

The Grain Growers' Guide

Winnipeg, Wednesday, December 9th, 1914

CHRISTMAS

The Christmas of 1914 will not soon be forgotten. It will be remembered by the children of today when they are grandmothers and grandfathers as the Christmas—perhaps as the first Christmas—of the Great War. It is difficult to think of Christmas and war at the same time. To celebrate Christmas, the birthday of The Prince of Peace, while the greatest efforts of most of the leading nations of the world are bent upon killing the people and destroying the property of neighboring countries, seems almost like a mockery. The Christmas spirit is the very opposite of the war spirit. The teachings of Christ are entirely opposed to war. His message to the world was love, not hatred; peace, not war.

But, nevertheless, it is our highest duty at this time to cultivate the Christmas spirit. We can see today more plainly than ever before the disastrous results of the distrust and deceit, the jealousy and antagonism which have characterized the attitude of the nations towards each other. Peace, perhaps, will come now only when the foe, crushed and helpless, pleads for mercy. But peace will only be preserved if the policy of force is displaced by the spirit of Christmas. There is, too, a strong appeal to the Christmas spirit in the dire need of so many thousands, and indeed millions, who have been suddenly thrust into poverty thru the war. In Belgium alone nearly seven million women, children and men are actually on the verge of starvation. In the other warring countries distress probably is not so general, but in Britain, Germany, France, Austria, Hungary, Russia, Servia and Turkey there are many thousands of little children who will be orphans this Christmas Day because their fathers have lain down their lives on the battlefield. This is a year when the true Christmas giver will not send diamonds to the rich, but the necessities of life to the needy and the starving.

TO HELP THE BELGIANS

Knowing that our readers are deeply interested in the Belgian people, and are contributing very generously to their aid we are publishing herewith a letter from the Belgian Consul in Winnipeg:

Grain Growers' Guide,
275 Sherbrooke St., City:

Dear Sirs:—Please accept my most grateful thanks for the interest you are taking towards the Belgian Relief Fund. It is not necessary for me to relate the sufferings of the Belgian people; we all know that they are starving and that we must send food, as much as possible and as quickly as possible. The United States and Canada are responding generously and enthusiastically to our appeal but we have to continue our work for the time being and try to interest all those who have not yet given.

I have been advised by headquarters in Montreal that for the present they are most in need of wheat and they would rather receive wheat than flour. The purchasing committee in Montreal purchased, the other day, \$65,000 worth of wheat and the shipment has already left Halifax. Would it not be possible thru the medium of your paper to ask the farmers of Manitoba to contribute their share, and any farmer could individually send addressed to me one bag or more of coarse wheat, and as you are aware, any express company or railway company will transport same free of charge, and from here it will forward to Montreal, also free of charge, or if they prefer, a committee could be formed in each village for the purpose of gathering the

wheat from the farmers and then ship same to me in bulk.

The British Admiralty is furnishing us with boats and transportation across the ocean to Rotterdam, so that everything that is given is taken free to Holland. Canada has already sent across about 12,000 tons of food and clothing, and we are receiving every day, contributions in money and kind, showing the appreciation of the Canadian people for the gallant Belgians, who have won the gratitude of the Allies and the admiration of the whole world. Even now, King Albert of Belgium is appealing to all Belgians thruout the world to go to the front to aid in the repulsion of the invader.

I have no doubt but that an appeal to the farmers thru your valuable paper will bring great results.

Believe me,

Yours very truly,

A. J. H. DUBUC.

Belgian Consul.

Winnipeg, December 2, 1914.

It will be noticed that the greatest need of the Belgian people is now for wheat. There are a number of mills in Belgium unharmed and they can grind a large quantity of wheat if it were only available. The greater portion of our wheat has now left the farmers' hands and it is, therefore, impossible for thousands of farmers to contribute wheat who would gladly have done so if the call had come earlier in the season. But of those who have wheat many will be glad to contribute, and, as stated in the above letter, all that is necessary is to put it in sacks and bill to "A. J. H. Dubuc, Belgian Consul, Winnipeg," and it will then be forwarded free of charge by any of the railway companies. If there is enough at any shipping point to make a carload, it may be shipped in the same way. Those who have other food and clothing such as mentioned in our last issue, may also forward it to Mr. Dubuc. Those who have neither wheat nor other articles to send and wish to send cash should send it to The Grain Growers' Guide, and mark it for the "Belgian Relief Fund." It will be acknowledged in The Guide promptly and forwarded to the proper authorities. There are several millions of people in Belgium without food or shelter and it is a part of our duty to help them all we can. A strong commission, composed of men of the neutral nations has been formed with headquarters at Rotterdam, Holland. This commission has charge of the distribution of all relief sent to the Belgians, and ensures it being properly handled. We have already forwarded to the "Belgian Relief Fund" in Winnipeg \$600 contributed by our readers, and will be glad to receive any further contributions which our readers may send.

BONDING PRODUCE MERCHANTS

One of the first essentials to success in farming is a good market for the products of the farm. Not only must the price paid for these products allow a fair margin of profit to the producer, but the farmer must be assured of receiving his money after he has made the sale. In Eastern Canada in years past many farmers have sold and delivered their apple and potato crops at good prices, but met with an entire loss thru the failure of the buyer, who was frequently a speculator. In Ontario, we are informed that many farmers have in the past lost heavily thru the failure of cheese exporters. In Western Canada we have known a number of farmers to lose thru the failure of produce merchants.

Just recently one of the leading produce firms in Winnipeg has made an assignment. A large number of farmers had shipped butter, cream, eggs and poultry to this firm and had not received payments for shipments made during the last few weeks before the failure. Now the settlement will have to go thru the tortuous processes of legal winding up and it is doubtful if the farmers get very much for their produce, and what they do get will probably be a long time delayed. This same thing has occurred with other produce firms, not only in Winnipeg, but in other western cities, and it is very discouraging to farmers to lose the produce which means to them their living. The margin of profit is none too wide on any of our western farms and such losses cannot be borne. The Guide in such cases has always rendered what help is possible and given the legal assistance for the collection of such accounts free of charge, but this is only a small matter compared with the large number of losses, and generally it is too late to save the situation. There seems no good reason why farmers should not be protected on these lines of produce as they are on their grain. Under the provisions of the Canada Grain Act no person can go into the grain business, either as a commission merchant or as a track buyer, or in any way handle grain, without first receiving a licence from the Board of Grain Commissioners, and this licence is not granted until the dealer is bonded sufficiently to ensure that the farmer will receive full payment for his grain. It is entirely due to this wise provision in the Grain Act that our farmers have no trouble in getting payment for their grain. It seems to us that a similar provision should be made for the licensing and bonding of all firms handling all other lines of farm produce, and if this were done farmers then would be able to ship their produce to a licensed and bonded buyer and be certain that they would receive payment promptly. The increases in mixed farming will mean a large increase in the shipping of other farm produce than grain, and if this end of the farming business is to develop as it should, protection must be afforded to the farmer for the payment of such shipments. This seems to be a good subject for discussion among the local Grain Growers' Associations and by the annual conventions, and when the Board of Inquiry is appointed by the Dominion Government, we think it would be an excellent matter to bring before them when they come west.

SELF HELP ONLY WILL WIN

The outstanding lesson learned by the western farmers in the past ten years of their labors, is that the great improvements necessary in the development of western agriculture must come to the farmers thru their own efforts. The vast improvements that have been made in the grain trade for the benefit of the farmers in the past seven or eight years are entirely due to the fact that they have taken hold of the matter themselves, organized their own companies and handled their own grain. In other lines it will be found to be the same and the necessary improvements will come just as fast as the farmers themselves