

The Grain Growers' Guide

Winnipeg, Wednesday, December 29th, 1915

DEATH OF MR. SPEAKMAN

The sudden death of James Speakman, president of the United Farmers of Alberta, was a great shock to the farmers of the prairie provinces. Only a few weeks ago he was in Winnipeg in attendance at the Canadian Council of Agriculture and at the conference with the business men, where he made a very clever and able speech in support of the interest of the farmers whom he represented. Even up till within a few days of his death he was actively engaged in the work of the farmers' organization. Mr. Speakman was one of the best type of the large number of public spirited men who have come to this country from Great Britain during the past generation. For nearly twenty-five years he was engaged in farming in Alberta and he knew all the problems of the farmer at first hand. His experience qualified him exceedingly well to fulfill the duties of the various offices which he held in the U.F.A., and when he reached the office of president he brought with him a very wide knowledge derived from actual experience in the matters with which the organized farmers are called upon to deal. His business experience in his earlier years in the land of his birth was a great asset in handling the larger business problems of the organization of which he was the leader. Mr. Speakman's whole heart as well as his entire physical energy was given to the work in which he was engaged. He was in thorough sympathy with the cause of the farmers and tho he had been only one year in office as president of the U.F.A., the work which was accomplished in that comparatively short time stamped him as one of the very foremost of the leaders of the organized farmers of Canada. Coupled with his other qualities, he was a platform speaker of the first order and possessed the ability to discuss a big question in exceptionally clear and business-like terms. He never talked for the sake of talking and never indulged in what in this country is known as "hot air." He stood firmly for the principles for which the organized farmers have contended, and any who opposed him or endeavored to switch him from his purpose found in him an antagonist who knew what he wanted, why he wanted it and who would not sacrifice principle under any circumstances. Mr. Speakman was a high type of Christian manhood and his life and his work will be an inspiration to the younger generation. His death is a heavy loss to the U.F.A., but it is also a great loss to the organized farmers of the West. Only a year ago his predecessor in office, W. J. Tregillus, died with the same suddenness. The loss of these two men has left a great gap in the ranks of the organized farmers of Alberta, but as a result of their labors there are more men coming forward to carry on to its conclusion the magnificent work in which they were engaged and to which they gave the best that was in them.

THE OLD YEAR

The year 1915 which is now passing into history has wrought remarkable changes in Canada and possibly in this respect it will be a record year. The nation has quickly adjusted itself after the great shock of the war and business has very largely resumed its normal channels. Orders for war supplies have created activities among Eastern manufacturers and the great crop in the West has stimulated business all over Canada. One of the outstanding features of the year has been the revulsion of feeling against the liquor traffic. Alberta goes dry on the first of July next year as a result of the referendum last summer; licenses have disappeared from Saskatchewan and given place to government

liquor stores which will also disappear as soon as the people have a chance to vote on them; Manitoba will vote on a prohibition referendum in March and as a result it is confidently expected that the province will go dry in June. In British Columbia also the prohibition forces are gaining strongly as well as in Ontario and Eastern Canada. In the face of all the misery and suffering that the war has brought and will bring to Canada this reduction of the liquor traffic is one of the great blessings which has come to the country. From the standpoint of the organized farmers the old year has been one of great progress. The associations have grown in membership and many new men have come to the front to take their part in the work of the organization. The big crop and good prices have brought a great degree of prosperity to the farmers' business organizations and it is certain that they will accumulate large profits to be used in the extension of the farmers' business. There is always a touch of sadness in the passing of an old year; but the new year is bright with promise and it is wise for us to keep our eyes to the future and its possibilities without dwelling unduly on the sadness of the past.

