

CO-OPERATIVE LEGISLATION NEEDED

There are a great many interests combined to fight against the bills now before the Ottawa Parliament providing machinery for the operation of co-operative societies. The Retail Merchants' Association seems to be the leading spirit in this opposition and many statements that are being made are wide of the facts. Co-operation seems to be the best method at the present day by which the producer and consumer can get a fair deal. Co-operation provides no rake-offs for any private individual or corporation. It is a scheme whereby interest is paid upon capital and the additional profits go back to the producer or consumer in proportion as they do business with the society of which they are members. Co-operation worked out in its best form as is seen in many of the old countries, secures capital for the agricultural and working classes at a rate of interest which is within their reach. None of the legitimate interests of today have the slightest shadow of right to oppose any Bill which is intended to benefit the interest of the great producing and consuming classes of Canada.

The Co-operative Bill will be welcomed by the farmers of Canada because it will provide them with machinery whereby they can incorporate small societies for the transaction of their own business. At present there is a live co-operative association in operation at Red Deer, Alberta, but it is a voluntary association. There is no machinery at the present time for incorporating these co-operative societies except by special legislation. The enactment of a statute by the Dominion Parliament providing the necessary machinery similar to the present Joint Stock Companies Acts, would see co-operative societies springing up all over the land. The co-operative spirit is strong today in Western Canada and also in Eastern Canada. In the United Kingdom co-operation has been growing since 1844, and now the volume of business is \$500,000,000 annually. There is no reason why Canadian producers and consumers should not have the opportunity and privilege of conducting their own business if they desire to do so. All other legitimate businesses will continue, and if they are prepared to give a square deal there is no reason why they cannot face competition.

Co-operation provides a safety valve whereby every man is allowed to get a square deal and no man is allowed to victimize another without his consent. In urging the passing of these Bills through the House of Commons, the supporters are not working against the legitimate interests of Canada. They are merely following up what every person will admit is right, namely that there should be "equal rights to all and special privileges to none."

It is of special interest to note the following item in the Co-operative News of England:

"There is but one shop in the pretty little village of Howick, on Earl Grey's Northumberland estate—the co-operative store. It was upon the earl's initiative that the enterprise was started, and he not only erected the building, but gave it rent free to the society for two years, and also paid the manager's salary for the same period. The annual turnover of the society is over \$3,000."

Earl Grey is a firm believer in co-operation, and is Honorary President of the International Co-operative Alliance of the world. Of course in his present position as representative of His Majesty, he can take no part in the great cause that is being agitated in Canada. He gave evidence before the Committee of the House of Commons, however, and this example of the support he has given to his own tenants, shows where his heart lies. The only reason given for opposing the co-operative bills before the House of Commons, are selfish ones, and if they are to become law, those who favor them must be active in their support.

THE HUDSON BAY RAILWAY

Newspapers announce that William McKenzie, president of the Canadian Northern Railway, has gone to Ottawa to make an

arrangement whereby he will build the Hudson Bay road. There is no doubt but that McKenzie and Mann would like to build the Hudson Bay road and it is safe betting that they would not lose a cent on the deal. Of course, if they built the Hudson Bay road, the Dominion government would be expected to give them a cash subsidy sufficient to pay the entire cost of the road and something to the good. Then in addition to this, the western provinces would each be supposed to guarantee a similar amount. By this means, McKenzie and Mann would have the road built and equipped without any cost and in addition would receive immense funds for the financing of their other schemes. At the present time, McKenzie and Mann, or the Canadian Northern Railway, have 100 miles of railway built from their Prince Albert branch at Hudson Bay Junction to The Pas Mission on the Saskatchewan River. This road is, of course, of little or no use where it is and was only built for the purpose of preventing any other road from being built, and in the hope of eventually securing some government aid to complete the other 480 miles to the Bay. Western Canada does not want any road built to the Hudson Bay by McKenzie and Mann. Those two enterprising railroaders have got enough work on their hands to bring their present railways up-to-date without biting off any more. Every man in Western Canada, who is interested in the construction of the Hudson Bay Railroad, should make it his business to tell the government that no private corporation must be allowed control of this great avenue of commerce. The Dominion Government has made many promises. The only project which will be considered by western farmers, is that of a railway, owned and controlled by the Dominion Government; also terminals at the Bay under similar control. The government does not seem very keen at the present time to undertake the construction and operation of the road. It is therefore the plain duty of the farmers of the west, to write to their representatives at Ottawa and give them their opinion. What Western Canada wants today, is a railway to the Hudson Bay operated for the benefit of the people of Western Canada. In conjunction with this there must be an efficient steamship service from the Bay to the Old Country markets. Though the country through which this Hudson Bay road will run will never be an agricultural country, there can be no doubt that the 500 miles of railway through the northern country to the Bay will form probably the greatest commercial highway in Canada. We have had sufficient experience with railways under private control, that we feel justified in demanding that this great national highway be constructed, controlled and operated for the benefit of the people. We will get it, too, if we stand firm.

