

The Grain Growers' Guide

Winnipeg, Wednesday, August 25th, 1915

THE GUIDE CROP REPORT

As will be seen on another page in this issue of The Guide, the third crop report covering conditions in Western Canada up to August 14 shows a very satisfactory state of affairs. Reports from over 500 different points go to show that the crop is a good average one over the entire West. This fact in itself is worthy of note since scarcely a year has passed in which some serious damage has not occurred to crops in one part or another of the West.

In most of Manitoba cutting is in full swing and a large proportion of the wheat crop is safe. In the provinces further west cutting is not quite so far advanced, but every fine day makes the crop more sure, and with two weeks more of favorable weather most of the grain, which will play such an important part in the welfare of this country, will be in the stook. Farmers at this time of the year need no urging, but it is even more important this year than usual that everything which will aid in a rapid handling of the crop be put in readiness. The report shows that apprehension is felt in some districts as to a danger of shortage of help causing some delay in the handling of the crop. Labor bureaus this year have been specially organized to deal with this problem by the several provincial departments of agriculture, and farmers should make full and immediate use of these facilities if men are scarce in their district. The hay crop seems to be just average this year. In Manitoba and part of Eastern Saskatchewan drought early in the year made hay short and the crop in these parts is small, but in North-Western Saskatchewan and generally thru Alberta rains have made the hay crop bountiful. Summarizing crop conditions, using average yields for each of the crops as indicated by the reports just received and taking the crop area figures as issued by the several provincial governments, the estimated yield of grain this year, given favorable weather conditions during cutting and harvest, should be as follows:

Crop.	Estimated total yield.
Wheat	212,294,790 bushels
Oats	256,751,760 bushels
Barley	51,964,440 bushels
Flax	6,545,370 bushels

A NEW CANNING COMBINE

While the war and the harvesting of the crop are naturally taking up a great deal of attention just now, it is important that the public should keep one eye on what is going on around them. Those who profit by Special Privilege are not asleep, neither are they so busy with patriotic work that they are overlooking any chance to exploit the people. On the contrary, this world struggle is to many only an opportunity to tighten their grip and to strengthen their powers of exploitation by securing increases of the tariff, by the formation of combines and mergers, and by securing privileges from provincial and Dominion governments.

The Monetary Times, of Toronto, in its issue of August 13, contains an item of news reprinted in full elsewhere in this number, relating to a new combine of the canning companies of the Dominion. The statement very frankly says:

"Disputes have also arisen in the past as to

what are fair prices to be paid by the canning companies to growers of fruits and vegetables. The companies are understood to have considerable stocks on hand. Canned goods have been sold at low figures during the past year or so. The arrangement now made will try to remedy these matters."

In other words, the new arrangement will enable the canners to reduce the prices which they pay to farmers for fruit, tomatoes, corn, peas, etc., and increase the prices which they charge to the wholesalers and thru them to the retailers and consumers, for their products. It is the Protective Tariff that makes combines of this kind possible. Under Free Trade the Canadian canners would be compelled by competition with British and United States concerns to manufacture and sell a good article at a fair price in order to retain their customers. That the Canadian product is not of the best quality was proved not long ago by the report of the Chief Analyst of the Dominion Government that one-third of the contents of cans of tomatoes examined by him was water, and that three cans out of five contained less than a reasonable standard of fruit, such as was required by the laws of the State of Ohio, for example. Nevertheless canned tomatoes and other vegetables including corn and baked beans, are "protected" by a duty of 1½ cents per pound, the weight of the can being included in the weight for duty, with an additional duty of 7½ per cent. ad valorem under the war budget. This, truly, is "protection" which sacrifices the people at large to the greed and cunning of a few exploiters.

WILL BOND PRODUCE MERCHANTS

It affords The Guide much pleasure to state that the heavy losses sustained by farmers and their wives thru the failure or dishonesty of produce dealers will very shortly be brought to an end. The Guide has advocated strongly that produce dealers should be licensed and bonded similarly to grain merchants so that farmers would be sure of their pay. Recently The Guide placed the situation before Hon. Valentine Winkler, Minister of Agriculture, and Mr. Winkler has given The Guide authority to announce officially that he will introduce legislation at the next session of the legislature to make the shipments of all kinds of farm produce absolutely safe. It is expected that the new legislation will compel all produce dealers, creameries, tanneries and fur, hide and wool dealers to become licensed and bonded before they can do business in Manitoba. Farmers in Manitoba as well as in the other Prairie Provinces have met with heavy losses in the past few years thru not receiving payment for the produce they shipped to dealers. A number of produce dealers in Winnipeg have failed or absconded, and in each case The Guide has taken up the matter for the farmers and borne all the legal expenses in connection. As soon as the new law is passed there will be no more such losses. The Guide has campaigned in favor of such legislation in behalf of the farmers for some time, and it is gratifying to know that the remedy is at last in sight. The prompt action on the part of Mr. Winkler will have a splendid influence in stimulating the production of all kinds of farm produce and this will add materially to the prosperity of the farm homes of Manitoba. Undoubtedly

the example of Manitoba will be followed shortly by the other provinces.

FARMERS LOSE SIX MILLIONS

Farmers who have been expecting a high price for their grain this fall will no doubt be disappointed at the prices which are being paid for the new crop. In May, when very few farmers had wheat to sell, No. 1 Northern was worth \$1.60 at Fort William, but on Saturday last, August 21, the wheat of the new crop was quoted at only \$1.00½. Of course, the big crops being harvested in the United States and Canada, the prospects that the forcing of the Dardanelles will release Russian stocks before long and other world conditions are largely responsible for the decline in prices, and if the returns from this crop are not as great as some people have been predicting, we must remember that dear wheat at Liverpool means dear bread in Great Britain and France where every cent is required in the prosecution of the war. As far as prices at Liverpool are concerned, therefore, the farmers' loss is the Allies' gain, and as long as wheat stays around the dollar mark the farmer will not have much cause to grumble. It is not entirely the fall in prices at Liverpool, however, that has brought down the return to the farmer in Canada. Prices at Fort William and at country points are Liverpool prices less freight, handling charges, interest, exchange, insurance and other expenses and the profits of the middlemen. If these intermediate charges are high the price received by the producer of grain is correspondingly reduced, and this is one of the reasons for the present relatively low price of wheat.

In normal times £1 in London is worth approximately \$4.85 in New York. Recently the value of the pound has fallen considerably and the last quotation showed the pound sterling worth only \$4.67 in New York. This means a loss to the producer of 18 cents on \$4.85, which works out at approximately 3½ cents per bushel of wheat. It is estimated that on wheat alone this will mean a loss to western farmers of over \$6,000,000 if the same conditions continue thruout the crop marketing period. Wheat, however, is only one of the exports of Canada and the United States to Great Britain and manufacturers and producers of other classes of foodstuffs in both countries are losing 3 per cent. of the money which they should receive for goods shipped to Great Britain. Naturally the matter is being anxiously discussed in financial circles and in the financial press and while the remedy has not yet been agreed upon it is clearly perceived that the chief cause of the situation is the great increase of exports from Canada and the United States to Great Britain due to war orders, and the decrease of imports by these countries since the war began. For some years past Canada has imported a great deal more than she has exported and British investors have lent Canada enough money to settle the account. Now, with our exports and those of the United States exceeding imports, and Canada still borrowing in England, the balance is on the other side. There is a lot of money standing to the credit of New York in London and a much less sum to London's credit at New York. In normal times the amounts are about