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THE GRAIN GROWERS' GUIDE

"Equal Rights to All and Special Privileges to None"
A Weekly Journal for Progressive Farmers

Published under the auspices and employed as the official organ of the Manitoba Grain Growers' Association, the Saskatchewan Grain Growers' Association and the United Farmers of Alberta.



The Guide is the only paper in Canada that is absolutely owned and controlled by the organized farmers—entirely independent, and not one dollar of political, capitalist or special interest money is invested in it.

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Our Ottawa Letter

Budget May Include Free Implements—Free Wheat Welcomed—Election Rumors
(By The Guide's Special Correspondent)

Ottawa, April 21.—When parliament adjourned on February 7 after sitting for 15 days in order to permit Sir Robert Borden to attend the Imperial War Conference the Dominion had been provided with the money to carry on its share of the war until the close of the present fiscal year on March 31, next. A war appropriation bill providing for an expenditure of \$500,000 had been passed and Sir Thomas White had been given authority to borrow another \$100,000,000 for domestic purposes. That was all the important legislation which the house agreed to pass before the departure of the prime minister, apart from the voting of one quarter of the sums asked for in the main estimates for general purposes.

When parliament resumed its labors on Thursday the thoughts of the members naturally did not turn to prospective war measures, although it was recognized that the war and its progress would have not a little influence in shaping the developments of the future. Apart from a soldiers' land settlement scheme, the chief details of which have already been announced, the parliamentary perspective points to domestic measures and a return to the consideration of the matters which were engaging the attention of the house previous to the outbreak of the great world struggle now entering upon its final stages. A reminder of the old days was a notice given by Hon. Frank Cochrane, minister of railways, that it is his intention to again introduce the Highways Act, which was on two occasions rejected by a Liberal majority in the Senate. Now that the opposition predominance in the Red Chamber has become a thing of the past, Mr. Cochrane proposed to put the bill through. It will provide for the spending of ten million dollars on roads. The re-introduction of the bill, like the granting of free wheat, is interpreted here as another sign that an election is not many months away. As to the likelihood of an early battle of the ballots a considerable divergency of opinion is expressed by members and the political hangers on. The majority view appears to be that the opposition will refuse to consent to further extension of the parliamentary term, and that the house will remain in session until July. Shortly after prorogation the government will dissolve, the elections taking place in September. The next most popular opinion is that when the extension is refused dissolution will take place at once. This would fix the election date late in June or early in July. I have it on the best of authority, however, that the majority of the ministers do not favor this plan. They would prefer to wait until September. A considerable minority still believes that an extension will be granted, and that there will not be an election for another year at least. It is quite within the range of possibility that something might happen to make this minority grow into a majority, but nothing of the kind is as yet on the horizon. No one who is well informed places any credence in the story circulated in some

quarters that the government intends to pass an extension bill by the use of its majority in both chambers. There is no such intention in government circles. Unless there should develop a situation which would mean a practically unanimous vote for extension, parliament will be dissolved not later than the middle of August, and, perhaps, at an earlier date.

The Budget

The first interesting development of the session is likely to come on Tuesday next, when Sir Thomas White will bring down his budget proposals. His new tariff and taxation plans will be known by the time the readers of The Guide have an opportunity to peruse this letter. At the moment of writing the minister's secrets are being closely guarded, but it is claimed that the tariff changes will not be so important, while the period of war taxation will be prolonged and a larger percentage of profits made in the manufacture of munitions taken. Should more radical features be proposed no one here will be surprised. There are those who think that there may be another concession to the farmers of the west in the granting of free implements. The concession to western sentiment this week embodied in the free wheat announcement has caused more talk in the corridors of parliament since the house opened than anything else. Western members of both parties claim to be well pleased. The Conservatives say it will help them retain their seats and win others. Liberals, while admitting that it may give some ease to government supporters, claim that the concession on the part of the government that it has been wrong may really do it more harm than good. The chief interest seems to centre around the attitude of the government as to the permanency of this new policy which has been brought into effect under the temporary War Measures Act. The removal of the duty on wheat by order in council within ten days of the budget, when tariff changes are usually dealt with, would appear to indicate that, as Sir George Foster stated in an interview, the question is one which is the opinion of the government "has been removed from the realm of trade and economics." Should that be the attitude adopted by the government free wheat will be regarded by protectionists as a temporary war measure and Sir Thomas White may not be disposed to make a definite promise that with altered conditions there would not be reversion to protection. An admission that the policy would be permanent would mean the abandonment of the hope, so long indulged in by protectionists, of preferential treatment for Canadian wheat in the markets of Great Britain. In view of these things and the consideration of after-the-war trade conditions which, presumably, is now taking place in London, a definite pronouncement in favor of the permanency of this war measure is not expected from the government by many. Should that be the case a line of controversial cleavage is certain to develop in the

house. The granting of one of the planks in the western platform will not in the least keep western members from advocating the adoption of other planks quite as important.

