

Ward, officers in the inactive and peace time militia of Canada, were very much in evidence, however, on the side lines.

"They were too d— scared of their skins to go themselves", a man from Monquat remarked audibly, and of the boys who went that day not more than three had ever worn the King's uniform with me on the warlike and canteened field of Sussex.

"The band came to the ragged end of the selection, and then, after the younger members of the 'Woman's Institute' had distributed some cigarettes and other creature comforts, Mark Ford, the young and assertive attorney, whom you know so well and dislike so cordially, delivered an oration from the post-office steps. Ford, as O'Henry would say, was 'some gravy' at delivering himself of audible sounds relating to 'matters and conclusions', and one could hear the traditional pin drop as he drew a realistic and plagiarized word picture of the brave soldier boys parting from those they loved and 'marching proudly away under the flaunting flags, keeping time to the grand wild music of war, marching down the streets of the great cities—through the towns and across

the prairies, down to the fields of glory, to do and to dare for the eternal right. We see them pierced by balls and torn with shells, in the trenches, by the forts, and in the whirlwind of the charge when men become of iron with nerves of steel.'

"That all seemed a long time ago; but as I lay in the little hospital I could imagine the patriotic and eloquent Ford still back in his dingy 'two-by-twice' Rockport office, scanning, no doubt, a divorce libel, or advising a client how to 'swear out' of jail with a Walkam watch in his pocket.

The reel seemed to flicker out, and then the Captain's face swung into alignment again. The young Captain who had taken charge of our Company the second week at Valcartier, and whom we had vowed to follow to the brink of h—. I, at least, had followed him through that undesirable region and on to this hospital camp on the sunny banks of the historic Rhine. The rest of the Company were back at —, no doubt, at the bottom of the Pit that had almost held me in its iron grasp.

"The old parade ground stood out clearly in the yellow sunlight; but the trip over, the weary wait

on Salisbury Plain, the sail across the Channel in the crowded transport, all seemed hazy and indistinct, and then the three weeks that we spent at the little French village of —, within sound of the thundering delirious artillery, passed in rapid review.

"I saw again the quaint French streets—the old-fashioned houses; the people—their warm, unobtrusive kindness, and their unutterable wrongs. For the village had been occupied twice by the enemy during the march to Paris—going in the flush of victory, and coming back in the bitterness of defeat—and we had entered it close on their heels.

"I tried to shut out the scene, for my still unstable mind reeled with the thoughts of our first few days in that village, and if I were to write the hundredth part of what we saw and heard, it would make the Bryce report look like a boy's story paper, and would be set down by you and the good people of Canada as the vagary of a half-unbalanced mind.

"There, for instance, was the body of a young girl we found at the first cross road beyond the village, (Continued on page 17.)

# THE MORALS OF MANITOBA

*Unscrupulous Thermometers—Rampageous Rust—Two Per Cent. Alcohol—  
The Clock With Two Hour Hands—and the Assize Court*

WINNIPEG, July 31, 1916.

By AUGUSTUS BRIDLE

HERE is a pilgrims' chorus programme—set down for Friday, 28th of July. Begin with a long, cool lemonade at the Royal Alexandra. Decide at once that you will walk down Main St.—which seems up—as far as the Fort Garry. You give no man a reason. All you explain is that you will journey afoot to the Fort Garry when every conscientious thermometer on the route swaggeringly proclaims at least 96 in the shade, and in some cases 100 plus.

On a day like this Main St. is a fine pilgrims' promenade. It was designed so that during the high-sun part of the day there should be no shady side, or even a cranny where you can draw a breath of anything but a blast-furnace until you get down past the City Hall, where Mayor Waugh sits in his corner office with no braces over his shirt. From there to Portage Ave. there is a shady spot or two. Keep on. Just north of Portage you glance left at a long white-brick building that seems to be expanding three new storeys with the heat. That is said by some, my friend, to be the headquarters of all this weather-inferno. It is the Grain Exchange. Pass it by. At 100 in the shade it's no place to be looking at wheat, oats and barley. Persevere. You are at Portage, where the bold, benign front of the Bank of Montreal blocks out the sun. Gasp your way, coat over your arm, past a car-hunting mob, past palpitating dogs, smothering horses, and sweltering people, over to the steps of the Bank. There heaven permits you to breathe freely. You note the lines of super-heated humanity that meet here and cross at the busiest junction in the City of Wheat; great broad streets of which Portage Ave., once the trail of the Red River carts, is now the main artery of prosperous traffic.

But keep on. Fight your way up past the Industrial Bureau, white as wood can be made to look like stone or marble, reflecting all the heat it gets. Remember the goal. The Fort Garry rears its pile of new stone American style nine stories into the heat. You are still to go three blocks, past the new Union Station, the old Hudson's Bay stores—then here you are in the shadows of the hotel on Broadway, up comes a new bus that looks like a small submarine—and in five minutes the desire of your life is accomplished.

