

The Saturday Press

and Prairie Farm

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THIS WEEK'S CONVENTION

REPRESENTATIVES from the Rural Municipalities throughout the province have been in Saskatoon this week holding their annual convention, and threshing out their problems. They have doubtless accomplished much important business which will be duly recorded on their minutes; but it is not in the convention hall listening to long addresses that the real genius of the convention is expressed. It is in the ante-rooms and in the hotels, where these Reeves, Secretary-Treasurers, Farmers and Business-men are meeting and talking over their problems and how each locality or individual has been best able to solve them. Men have been here from all quarters of the province; and, meeting in little groups have exchanged experiences and encouraged each other's hopes. This is all to the good, both to the dweller in the country and in the town. Our people cannot meet too often or too familiarly. If they had met oftener in the past they would know and appreciate each other better.

A FARM JOURNAL

BETWIXT the farmer and the agriculturist there is the same difference as between practise and theory; the former may be assisted by the latter, so long as they can go hand in hand; but in case of a collision, the farmer will be of more service to himself and his country than the agriculturist.—Crabb.

This expresses very truly and concisely a distinction that is often lost sight of, but one which we shall try to bear in mind in making the sort of paper *The Saturday Press and Prairie Farm* is designed to be. To make a success of a farm in Saskatchewan, it is not enough simply to know how to farm well. There is much of unavoidable drudgery, painful and disagreeable labor; long hours; grinding worries; disappointments and difficulties; all of which the farmer must struggle with and overcome. The man who is merely an agriculturist usually runs away from them.

Floods of gratuitous advice are being poured out on the farmers of Saskatchewan. Where it does not enrage them, it must amuse. They are given everything except what they most need. They ask for financial assistance and they are given fatherly advice; for lower tariffs they are given a War Tax. Much of the advice they are given is at least well-meant and would do no harm if followed. A great deal of it is so ill-adapted to the actual conditions and needs of the farmer as to be merely ridiculous. Consequently, there is some danger of farmers overlooking information of real value to them, while they are surfeited with the well-intentioned, but often almost insulting, advice of "armchair farmers."

The point which some of his would-be advisers have missed is that they are making themselves somewhat ridiculous by attempting to advise on subjects of which they know nothing, while they would be gladly listened to if they would only talk to the farmer on those subjects with which they may be assumed, to be conversant. So, when the farmer goes to his bank to see if he can borrow enough money to buy feed for his hungry horses, he may get the money; but what he is almost certain to get is a homily on the subject of mixed farming and a tract on summer-fallowing. Railroad presidents will plead with him in broken accents, and almost overcome by emotion, to "grow alfalfa!"; although any practical western farmer knows that the present price of hardy alfalfa seed makes growing that crop unprofitable. The Board of Trade asks him, reproachfully, why he is not growing Soy beans, when the veriest school boy knows how old man Soy revolutionized agriculture when he invented them.

Now, what the unregenerate farmer does to all this is just what you might expect. When circumstances compel him to do so, he listens as politely as possible, and reserves the expression of his true feelings for the open prairie; when a free agent, he promptly squelches it, or smiles indulgently.

At the same time, the average farmer, like any average man, is always glad to get information from those who are sticking to their own lines. He will gladly listen to the banker who will give him information (often much needed) about banking methods and requirements; to the railroad official who will talk to him frankly on transportation problems; to the Board of Trade when it advises him upon the state of the labor market; to the merchant who will tell him how to market his products. They are talking then about their own business and not about his; and he listens with respect.

The object of *The Saturday Press and Prairie Farm* will be to act as a medium for the exchange of information, practical and theoretical. It will offer its pages to

Difficulties of Warfare in Poland



In the Russian armies as well as the German forces, frequent mishaps such as shown in this photograph occur. The Russians are expecting the spring thaw will greatly impede the German armies.

the professor to talk to the farmer; to the farmer to talk to the professor; and to farmers to talk to one another. What either has found of value, let him give to some one else; and let these pages play the minor but useful part of passing it along. They are open to anyone who has anything to say. We want the results of scientific

experimentation and the actual experience of successful farmers. The farmers' problems are not all agricultural; many are economic. We want to hear about those also. If a medium of this kind can be of practical value, here is the opportunity for those most concerned to make it so.

