

CONSCRIPT CANADA'S CROP

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the millers were wealthy and shrewd enough to suppose that the wheat market would go up, and that they would be safe in omitting the usual precautions last October, and to act on that supposition. You may suppose that some of the milling companies' profits of the past year came from that source. If so, it was speculation much more than is the usual procedure of entering the option market.

THE full treatment of the position of the mills would require extended treatment, and consideration of how far they are able to make the first grade of flour out of wheat that is lower than the contract grades, and for various reasons this year has been cheaper, comparatively, remarkably cheaper, than usually. It is desired to show that we are very much concerned, as consumers, with the course of the wheat market, and that we suffer severely when a corner is engineered, even through inadvertence.

To get a remedy it is not sufficient to abandon trading in futures. That hurts the farmer at once. The whole machinery of the grain trade depends on

the existence of a market for future delivery. Without such a market there may be an enormous drop in price as soon as the farmer attempts to market his crop of 1917. That would not be a good thing, although at first it may look like it to the consumer. Leave out of consideration the justice of the matter to the farmer, after he has been urged to make every endeavour for production. Remember that the war shows every sign of lasting through another winter, and that next spring we shall very likely be urging the farmer again to do his duty. It would not pay if he were fooled this year.

This, then, is the situation. Our future market has been ruined, perhaps not through any inexperience on the part of the commission buying for the European Allies, but by the logic of events, which has destroyed the market on the other side of the Atlantic. That single source of buying may upset our commercial conditions by too vigorous buying of future contracts at the wrong moment or by refraining from buying at a time when our wheat is for sale. We must have a future market, and that can be provided by the Government of Canada. It is an easy matter to arrange, calling for no elaborate

office organization, for the existing machinery of the elevator companies can be employed without difficulty.

There is first the matter of price to be settled. A short time ago the farmers wanted to sell the whole crop on the basis of \$1.70 per bushel for No. one Northern, delivered at Fort William. The British authorities demurred. Now October wheat has soared far over two dollars in price, and perhaps that price will have to be conceded. Then a price for every other grade must be set, based on the milling value of the different, and not, as were the prices this season, allowed to be depressed unduly because the lower grades chanced to be relatively more plentiful than usual. We do not need to await long negotiations with Great Britain as to the price to be paid for this year's crop. We can determine a fair price, and buy the wheat at that. If Great Britain thinks our price too high, she can pay a lower one based on the prices she is paying elsewhere for grain. The difference, if any, can be absorbed as a war expense of this country's. It is much more likely that the difference will be the other way and that we shall

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THE DOCTOR'S BARGAIN

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about, is goin' to make one fer you."

"Aw, gwan. Wot yer givin' me," grunted the skeptical Pete, ignoring the enthusiasm of the head of the house.

"Come on, I'll show you."

"Naw, you don't. You don't get me losin' what leg I've got."

"Honest, Pete, I'm on the level. The doc says he bets he can fix you up good as new."

"Nixey fer me. I'm fer keepin' me bum prop. I reads how a doc saws off a boy's legs just for fun."

"Aw, Pete, don't be silly. The doc won't hurt you."

"Don't you believe it," Pete replied, and started down the sidewalk to get away from temptation. Tom knew Pete's stolid strength of will, and decided on another tack. He felt in his pocket and found sixteen cents. Counting out five pennies, he ran across the street, and soon had Dr. Harrison on the wire.

"Hello, this you, doc?—Pete won't come—Naw, he's afraid you'll hurt him. He's read how a doc cut off a feller's leg just fer fun.—Send up a pape? Sure, but you'll have to hide yer sign, or he won't never come in.—All right, I'll send him up. Please don't hurt him, will you doc?—Good-bye."

Tom ran back to the corner.

"Hey, Pete," he called, as soon as he was within earshot of the cripple, "a guy just told me to hustle a Herald up to 345 West Alden Avenue. Get on a Prince Street car, and hurry up. Here's a dime fer carfare."

