

# The Grain Growers' Guide

Winnipeg, Wednesday, December 23rd, 1914

## WAR TAXES

The financial statement for the month of November, issued by the Dominion Government discloses a serious falling off in the federal revenues. The total revenue for November was \$9,495,536, compared with \$13,536,981 for the corresponding month last year, a decrease of \$4,041,445, or nearly 30 per cent. For the eight months ending November 30 there is a decline in the federal revenue of over \$28,000,000, the total being \$90,468,002, as against \$118,640,295 for the corresponding period of last year. The drop in revenues is almost entirely due to the decline in customs receipts. The amount produced by the tariff in the month of November alone shows a falling off of over \$3,200,000, the collections being \$4,895,642, as compared with \$8,101,626 for November, 1913. In the eight months the decline in customs receipts is over \$23,000,000. Meanwhile, in the same eight months, expenditures on current account show an increase of over \$9,000,000, while capital expenditures have been curtailed by over \$8,000,000. The Dominion's net debt at the end of November was the enormous sum of \$364,843,237. It increased by \$12,167,848 in the month of November.

These are striking figures, and they emphasize the fact to which we have previously referred, that new methods of taxation will have to be resorted to by the Dominion Parliament. At the special war session held in August, a number of increases were made in the tariff in the expectation that this would increase the revenues. This, however, has not been the case. On the contrary the revenue has gone down because imports have been reduced, partly on account of the higher rates of duty, partly as a result of the "Made in Canada" campaign, and partly because people are becoming more economical. This experience has probably been sufficient to convince the Minister of Finance that the tariff cannot be relied upon to produce the revenues which he requires during the war and we have no doubt that he is at present giving very serious consideration to the question of new sources of revenue. In this connection it is interesting to note that the Toronto News, the most influential paper supporting the government in Ontario, quotes with approval the suggestion of The Guide that a war tax of one per cent. should be levied upon the unimproved value of all land throughout the Dominion. In addition to the sound principles upon which a tax on unimproved land values is based, this proposal is deserving of support because of the fact that it will compel contributions from a number of wealthy corporations which have taken millions of dollars out of this country, without, in most cases, giving an adequate return. The Canada North West Land Company, for instance, would be called upon for taxes upon a trifle of 369,500 acres; the Canadian Northern Prairie Lands Company on 67,000 acres; the Hudson's Bay Company on 4,000,000 acres; the C.P.R. on nearly 8,000,000 acres, and the C.N.R. on 850,000 acres. If anyone can afford to contribute to the war fund it is companies like these. Practically all this land was originally given to them by

the Dominion Government and the owners have already made many millions of dollars of clear profit by the sale of portions of the grants. The shareholders have become rich thru the settlement and progress of the West and it would be only fair to ask them to do something for Canada now in the time of need. They will not have to go down into their pockets to find the money to pay the taxes. All they need to do is to sell a part of the land to pay taxes on the rest. The land would perhaps not command a very high price just now, but that would not be a calamity, for it would mean that farmers and new settlers would be able to get some good land at a reasonable price on which to increase the agricultural production of the country. Let the C.P.R. and Hudson's Bay Company each advertise an unreserved auction sale of a thousand well-located quarter sections of land, on settlement conditions, in each of the three Western Provinces and see what a healthy immigration of experienced farmers from the South and East would set in next spring.

## THE COMMISSION ON OATS

The organized farmers made a strong case before the Board of Grain Commissioners in Winnipeg last week in favor of having the charge for handling oats reduced. At the present time the grain dealers charge one cent a bushel for handling wheat and the same for oats. At this rate it costs the farmer \$10.00 to sell his car of wheat and \$17.65 to sell his car of oats, on the basis of 60,000 pounds per car. It costs no more to handle a car of oats than it does a car of wheat, and it costs no more to handle an 80,000 pound car than it does to handle a 60,000 pound car. The injustice of the one cent commission charged on oats was apparent to the Board of Commissioners and could not be defended. The demand of the organized farmers was that the commission charges on oats be reduced to a half cent per bushel, and that reduction also be made in the commission charge for handling barley. Half a cent on oats is certainly a reasonable charge and the commission dealers can handle oats at this rate with a fair margin of profit to themselves. Dr. Magill, the chairman of the Commission, referred the matter back to the Grain Exchange for consideration, but in doing so he practically told the Grain Exchange that unless this injustice against the farmers was removed the Board of Commissioners would be forced to recommend to Parliament that the commission charges be placed under the control of the Government. At the present time there is no state regulation of commission charges or of grain exchanges. It is quite possible that if the Grain Exchange declines to reduce the commission charge on oats, parliament will enact legislation which will bring all grain exchanges, and their operations, under the direct control of the Board of Grain Commissioners. This is a possibility which the Grain Exchange will not likely consider favorably. The position of the Grain Exchange at the present time is, according to Chairman Magill's remarks, that they must either voluntarily meet the demands of the organized farmers or accept state regulation

of their own institution. It will be very interesting to watch the developments in this case. It is another evidence of the value of organization among the farmers.

## THE EGG MARKET

Complaints are constantly being laid by farmers that their business does not pay, but little or no attempt is made by many of such men to inquire into the reason of their failure to receive adequate returns. The fact of the matter is, in many cases, that little or no attention is paid to details in ordinary farm management. Take for example the egg situation. There is a splendid market in every town and city for this easily raised farm product. Housekeepers are only too glad to pay a handsome premium over the ruling price for market eggs, providing they can be certain they are no more than a week old. There is no shortage of eggs just now, but absolutely no reliance can be placed upon any of the regular offerings at present on the market. To remedy this state of affairs need not occasion very much extra trouble to the poultry-keeper; simply system is required in the collecting and shipping of the eggs. Eggs should be collected daily, sometimes during the extra cold spells it may be necessary to go thru the laying house quite often during the day, so as to avoid having any of the eggs frozen. As soon as collected they should be stamped with a rubber stamp provided for the purpose, having on it the date and perhaps the name of the farm or poultry plant. The eggs should then be placed in cardboard cartons containing a dozen each, upon which the name of the farm is printed, the whole package having a distinctive appearance which will soon be recognized as characteristic of so-and-so's new-laid eggs. The cartons should be packed twelve in a case and shipped so as to reach the consumer as soon as possible after the eggs have been gathered. In this manner, with a very little extra attention poultry keeping can very readily be made a profitable sideline on any farm. The winter egg market is one which should be taken advantage of. Housekeepers pay fifty cents a dozen in Winnipeg today for eggs which are said to be new laid but which the purchasers know to be far from fresh, simply because no better product is available. Shipping eggs affords no obstacle in these days when express companies will deliver rapidly, in perfect condition, all consignments placed in their care, no matter how cold the weather. Here, then, is the farmers' opportunity. The market is almost unlimited and the demand is so good that a price will be paid for the product which will give handsome returns over and above any extra expenses which the following out of the system as outlined above will incur.

## DEVELOPMENT OF CO-OPERATION

One of the things that strikes the observer of western agricultural conditions most forcibly, is the growth and success of the co-operative movement among western farmers. It is only a couple of years ago that the manufacturers and wholesalers of many commodities used on the farm were unwill-