You order another long, cool lemonade!

PEOPLE here say this kind of heat is not a common thing. In fact, it's not good for the wheat, they say; especially when it's humid. The regular Winnipeg specifications for wheat weather this time of year just past the milk stage is a dry, hot day with a fine pranking breeze that keeps the rust from crawling up the stalks of the wheat, then cool nights when the thermometer flirts with ten degrees above frost; an occasional shower. Mix well—and you have a good chance of a high-grade sample of No. 1 Hard.

Thus far the weather has not been so virtuous. Hot, humid days are said to create rust, which is technically the little, red parasite that tickles the bulls on the Grain Exchange. Rust has had the stage



"You will walk down Main St.—which seems up . . ."

of late. He has a host of friends. Average citizen as you are, concerned with the greatest good to the greatest number, you must learn that to be so sincere about grades and acre-averages is quite superfluous if you want to be a bull at the Exchange.

"But why," through a mist of moist heat you inquire of the cheerful one telling you discretely, cocksure tales of wheat and weather, "why should one want to raise the price of wheat? Isn't it high enough?"

"Closed to-day, July wheat at \$1.25, barring a point or two," says he.

"Dear loaf!" you murmur.

He glares at you. Do not pester him with too much economics. He is a bull. And a bull is never an economist, except to argue.

"My dear sir, don't you see that high wheat means a heap of money for the farmers?"

"Yea, verily," you consent. "But I am not a farmer. Neither are you. I am one of those who cannot afford wealthy farmers produced by H. C. of L. to other people."

"Farmer is basic," he blurts with a fresh gulp of heat.

"We are all basic," I insist.

"Look at the prosperity from last year's crop. If we have within a hundred million of it this year—"

"No so fast my friend. You are beginning to cheer for a large crop. But if rust is on the rampage, how can that be?"

"Too much velocity," he insists. "High price is the thing. As much money with less wheat."

"But the railways?" I venture. "How about the haulage? High prices don't raise freight tariffs. Next to the farmer, isn't the railwayman—?"

He gulps another harmless and moralizing dink.

"Not the point, sir. Railways are common carriers, but not common political economy. Nobody understands railways. And entre nous—there's a

whole lot of guff about this rust talk. Most of it starts across the line. Chicago is headquarters. Wheat-prices are international—like war, and art. Our couple of hundred million bushels a year more make very little difference to it. There's the United States, Russia, Argentine, India—all to figure in the annual bulk of supply visible. What I want to get at is—it's important to have those rust artists across the line hand out enough scare dope to force up the price. Suppose the rust in Western Canada doesn't amount to one per cent. of damage. Our price goes up just the same. Our bulls buy in the rising market. The farmers buy—"

"Excuse me," I interrupt. "I thought the farmer's business was to sell."

He gazed at me charitably.

"So it is. But doesn't he want to sell high?"

"Surely."

"If he wants to sell more than he raises, he must buy. If he buys while the price is going up over a rust-gambling period, isn't he as much entitled to sell higher than he buys on a rising market, as you or I?"

"Presumably—yes."

"Well," he chuckled over two gurgling straws, "he doesn't do it—as a rule."

He went on to explain that the farmer is constitutionally a bull, because to him as a producer dear wheat is good business no matter who pays the piper. Cheap wheat is disastrous. Anything that boosts the price is a good thing. It may be low visible supply, poor crops in other wheat areas, war, bad weather—anything.

"I admit all that," realizing that another starched collar has become a rag.

"And whether his own particular crop is good or bad, the high price is the thing."

"I get you."

"So the farmer fetches in the rusty stalks. Go up to the Exchange and you'll find sheaves of 'm littering about. The farmers made a raid on the fields, and if they didn't pick out the worst stalks they could find, they'd be too good to live in a world as hot as this."

"Undoubtedly." I was weakening. The new political economy, new to me, but old to my friend, was getting in its work like the rust. "So up goes the price. I buy in a rising market, expecting to unload before she goes down."

"Doped by a Rube?" I ask him.

"Not so fast. The farmer sells. But he gets the fever and buys too. He wants to be happy same as the rest of us on a bull market. Some of these farmers buy up into the hundreds of thousands. Then they go home to hang on. They think that the market will stay bull a long while. They live in an atmosphere of bull. We don't. Closer to the barometer than the farmer is with his yesterday's paper, we let go while it's going up—before she breaks. The farmer intended to. But he didn't move in time. He is caught. But if he sells his own crop high his losses average up on his buying high and selling on the downward market. And he is always a bull. He can't help it. There's no other way for the producer to be."

Heat and wheat have gone to my brain. There's