FISH, AND HOW TO SELL IT

MARK TWAIN once wrote a story entitled "The Man Who Put up at Gadsby's." It was all about a Southerner who went to Washington to collect for a little matter of twenty barrels of pork, supplied to the troops during the Civil War. He went in great style and with great expectations of collecting the account and getting home the next day. He had a coach and four, a footman, and a spotted dog. He found himself quickly involved in the coils of the circumlocution offices at Washington. Day by day went past without his claim being collected. By degrees he parted with all his costly equipage in order to live. Finally, Mark relates that he saw him about to leave for home with his claim still uncollected. He was disposing of his last remaining possession, with the remark: "Durn a dog, anyhow."

His experience was fairly representative of those who go to interview governments in any country. Sometimes they come away from the official presence really feeling they have secured what they went after. In turning the thing over in their minds on the train on the way home they begin to have some doubts about it. Before they are home long, all doubts are dissipated; they know they have got nothing but honeyed words. For years past the farmers of the prairie have been storming Ottawa, as "single spies" or in "battalions"; and about all they got for it was the privilege of spending ten nights in an upper berth.

Before Hughie Green, Ichthyologist, went to Ottawa, the enduring record of government interviewers was twelve days, and the man who stayed that long did so, not because he was making any headway, but because his expenses were paid, and he liked the board at the Chateau Laurier. Hughie took down with him a fine large specimen of the whitefish from the northern lakes, wrapped in brown paper; and a strong Doric accent. For social functions, he had his kilts. Like the "Man Who Put up at Gadsby's," he was going to run down there, see the Militia Department, settle up his business and come back on the next train. It was a simple little matter: merely to have fish put on the menu of the soldiers, thereby supplying them with cheap, palatable and nutritious fare and at the same time helping out the fishermen in the northern lakes. If there was anything left Hughie didn't mind taking a share of it himself. Sounds easy, doesn't it? Hungry Soldiers—Cheap Fish—Economic and Paternal Government—Poor Fishermen—also, poor Hughie Green!

You know those revolving doors? Well, it was just like that; only those at Ottawa all empty you out on the sidewalk again, instead of letting you get in anywhere. Hughie naturally went first to the Militia Department. The Minister couldn't be seen; probably he was in a trance writing a poem; but after three days the Senior Assistant Colonel of the Guard listened to him through his monocle for the space of half a cigarette; and then, sniffing at the brown paper

parcel, and his face lighting up with intelligence, he exclaimed: "Fish! Ha! Yes. You must see them at the Marine and Fisheries Department. Quite so! Quite so! Right-o!"—and Hughie went out through the revolving doors.

It only took him two days to reach the nethermost caves of the Marine and Fisheries Department; but it was time well spent, for he got to the Minister himself. "Now," said Hughie, "this is whaur I should have come fir-r-st." He pictured this department filled with hardy mariners, with oilskins and sou'-westers hanging up behind the doors. He went in with a rolling gait, and a "Yo Heave-ho, my hearties" salutation; but was met by a frigid air of inquiry. Barring the fact that the typewriter had her hair in Marcel waves, there was not a sign of the briny deep about the place; but just as he was being shunted off with a letter of introduction to the Archives Department, the minister himself entered and Hughie followed him, with his fish under his arm. The minister did not deny that it was the department of Marine and Fisheries; but it was the naval end of it that was occupying his exclusive attention then. If Hughie had only had a model of a new torpedo boat now, or an invisible periscope, he might do something for him; but he did not see that anything could be done with prairie fish just at present. The department had recently issued a splendid booklet instructing the public on the value of fish as a food, a copy of which could be had by anyone on application. He would advise seeing Colonel Black, D.S.O., of the Militia Department. Being still new at the game, Hughie took the advice and his fish and once more made the perilous passage through the revolving doors.

It must be admitted that by this time Phew-w! the fish had been feeling the effect of having been pressed by Hughie's by now very war-r-m ar-r-m for a week, and out of cold storage. He thought it advisable to have it loosened up ready to be whipped out at short notice; so he was admitted to the presence of the Colonel with the devoted fish peeping coyly out of the end of the parcel. The Colonel was a soldier of the old school; stout, red-faced, monocled, and fussy. "Ah!" he said, "Good morning. Phew-w-w!" "Guid mor-r-ning," said Hughie. "I've just cam frae Saskatoon about ar-r-r-angin' for a diet of—"

"Ah, yes. Quite so. Phew-w-w!" "—of fush for the laddies in the camps, ye ken, an' this is a bit o' a white-fush frae the northern lakes. Ye understand that the Indians—"

"Ah! the Indians? Phew-w-w! Quite so; but my dear sir, I really—Phew-w-w-w!" "—an' this (proceeding to remove the paper) is a white-fush—"

