of \$518,920,

an increase of \$10,981 over the previous year: while the Western Canada Flour Mills Company made \$340,062 against \$315,246 in the previous year. These figures are interesting in view of the fact that the millers are the chief opponents of free wheat. The Canadian millers sell their flour in Great Britain in free competition with the millers of the United States and other countries and for equal grades receive equal prices. By the aid of the tariff wall between Canada and the United States Canadian millers are enabled to buy wheat cheaper than their United States rivals and their profits are thus greater than they would otherwise be. In order to give the millers this advantage, the price of wheat in Western Canada is by federal legislation kept below its value on the open market and the farmers of Canada are, at the present time, losing literally millions of dollars every week in consequence. The patience of the farmer under oppression and exploitation is truly marvellous.

THE AGRICULTURAL COMMISSION

Three weeks ago the Dominion government appointed a Royal Commission to investigate the questions of increased agricultural production, agricultural education, transportation, co-operation, farm credits and the placing of soldiers upon the land after the war. In an Ottawa dispatch it is stated that this commission is appointed upon the request of the mayors of the various cities of Canada who waited on Premier Borden some time ago in connection with some of these questions. It is further stated that this commission is in response to the joint memorial presented to the Dominion government by the conference of farmers and manufacturers held in Winnipeg a year ago. Western Canada is more deeply interested in this new commission and its work than any other commission that has been appointed for many years. Our readers will therefore be very much interested to know something about the members of this commission. There are nine members of the commission with Senator Lougheed as chairman. The following brief sketch of the members will throw considerable light upon the probable outcome of the commission's labors:—

Hon. James A. Lougheed is the leader of the Conservative party in the senate. He is the senior partner of the law firm of Lougheed & Bennett, of Calgary, solicitors for the Canadian Pacific Railway. He has been a member of the senate since 1889 and has always been regarded as a strong supporter of vested interests.

S. J. B. Rolland, of Montreal, is a son of the late Senator Rolland and is the head of the Rolland Paper Manufacturing Company, which is an amalgamation of two other paper factories. Mr. Rolland is regarded as a very keen business man, is a Conservative in politics and is a member of the executive of the Canadian Manufacturers' Association.

William Smith, Conservative M.P. for South Ontario, has been a member of the House of Commons for three terms. He is a farmer, stock breeder and importer, according to the Parliamentary Guide.

Dr. J. G. Rutherford is the agricultural superintendent of the Natural Resources Department of the Canadian Pacific Railway at Calgary. Formerly Dr. Rutherford was Dominion livestock commissioner at Ottawa. Dr. Rutherford is politically Independent Liberal.

J. C. Watters is president of the Trades and Labor Congress of Canada. He is politically Independent.

William Farrell, of Vancouver, has for many years been a leading financier of British Columbia and is now president of the British Columbia Telephone Company. Mr. Farrell is politically a Conservative.

J. W. Flavell, of Toronto, is director of the Canadian Bank of Commerce; president and general manager of the William Davies Packing Company; president, Harris Abattoir Company; director, Imperial Varnish and Color Company; director, John Murphy Company; president