WHAT I LEARNED IN 1915

Every season something new turns up in farm management. Perhaps the experience has been the means of saving time and money or it may have caused delay and loss. In any case it has been valuable to each individual. We want to publish this practical material and naturally, we depend upon our readers to furnish the information for us. As an incentive we will give a prize of \$5 for the best article received on "What I learned in 1915" and prizes of \$3 and \$2 for the second and third best article respectively. No experience should contain more than five hundred words. Just write down the idea which strikes you now before you lay the paper away and forget about it. Never mind about the spelling or the grammar. We just want facts. Write plainly on one side of the paper only. Send as many different experiences as you like but commence each one on a separate sheet of paper. Whether or not you win a prize you will have the satisfaction of knowing that your experience has been of great help to some brother farmer. All experiences for this competition must be sent to reach this office before January 17.

GIVE AND TAKE

It is a common expression among business and financial men that in the settlement of the questions in dispute between the farmers and other interests both sides must be prepared to give and take, or, in other words, to make concessions. These men consider that the organized farmers are too extreme in their demands and they state that a complete fulfillment of these demands would mean ruin for many other interests. We have not yet been able to see that the demands of the organized farmers are anything more than simple justice, or that they will discriminate unfairly against any business or financial interest. The grain trade was the first big problem in this country with which the organized farmers grappled and it was entirely thru their efforts that the grain trade was reorganized, in fact almost revolutionized, until today it is considered that the grain trade of Canada is on a better footing than in any other country in the world. In going after these reforms in the grain trade the organized farmers have not sought in any way to deprive any persons of a fair return for their labors, but have always advocated a removal of restrictions and the utmost freedom and fair-

ness in competition. In the solution of their other problems the organized farmers have not been nearly so successful chiefly because the headquarters of the other interests concerned are in Eastern Canada and also because they exercise almost complete control over our federal government. It is a tribute to the strength of the organized farmers, however, that all the other big interests of Canada have now given them recognition and are prepared to discuss with them the very problems which a few years ago they ignored. It is a well known truth that the affairs of this world are conducted very largely on a compromise basis. It is not possible very often to have a satisfactory settlement between two or more parties by which each one will receive absolutely all that he desires. It is essential, however, that concessions be made equally and the organized business and financial interests of Canada should consider this carefully. For the last thirty-five years the give and take method has been in vogue in Canada, but the farmers have been doing all the giving and the financial, industrial and transportation interests have been doing all the taking. If there is to be any amicable settlement of the present problems, certainly the first concession must come from those who have secured all the benefits in the past. If it is left for the farmers to secure all these settlements thru political organization and effort it is quite natural that there will not exist the same cordial feeling as would be brought about thru a fair "give and take" arrangement.

ECONOMICS AND DEVELOPMENT

The Royal Commission appointed by the Dominion Government to investigate agricultural conditions thruout Canada and bring in recommendations for improvements has adopted the name of the Economic and Development Commission. The commission had its first meeting in Ottawa a few days ago and we are in receipt of a report of that meeting from the secretary, W. J. Black. The report of the meeting forwarded by the secretary reads in part as follows:—

The Commission is desirous of securing information on all matters dealt with in the order-in-council constituting it, and having given publicity to this fact, many communications have been received directing its attention to such subjects of public interest and urging that enquiry should be made as to the following:

1. The collection and publication of accurate and reliable statistics relative to the agricultural production of the Dominion. This decision is due to the many and persistent demands for the establishment of a system whereby producers may secure definite information not only as to the yields of grain and other crops but accurate figures as to livestock production in the various provinces with a view to the prevention of misrepresentation and market manipulation by interested parties.

2. The inauguration of some comprehensive plan whereby farmers may obtain more readily and less expensively than at present, long and short term credits for the carrying on of farm operations and the further development of their resources.

3. The application of the principle of government control to public markets, stock yards and other like utilities with a view to safeguarding the interests of both producers and consumers, possibly by the extension to such utilities of the policy now in force in the case of cold storage warehouses.

4. The whole question of co-operation in connection with production, marketing and consumption and the advisability of securing simple and uniform legislation providing for the establishing and management of co-operative societies.

5. The question of settling the vacant lands of Canada, and the future policy respecting immigration and colonization in this connection. It is proposed to carefully consider the suggestion that returned Canadian and British soldiers be afforded an opportunity of settling on the land.

The Commission invites the hearty co-opera-