

# THE CANADIAN THRESHERMAN AND FARMER

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## SNIPING!

1918

### OUR GUARANTEE

No advertisement is allowed in our Columns until we are satisfied that the advertiser is absolutely reliable and that any subscriber can safely do business with him. If any subscriber is defrauded, E. H. Heath Co., Ltd., will make good the loss resulting therefrom, if the event takes place within 30 days of date advertisement appeared, and complaint be made to us in writing with proofs, not later than ten days after its occurring, and provided, also, the subscriber in writing to the advertiser, stated that his advertisement was seen in "The Canadian Thresherman and Farmer." Be careful when a writing an advertiser to say that you saw the advertisement in "The Canadian Thresherman and Farmer."

**T**HE sniper who knows his business is a most valuable man on the field of battle. We respect him as a perfectly legitimate, if not indispensable, arm of the service, and we plaster him with the most fulsome praise when he is able to present an unusually large "bag" obtained under circumstances of peculiar difficulty and risk. But there are snipers and "snipers," and for the brand we find stalking his game in the peaceful fields of social intercourse, there is no condemnatory phrase too violent, no contempt too scathing to fit the case. He is the man who "writes to the papers" over a non-deplume—the fellow who finds his supreme satisfaction in "getting the drop" on some worthy institution which is not being run to suit him.

An illustration of what we mean will be found in the recent "sniping" at the Y.M.C.A. in its work among the soldiers at the front. Every reasonable person knows that the work of this association has been carried on amid great difficulties and dangers, that the benefits which have come to the soldiers in the line and in camp have been contin-

uous, and that the whole administration has been directed by a lively public spirit and a single-minded purpose to serve the fighting men. Only one attack, however, has been made from a responsible source, and the criticisms made in this case have proved to be unfounded. But from time to time one hears the petty sneers of the "sniper," and cheap comments, which are wholly unjustified from the very last man who ought to make them.

Recently in Wisconsin a man was arrested on the charge that he called the Y.M.C.A. "a bunch of grafters," and had said that not over ten or fifteen per cent. of the money collected or donated was spent on the soldiers. Proof of the statement was not offered in court, the defence merely holding that the utterance did not violate the American espionage law, because the Y.M.C.A. was not "a naval or military force." The Federal judge decided that the effect of such remarks would be to hamper the raising of funds. The organization sought to give the soldiers greater comfort and efficiency. Therefore to cripple the force collecting the funds "interfered with the operation or success" of the armies and was a violation of the law.

Since the penalties provided in the Espionage Act range from a fine of \$10,000 to imprisonment for 20 years, it is most likely that loose talk and irresponsible sniping at the Y.M.C.A.,

the Red Cross Society and similar organizations will be as scarce in the future as they have been common in the past. Canada needs a sharp law that will effectively deal with whisperers and falsifiers. There is no more fruitful medium for enemy propaganda than the natural tendency of folks to gossip. Any story, no matter how improbable, will quickly gain currency if its point is to slander some distinguished man or woman, or if it attacks some eminent association of decent and patriotic people. There are too many citizens always eager to believe the worst.

We purposely make these statements on the eve of the drive for the Victory Loan, because there already has been "something doing" in the way of loose talk which might ultimately lead to mischief in hampering the efforts of canvassers and perverting the judgment of good men and women who never require the services of a smart salesman to open their hearts to a really worthy cause. At a recent meeting of Western Editors we heard quite a little of local scandals on the subject of payments made collectors on the occasion of the raising of the last national loan, but whether these had any foundation in fact or not, the men who mentioned them were loyal to the core, and were out to do their whole-hearted best in the coming campaign, uninfluenced by "common report."

One of those editors from a country point stated that he happened to be one of the bond salesmen in his own district when the last loan was floated, and with his colleagues, received a fair sum for their services. But as they were all men who could afford to donate these services, the whole sum received in respect of remuneration was handed over to the Red Cross Society. This is but one of hundreds of cases where the matter was handled in the same fine, public-spirited fashion, but there are just as many no less public-spirited, honest souls, whose efficient services are of untold value to the great task of reaching the objective, who cannot afford to give their time, and these men are just as much entitled to their remuneration as any toiler on the farm or in the workshop.

Taking it all round, the cost of the flotation of 1917 Victory Loan was amazingly small. The raising of the money was imperative and could not be delayed. Will any reasonable being dare to allege that \$4,012,600 was an exorbitant deduction to make from a gross subscription of \$418,000,000? That sum, we believe, covered the whole cost of the flotation.

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