

# The Grain Growers' Guide

Winnipeg, Wednesday, April 24th, 1912

## THE TITANIC DISASTER

Sixteen hundred precious lives were wiped out when the giant steamer Titanic sank beneath the Atlantic waves in the darkness that came before the dawn of Monday, April 15. And two continents mourn, for nearly every country of Europe as well as Canada and the United States was represented in the band of heroic men who gave up their lives that the women and children might be saved. The disaster was the more appalling because it was believed to be impossible. The Titanic was the largest vessel afloat. She was equipped not only with all the luxuries and conveniences of the modern floating palaces, but with the newest safety appliances known to science. She was believed to be unsinkable. But in her rush to make a notable speed record on her maiden voyage this monster of man's making flung herself against a monster of nature's handiwork, and she was broken and sent to the bottom of the sea. Wise after the event we can see that if the Titanic had proceeded more slowly after the wireless telegraph had told her of the presence of icebergs in her vicinity, the accident might never have happened; we can see that if the Parisian had carried two wireless operators she might have received the Titanic's call for help in time to reach her before she sank; and we can see also that if the Titanic had had sufficient lifeboats to carry all her passengers and crew all might have been rescued. Much criticism has been made, because these precautions were not observed. Much of this is doubtless justified, and there is no doubt that much more stringent regulations will be required by governments and observed by steamship companies in the future.

But in our mourning we can also rejoice; rejoice for the men, rich and poor, famous and unknown, British, American and of other races, who in the face of certain death had the courage and the chivalry to stand back from the boats while the helpless women and children were taken away to safety. There is no need to mourn for those who died on the Titanic. In the four brief hours that passed from the time when the great ship struck the iceberg, until they were plunged beneath the cold waves they lived their lives over and over again. During those four hours they stood face to face with their God, and when the end came they were ready to die. Think of the ship's band, sitting in the saloon making no attempt to save their own lives, sending out music to give cheer and courage to the women who were getting into the boats and the men who were placing them there, and then in their last moments in this world playing "Nearer My God to Thee." Rather we should mourn for those who, though saved themselves, left on the stricken ship their brave husbands, fathers, brothers and sons hoping perhaps that these might yet be saved, but doomed never to look upon them again.

## CHEAP MONEY FOR FARMERS

Capital at a low rate of interest for the development of our agricultural resources is one of the greatest needs of Western Canada today. Large sums of money have been borrowed and still larger sums will have to be borrowed by the farmers of the West, for the purchase of land, live stock and machinery and for the erection of buildings and the improvement of their farms. If the settlement of the West had to wait until it could be accomplished by men with sufficient means to be independent of borrowed capital, its progress would be slow indeed. Far less people would be on the land and the few who

were there would be cramped and hampered in their operations. So far, the provision of capital to finance the farmers of Canada has been left to private enterprise and the farmers of Western Canada especially have been the prey of loan and trust companies, money lenders and banks. While railway promoters have been aided in their financing by government guarantees which have enabled them to borrow at 3½ and 4 per cent., the farmers have been left to fend for themselves and are compelled to pay from 7 to 10 per cent. for the accommodation which they require and often they cannot get credit at all even though they have the best of security to offer. The problem of providing cheap money for farmers has been solved in other parts of the world, notably Australia and New Zealand, by the loaning of money by the government, the necessary funds being secured from government savings banks and by the issue of government bonds, a sufficient rate of interest being charged to cover interest on savings and bonds and the expenses of administration. In New Zealand and Victoria (Australia) the governments loan money to farmers at 4½ per cent., while in the other Australian states loans are made at 5 per cent. By this means settlement is encouraged, better methods of farming, requiring a larger outlay of capital, are made possible, and money which would otherwise pass to money lenders is left in the farmers' hands for the improvement of their land and homes and for the purchase of manufactured articles. We commend the adoption of the Australian and New Zealand system of providing cheap money for farmers to the provincial governments of Canada. No one asks them to subsidise the agricultural industry or to make an experiment, but to put in practice a system which has been in operation for eighteen years in our sister commonwealths and has worked immensely to their advantage. So far as we know the establishment of such a system is not part of the platform of any political party in any province of Canada. Such a policy, however, if set before the people would be extremely popular with every class of the community except those who are lending money at high rates of interest. The nine provinces of Canada are each striving to secure the largest possible share of the immigration which is pouring into the Dominion, and any province which could in addition to other inducements provide settlers with capital at 5 per cent. interest would have an immense advantage over its rivals. In the last issue of The Guide there was an article containing an outline of a proposed scheme for providing cheap money for farmers, which we commend to the consideration of our readers, and in this issue a second article appears in which the experience of other countries, as gathered from official publications, is given. The time is ripe for the adoption of the same system in Canada, and the attention of our governments and legislators should be drawn to the subject.