"There ain't no profit in that," Pete grunted, "go yerself and save the dime."

"Do as yer told. I'm boss o' this corner," the young financier retorted, shoving Pete toward a car as fast as the cripple could hobble. "Get off at Walnut Street and walk west half a block," he shouted as he helped Pete on the car platform.

For the first time in twenty-two years Dr. Harrison's sign was hidden as the cripple struggled up

the steps and rang the bell.

"Here's yer pape," he said in a matter-of-fact tone, holding out the first edition, when the maid opened the door.

"Pape?" asked the girl, pretending ignorance. "Step in a moment and I'll see if it belongs here."

PETE stepped inside and took off his cap. The girl disappeared, but returned presently, and pointed to an open door down the hall. Pete hobbled in the direction pointed, and entered the doctor's outer office.

"Sit down a minute," came a pleasant voice from somewhere, and Pete crawled up into one of the large chairs. The next few minutes were about the busiest the cripple had ever known. Pictures, statuary, books, furniture—never in his short life had he seen such an array. How could he possibly remember all to tell Tom. Before the survey was half finished, however, a tall man with a kindly face stood before him and held out his hand for the paper. Pete handed him the Herald and arose to go.

"Hold on a minute, how much do I owe you?"

"Two cents."

"Two cents?" the doctor shouted, so loud that Pete feared he had overcharged him. "Didn't you pay carfare to get here?"

"Yes, Tom paid that." Pete smiled with relief.

"Tom? Who's Tom?"

"He's me big brudder."

This time the smile bespoke pride and thankfulness.

"Likely sort of chap?"

"Yes, sir; Tom's all right."

The smile was wider than ever.

"Do you know who I am?" the doctor asked in his kindest tone, placing his hand on the boy's shoulder.

"No."

"I am Dr. Harrison." The smile disappeared and the boy began to tremble at mention of the awful name. "Possibly you have heard of me?"

"Ye—es," Pete whispered, too scared to realize whether he was saying "yes" or "no."

"Now, Pete, take a good look at me," the doctor continued as he arose from his chair and stood in the middle of the room for the cripple's inspection. "I'm not really such an awful man, am I, Pete?"

"N—n—o—o," Pete answered, more because the surgeon's tone needed a negative reply than because he knew what he was saying.

"Pete, I like little boys," the doctor went on, ignoring the lad's terrified expression. "And I kind of think some of them like me. Do you think you could?"

"Ma—a—aybe," the youngster was doing his best to be brave.

The doctor glanced at the open door and nodded to the maid.

"Tom McGuire is out at the door and wants to see you," she said.

"Send him in," the surgeon answered heartily.

"Well, I never. Hello, Tom!"

"Hello, doc! Done anything to Pete's leg?"

"Why, no, we haven't mentioned legs. Have we, Pete?"

"Not yet," said Pete, with a feeling that something was still to come.

"Say, doc, look at it now, will you?" Tom exclaimed energetically and began to take off his brother's shoe.

"Hold on a minute, Tom; this isn't the place to examine legs, and besides, I never make an examination without the owner's consent."

"Tell the doc you want to have yer leg looked at," Tom commanded in a tone that bore authority.

Before Pete could answer, the doctor had interposed a good natured objection.

"You keep out of this, Tom. This is Pete's leg, and he shall have the whole say about what is done to that leg."

THIS announcement was a revelation to Pete, who had had visions of being bound and gagged while the doctor attacked his leg with a common hand saw.

"Is that straight?" he asked, looking up dubiously into the surgeon's face.

"Absolutely!" the doctor exclaimed. "I won't touch a finger to that leg till you give me your consent."

"There, Pete, what'd I tell you," Tom broke in, but the doctor frowned at him to keep quiet. The eyes of both Tom and the surgeon were now on Pete.

"What'll it cost?" The cripple seemed about to

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It took Tom nearly five minutes to read it aloud.