

Advance in Food Prices

In the current Atlantic Monthly, G. S. Dickerman, in discussing the "drift to cities," produces as a byproduct a good deal of information as to the rise of food prices. Because of the drift cityward it was expected that there would be a decline in farm products. The United States corn crop of 1910 was less than that of 1900 (census years), by 114,000,000 bushels. Wheat was greater because of a better yield, but had 8,000,000 less acreage. The apple crop was less by 27,876,000 bushels, and the small fruits by 27,876,000 bushels, and the small fruits by 36,653,000 quarts. Proportionately in 1910 wheat was grown for every 1,000 inhabitants on 212 fewer acres than in 1900, with a product of 1,236 fewer bushels, but a valuation greater by \$2,283 on 30.6 per cent. less land, 14.3 per cent. less production and 46.9 per cent. greater value. Corn was grown on 178 fewer acres for every 1,000 inhabitants, produced 7,337 bushels less, which was valued at \$4,743 more; or 14.7 per cent. less land, 20.91 per cent. less bushels and 43.5 per cent. greater value. All the cereals had 14 per cent. less land, 16 per cent. less product and 48.9 per cent. greater value in 1910 than in 1900. Orchard fruits showed 32.6 per cent. fewer trees 16.1 per cent. less fruit and 39 per cent. greater value. For all crops there was 9.18 per cent. less land cultivated while the product cost 51.2 per cent. more.

Meanwhile, in this decade, meat cattle decreased 5,916,000, swine 4,682,000 and sheep 9,056,000. Or proportionately to each thousand inhabitants cattle on farms decrease 219, while increasing \$2.38 a head in value; swine, 195 head fewer, with \$3.17 increased value a head; sheep, 238 fewer, and in value \$1.67 a head greater. There was an increase in horses, mules and goats. But every old northern state shared in the cattle decrease to a total of 2,000,000 head. Mr. Dickerman's reasoning is that all this comes from a cityward drift, resulting in a decrease of the rural population. Therefore, that the increase in price of beef, mutton, pork is thus explained. The smaller crops caused by a decreasing rural population work a decrease of live stock by reason of less food for the animals, and this decrease accounts for the higher prices of the dressed products. But he argues still further effects. We are not and cannot go on exporting as large quantities of breadstuffs, meats and fruits as heretofore, and this will cause higher prices in all countries with which we have commercial relations. More than this he traces a deterioration of character as a result of the Cityward drift. The young farm boy growing up as a city dweller becoming less of a man in many ways than the boy growing up on a farm. This, as Kipling might say, is another story. The exposition as to the rise in the price of food products or cost of living seems to be traced, in part, to a positive relative decrease and some times absolute decrease in the production, compared with population. It is a valuable showing and a very serious one.

HETTY GREEN ON HER 78th BIRTHDAY.

Hetty Green, who was 78 years old a few days ago said "To enjoy a long life, one must fear God and do justice to everybody, so as to have a clear conscience. Don't worry, but work hard and live frugally, avoiding too much rich food and irregular hours. The easier one is in mind the longer the span of life will be."

Edmonton Making Progress

(Special Correspondence, Journal of Commerce.)

Edmonton, December 1st,

Official announcement is made by Mayor William Short that the firm of Kleinwort Sons and Company of London, Eng., has made the final payment of the \$2,000,000, due on December 1, of the issue of debentures amounting to \$9,800,000. Two million dollars' worth of debentures, included in the original agreement, will be placed on the market in 1914 in addition to the regular debentures to be sold to provide money for the extension and improvement of public utilities. The city has received a total of \$9,135,000 to date. A portion of the last payment was used to retire treasury notes, amounting to \$1,250,000, issued in 1912 and previously. The city's public work is financed until the end of this year. The city has debentures amounting to \$538,253 in the Imperial Bank of Canada, which remain unsold because of an agreement with the Kleinworts that no debentures be sold while they undertake to supply money on the big issue.

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Guy Cathcart Pelton of the firm of Pelton and Pelton has written a letter to the press of Edmonton, saying that the local savings are sufficient to found a community bank. He places the accounts in savings banks at about \$100 per capita of a population of 70,000, which would make a larger paid-up capital than is reported by some of the prominent banks in Canada.

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W. D. Bradley, secretary-treasurer of the school board of Edmonton, reports receiving \$1,035.00 as the proceeds of 40-year debentures, issued last spring. The purchaser was a syndicate, composed of Spencer, Trask & Co.; Equitable Trust Co.; W. C. Langley & Co.; and W. M. Coler & Co., of New York. These firms took over the interests of Henry Spitzer & Co., of Toledo. The original issue was for \$1,250,000, but small parcels of the bonds were sold from time to time.

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Advices received in Edmonton from Europe indicate that large amounts of money will be available in the near future for investment purposes in the prairie provinces. Millions have already been forwarded for loaning purposes from Great Britain and Continental Europe and the letters to hand from Europe would seem to indicate that those who furnished these funds are well satisfied with developments.

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John McEachern, superintendent of general branches of the Bank of British North America, who is making a tour of Western Canada, said that despite the fact that this year's crop was one of the greatest in the history of the country, it would be far from sufficient to place the country on a sound and substantial financial footing. He added: "I consider three such crops will be necessary before the depression is fully relieved. This crop is practically the first good one gathered in the last three years and with the outstanding debts of the farmers and others, returns from one year's harvest will not do more than pay a portion of these accumulated liabilities."

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J. J. Galloway of Edmonton, for seven years western inspector of the Merchants' Bank of Canada, has been appointed to the position of superintendent of the bank's branches in Alberta and British Columbia. Associated with him will be C. E. Barthe and W. S. Bragg.

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