We are in receipt of a pamphlet sent out by the Minister of Militia in favor of military training. In this pamphlet he points out that the administration of justice in Canada in 1909 cost \$32,200,000 and that the cost of the liquor and tobacco consumed by the Canadian people in the same year was \$95,203,257. This is what he calls "negative" training, and recommends "positive" military training as a corrective. For this over \$8,000,000 will be spent in military training this year. If the military training will reduce the consumption of liquor and tobacco it will be something new. It will require some better arguments than this to warrant a huge expenditure for militarism.

## FIGHTING FOR JUST FREIGHT RATES

The most important ruling ever given by the Canadian Railway Commission was that made on April 16 at Ottawa, that a prima facie case had been made out in the contention that the Western freight rates were unjustly high. This ruling was announced by Chairman Mabee after evidence submitted by M. K. Cowan, counsel engaged by the governments of Saskatchewan and Alberta, to watch the interests of those provinces in the general inquiry now being made by the board. Mr. Cowan took advantage of the presence of George H. Shaw and W. R. McInnes, freight traffic managers of the C.N.R. and C.P.R. respectively, and J. T. Arundel, superintendent of the Ontario division of the C.P.R., and formerly superintendent of the Manitoba division of the same road, to place them on the witness stand and ask them a few questions. These gentlemen all admitted that the system of freight handling and the equipment and service rendered in the East for like quantities of freight over like distances was the same as in the West. As soon as these facts were established out of the mouths of the freight experts of Canada's two leading railway systems, Mr. Cowan proceeded to submit some figures showing how grossly the West was discriminated against. He had with him the figures prepared in the head offices of the railway companies by the order of the Railway Commission in the case brought up by the Vancouver Board of Trade. He also had tabulated figures prepared from the tariffs of the railway companies. From these figures prepared by the railway companies themselves Mr. Cowan showed that the freight charges on a great many different classes of goods were from 20 to 160 per cent. higher in the West than in the East for the same service. Then he showed from the companies' own figures that the cost of operation in the West was lower than in the East, while the density of traffic was greater in the West than in the East. After submitting all this evidence, which cannot be disputed by the railways because they prepared it themselves, Mr. Cowan demanded a ruling from the Railway Commission that he had established his case and that the onus was on the railways henceforth to prove that they were giving justice to the West. After consideration Chairman Mabee ruled that such a case had been made out. The importance of such a ruling cannot be over-estimated. In the past the chief officials of the railway companies have answered all complaints by saying that freight rates were so intricate that ordinary people could not understand them. These officials also were in the habit of declaring that the cost of operation was higher in the West while the density of traffic was less. Now, however, all these bubbles have been burst and the railways have been exposed out of their own mouths. The next session of the Board in this enquiry will be held at Toronto on April 29. It is now up to the railways to establish that they are not discriminating against the West, something which they will never be able to do.

The following are the three statements prepared by the C.P.R. in the Vancouver case, which were submitted to the Railway Commission by Mr. Cowan:—

Comparative statement of operating expenses per mile of road for the Eastern, Central and Western Divisions of the C.P.R. for the year ended June 30, 1910:—