"But really, you know, I do not wish to, ah—to see it! Not in my department, you know! Boots—Shovel-shields—Cross-belts—Ross rifles—anything but—Phew-w-w! Good morning! Good morning! Larkins, bring me File No. 8729B, and put up the windows"—and this time the revolving doors swung so hard that the Saskatoon Ichthyologist found himself carried half way up the long walk to the building where the House sits. It

THE QUESTION OF CO-OPERATION

ON page two of this issue will be found a most interesting and illuminating article by Prof. L. C. Gray, Professor of Economics at the University of Saskatchewan, on "Agrarianism in Western Canada" in which he deals with the co-operative movement. In it he discusses in the most frank manner questions which are of vital interest at the present time in the farms and in the country towns. Prof. Gray touches upon banking, rural credit, the middleman, co-operation, and the movement towards greater centralization of power in the executive of the Grain Growers' Association. He issues a warning as to the danger of going too fast and too far; but his attitude towards the movement is entirely friendly and sympathetic.

This question is perhaps the biggest one before the farmers of the province today. It cannot but benefit from a full and free discussion from all points of view. Some criticisms of Prof. Gray's article appear in this number also. We have invited the same, and hope to have others until the views of all are expressed.

was here he was overtaken by a newspaper correspondent whose acquaintance he had made.

"Hello, Hughie," he said. "How are you making out?"

"Friends," I'm gaun hame tae Saskatoon. I've been chased aroon' frae one muckle-headed bletcher tae another, an' fired out o' the merry-go-rounds, till I dinna ken which way I'm pintin'. Fush! I wouldna waste guid fush—"

"Hold on! Don't waste it all on me. Come up to the press gallery and give us all a fair show at it."

In the press room Hughie was, next to the Zeppelin scare, the best bit of copy that Providence had vouchsafed this year. He was welcomed accordingly, and found himself among friends, after he had told his story with some details which have necessarily been omitted here.

"How long have you been here, Hughie? Seven days, eh? Well, Channels we'll give you three more, if your fish will stand it. Then you'll go back, and wonder why you were ever such an ass as to come down here, getting to sell anything without going through the proper channels. All but the proper channels, you understand, are closed and mined; and you've got to get your sailing directions, and have your papers properly made out, and your pass-ports signed, and fly the right flag if you're going to do any navigating around here. And a pilot, Hughie. Don't forget a pilot! You'll not accomplish anything, of course; but you'll have a better run for your money. Now, you'll understand there is no bar here; but let us all go and drink "Success to the Fisheries!"

Afterwards the fush was solemnly deposited in cold storage to renew its pristine loveliness; and when this had been done, Hughie made known to them the exact different between a delegation composed of one Highlander, and all other delegations that Ottawa had ever witnessed.

"Ye'll understand," he explained, "just what I'm gaen tae dae the noo. When you bubbly-jock pit me oot wi' the fush, I thocht I'd take the first train back tae Saskatoon an' let the whole Canadian Expeditionary Force fill themselves wi' meat twenty-one times a week till they deed wi' hardenin' o' the arteries. But I've changed my mind; I'm gaun tae stop here and mak' them buy fush. The boys in the camps jist fair greetin' every time they think o't, an' yet they can't get it. Jist watch the track o' this torpedo frae Saskatoon, an' see whether the navigators in the department of Marine and Fisheries will be able tae dodge it!"

The sequel will be found in the following special dispatch published in the *St. John, N.B. Standard*, supposed to be the organ of the Minister of Marine and Fisheries:—

Ottawa, Jan. 29.—An important step has been taken by Hon. J. D. Hazen which should prove of immense benefit to the fish industry of Canada both directly and indirectly. At present the Minister of Marine and Fisheries is acting Minister of Militia and Defense, and when he found that fish was not included in the rations of the Canadian soldiers, he at once took steps to have this mistake remedied.

No one recognizes more than Mr. Hazen the value of fish as a food, especially as a change in rations, and with characteristic energy he sought interviews with leading fishermen to satisfy himself regarding the details of the supply and demand and perfect arrangements.

Mr. Hazen had an order-in-council passed yesterday to include fish in the rations of the soldiers and today the first orders went out.

The soldiers will not be required to eat fish, but those who want it will get it.

In the Press Gallery they have been drinking toasts to the man from Saskatoon who not only broke the record for endurance, but made the government put fush on the soldiers' bill of fare. And carloads of brain-food are being shipped not only from the west, but from the east as well, where they have been aroused to their opportunities by the missionary-work of the man who did not know when he was turned down.

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