TOO MUCH "WATER" IN EGGS

From Farm, Stock, and Home

The farm value of the eggs produced in the United States during the year 1909 was, in round numbers, \$300,000,000, which includes all cost for feed and labor. The valuation measured by prices to the consumer was nearly double that amount, or \$540,000,000. This is an expense loading of 80 per cent. for transportation, storage and salesmanship. Compared to this the exactions of the beef trust and the other food syndicates seem reasonable enough.

In Denmark the farmers have solved this particular phase of the food problem to their own satisfaction. They have formed associations that take over the eggs, each stamped with its date of laying. These local depots turn them over to larger shipping houses, and they are handled so that they reach the local or foreign (English) market at a minimum cost for transportation, storage and handling. This cost is charged back to the local producer, who receives the full profit that accrues to

the business after the shipping expenses have been met. The Danish farmers are not only able to realize a satisfactory profit on their produce, but meet successfully all foreign competition in the English markets through controlling the selling end of their business.

FARMERS SUPPORTING ACTION

In a few days the legislature of Manitoba will meet and consider the bill for the creation of a publicly owned system of elevators in the province. The memorandum presented to the government by the elevator committee has been received throughout the province with the unanimous endorsement of the Grain Growers. Local branches have met and endorsed the memorandum and have declared their support to the directors in the work. The government could hardly be expected to go ahead and take over the elevators without the assurance that the Grain Growers of the province were favorable. There is now no reason for fearing such a possibility. The farmers of Manitoba are of one mind in their demand that the elevators be taken out of private hands. The government has now sufficient warrant that it has the support of the country in enacting the elevator legislation.

SOUTH AFRICAN SCRIP

The latest figures available announce that warrants have been issued for South African Veterans' Land Grants to the number of 6,705. Of this vast number, only 465 veterans have themselves located on the land. There have been registered 3,017 substitutes. There are still on the market and unlocated 3,432 warrants and their value is quoted at \$710 each. Prices at which this scrip is being held are coming down as it is seen that the Dominion Government does not intend to extend the time of settlement duties. When it is considered that the speculators are now holding more than one half of the warrants issued, and paid for them about \$200 each, the enormity of the graft is evident.

The United Farmers of Alberta are preparing to place their demands for government owned elevators before the government of the province. Premier Rutherford has declared his intention of considering the proposition just as soon as the farmers place a feasible scheme before him. Manitoba is in the lead towards this most progressive legislation that has yet been enacted in Western Canada. The Bill for the Manitoba Legislature is now in the course of preparation and within a few weeks will be on the statute books of the province. The legislature of Alberta will also meet in a few days and will have an opportunity to show their intention towards the farmers. It will be interesting to note the action of the legislatures of the two provinces. There is reason to believe that they will give more attention to the requests of the organized farmers than they have ever done in the past. Evidently the Saskatchewan Government is watching and waiting before taking any further steps.

The Winnipeg Free Press stands pretty close to the government at Ottawa and in that paper last week was an announcement that there was little possibility of the government extending the time that was allowed for settlement duties to begin on homesteads given to South African veterans. The original time set was December, 1910 but since the speculators have got hold of the scrip, they wish to extend the time for their own financial benefit. It is gratifying to know that the Dominion Government will not be a party to this graft in commercial patriotism.