They will urge that they are just as much in the right in regard to these as they have been in connection with free wheat, and that if concessions are not made the next parliament will see the infusion into its life of a large number of independent members who will see that the producers of the country get a better show in the future than they have in the past.

The house did not succeed in accomplishing much work during its two sittings this week. On Thursday, Sir George Foster, the acting prime minister and Sir Wilfrid Laurier, voiced the pleasure of the people of Canada over the entrance of the United States into the war. Both emphasized the moral significance of the event and accepted it as a final proof of the righteousness of the cause of the allies.

Parliament Waits Railway Report

Parliament is awaiting with considerable interest the report of the commission appointed last session to study Canadian railway conditions and suggest a remedy which would put the railways in a better position to serve the people. The report will be tabled in the course of the next ten days. It is believed that Sir Henry Drayton, the chairman of the railway board, and Mr. A. A. Smith, the London financial expert, two of the members of the commission will report in favor of the nationalization of the G.T.P. and C.N.R. systems, and that A. H. Smith, president of the New York Central, will favor a perpetuation of the system of private owned railways. No definite decision will be reached by the government as to the nature of the legislation to be introduced until after Sir Robert Borden returns. It is believed, however, that there will be such legislation. Sir Wilfrid Laurier today endeavored to draw a statement from the government as to legislation to be introduced other than that already given notice of, but without success. Sir Thomas who was leading the house contented himself with saying that there would be additional government bills.

The soldiers' land settlement proposals is outlined in a resolution, notice of which was given today by Hon. W. J. Roche, minister of the interior. It provides for 160 acre grants to soldiers and financial assistance up to \$2,000. A commission will be appointed to handle the settlement of soldiers. There is some speculation as to where the government is to find land for settlement in districts to which soldiers would care to go. Explanations on this point will doubtless be made when the resolution is discussed in the house. The impression created at the sittings of the committee which has been considering the care of returned soldiers has been that very few of them have any desire to take to the farm. It may therefore be possible for the government to find homesteads for as many returned men as well be anxious to establish a home for themselves in the country.

MANITOTA ARBOR DAY, MAY 14

May 14 is the date set apart for the observance of Arbor Day in Manitoba.

The object aimed at is to have municipal, religious and school corporations, as well as individuals, devote at least part of the day to the planting of forest and other trees. For this purpose it has been proclaimed a public holiday.

GOPHER DAY IN MANITOBA.

A number of Winnipeg firms with the Manitoba Department of Agriculture, and Professor Jackson of the Agricultural College, Winnipeg, are offering a large number of valuable prizes for the largest number of "Gopher Tails" poisoned, trapped or shot on the first four days of May. The Department of Agriculture will give \$30, \$20 and \$10 to the three one-roomed schools securing the largest number, the tails to be brought before school hours. The teacher is to count, record the count, etc., and report to the Biology Department of the Manitoba Agricultural College, Winnipeg. Various hardware firms are giving prizes of rifles, baseball outfits, ammunition, watches, gopher poisons, etc. Professor Jackson is giving a beautiful little copy of Hud's leather covered Bird Guide to all who shoot more gophers than he does on May 5. Write immediately to Professor V. W. Jackson, Biology Department, M.A.C., Winnipeg, for further information.

BRITISH MISSION REACHES U.S.

A mission headed by the Right Hon. Arthur G. Balfour, British Foreign Secretary, and including many British and other allied statesmen, has reached Washington for the purpose of conferring with the American government as to the most practical way in which it can assist the allies in the conduct of the war. The Canadian members of the mission are Sir Gen. Foster, Sir Jos. Foss and Sir Thos. White. In outlining the object of the mission, Mr. Balfour stated that it was to make co-operation easy and effective between those who are striving with all their power to bring about a lasting peace by the only means that can secure it, namely, a successful war. Owing to the fact that the Dominion parliament is in session, it will not be likely that Sir Gen. Foster and Sir Thos. White will be able to attend at the same time. Sir George is now in Washington and it is expected that Sir Thomas will join the party as soon as his budget is under way.

BRITISH FLOUR MILLS TAKEN OVER.

Baron Devesport, the British food controller, has issued an order for the taking over of all flour mills in the United Kingdom. It is presumed that the mills will continue to be operated by their present owners under the supervision of the food controller. It is also stated that an inter-allied committee may be formed for the combined purchase and handling of all food stuffs whether from America or elsewhere. Competitive buying, it is stated, has been to a considerable degree responsible for the high prices prevailing. Another important function of the board would be to determine the allocation of food supplies amongst allies and formulate their requirements for considerable time ahead.