

The Grain Growers' Guide

Winnipeg, Wednesday, September 15th, 1915

THE WHEAT MARKET

The wheat market, as was pointed out last week, is very seriously affected by the increase in ocean freight rates, and the adverse condition of the Sterling exchange, which, combined with the prospect of heavy shipments, is depressing the market very rapidly. It is in the interest of every farmer and every business institution in Canada that the price of wheat be kept where it will give a fair profit to the farmers. The farmer can assist more than anybody else by holding his wheat off the market, but in order that the farmer may be able to hold his wheat it is necessary to have the wholehearted co-operation of the other business interests. This is the time when the bankers can afford to be lenient and extend credit to farmers who are holding their wheat on their own farms. The mortgage companies also will have nothing to lose by a generous policy and the implement companies can help the farmers a great deal by not pressing unreasonably for payments. It is, of course, only right and proper that all of these interests should look after their security, and in most cases they will be able to do that without forcing the farmer to dump his wheat on the market at once. All of these interests had a part in the campaign to induce farmers to sow a large acreage. The farmers did their part well and have produced the largest crop in our history. There will be upwards of 150,000,000 bushels of the western wheat crop for export and the price that is obtained for it will be the biggest single factor in the commercial life of the country. A difference of 10 cents per bushel in the price of this wheat means a difference of \$15,000,000. It is the duty of every interest with the welfare of this country at heart to assist the farmers in marketing their wheat slowly and maintaining the price at a reasonable level.

AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION

It is only within comparatively recent years that particular study has been given to agricultural instruction. Just why the importance of this work has been so much neglected in the past is hard to explain, but now the question of how education along agricultural lines can be most efficiently given is claiming a great deal of attention. The problem involved is a difficult one, more perhaps from lack of experience in this direction than from the obstacles which it affords. Agriculture is distinct from other professions in that it is necessary for much of the effort to be exerted individually. That is, it is necessary for each individual farmer to operate a large or small piece of land separate from his fellows. Then this individual effort necessarily differs somewhat because the farmers' operations extend over such widely different conditions of climate, soil and location. Hence no set rules for his work can be formulated which will be workable under all possible contingencies. The reasonable way, then, to deal with farm problems would be individually in so far as is reasonably possible. Comparatively little work has been done until recently to improve agricultural methods. Almost all the improvement which can be made is by experiment. The more nu-

merous these experiments can be the more complete will be the eventual results. This fact has led to the establishment of a number of experiment stations in representative parts of the country. Now, the practical side of agricultural education consists largely in teaching the results obtained from experiments, so that it would naturally seem an excellent plan to establish schools in which agriculture may be taught in connection with these experimental farms. In the past few years two distinct systems have been developed. One in brief has been the building up of a central institution to which students go from country districts and in which is taught both elementary and advanced work; and the other is a system of schools of agriculture located in representative parts of the country, province or state, in which the more practical elementary work is taught and from which qualified students pass to resume their studies in more advanced work at a central agricultural institution affiliated with the state or provincial university. Both systems are open for criticism. Which is the more desirable one? Of the many factors to be taken into consideration perhaps those of expenditure and service are the most important. Any system of education should be so designed as to be of the greatest service to the greatest number at the least possible expense in keeping with this standard of efficiency. The trend of instruction in agriculture today is in the direction of the unit system. Better farming trains, district representatives, agricultural secretaries, agricultural teachers in the high schools, agricultural college automobile tours, all these have as their object the getting into close individual touch with every farmer possible. From the standpoint of expenditure it is probable that the placing of schools of agriculture in representative parts of the country would call for a smaller initial expenditure than the creation of a large central agricultural college. It would seem then that inevitably such a system will be found to be the most efficient, and hence will be adopted in some form or other in each province. Of course the higher education leading to the granting of a degree in agriculture would not be discontinued, but such work can most efficiently and economically be taken up in conjunction with the central state or provincial university. In an agricultural country a carefully graduated educational system leading by easy stages from the public school, in which the rudiments of agriculture are taught, to the local school of agriculture and finally to the agricultural college affiliated with the university should provide an adequate and efficient training for the farmers and farm women of tomorrow.

SIGN THE SUFFRAGE PETITIONS

Every year, for some time past, the representatives of the Manitoba Grain Growers' Association in convention assembled have passed a resolution endorsing the principle of Woman Suffrage. The past two years they have gone a step farther and pledged themselves to take definite steps to advance this reform. This summer the sincerity of these resolutions has been put to the test by the distribution of woman suffrage petitions to the secretaries of the

Grain Growers' Associations throughout the province requesting them to find some one to get signatures in each of their districts. It is too early yet to be able to make a general statement as to the extent of the work being done by these associations, but word has repeatedly reached the executive of the Political Equality League that the Grain Growers' Associations in many districts have done nothing whatever in this matter. It is probable that the local secretary in such cases does not realize that the honor of the whole Grain Growers' Association is at stake, and that a great democratic reform depends in a large measure upon the signatures to these petitions. It is to be hoped that such officials as have failed to take action on this matter up to the present will not any longer delay the work necessary for this reform. Harvesting and threshing will of course, interfere greatly but the individual work required is small and will not take much time.

WHO PAYS FOR THE WAR?

With the newspapers full of appeals for contributions to funds for the purchase of machine guns and field kitchens, and the Manitoba government and the Winnipeg city council making grants for the purchase of an aeroplane and the establishment of a school of aviation, it seems almost necessary to enquire if this war is being run, so far as Canada is concerned, by the Dominion government, or whether it is being supported by voluntary contributions. The war, as we see it, is a national affair, and its cost should be borne by all the people, just as all other national expenses are. It is the business of the government to equip and pay the troops and to provide them with everything that is required to enable them to do their duty in the most efficient way possible wherever they may be sent, at home or abroad. If machine guns, field kitchens, and aeroplanes are needed by the army, they should be provided by the Militia Department and paid for from the public treasury, instead of being supplied by private generosity or done without. The same applies to motor ambulances, bandages, and every kind of medical and surgical care for the wounded, all of which, being absolutely necessary, should be provided for all who need them and at the expense of the country as a whole. We would also go further, and say that the state is the proper agency to provide for the families of the soldiers who go away to fight their country's battles, leaving wives and children or other dependents behind them, and also for the soldiers who have already begun to return maimed or blind or otherwise partially or wholly incapacitated. These should not be dependent upon charity, they should receive a fair allowance, not as a compassionate gift, but as compensation which they have well earned, and to which they are justly entitled. When private charity or patriotic committees are left to do what is really the duty of the government, there is sure to be overlapping and ground left uncovered, and there will also be a great deal of waste. A stronger reason, however, why all war expenditures should be undertaken by the government is that everyone would then be called upon to contribute his or her share, instead of the whole burden

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