

# Grasshopper Plague Threatens

**The Provincial Governments are Distributing Free Bait—  
Conditions are Favorable for Checking the Insects—  
School Children Watch and Report on  
Developments Daily.**

By E. CORA HIND.

Winnipeg, June 1.—Since writing last week the much dreaded grasshopper have made their appearance, both in Manitoba and Saskatchewan, and the provincial governments of the two provinces are putting up a very strenuous fight. In Manitoba the provincial government is paying the total cost of all the ingredients for the bait necessary for poisoning the grasshoppers, and in Saskatchewan the government is buying all the supplies and they will be paid for, half by the province and half by the various municipalities. The most encouraging feature of the whole situation is the fact that everybody in the infected districts this year is alive to the trouble and are doing all they can to assist the governments.

There has been considerable windy weather and some complaints of the crop being damaged by the high wind and soil drifting, but within the past twenty-four hours a very good general rain has relieved the situation, and it is too early in the season for much permanent damage to have been done by the wind.

The rain, too, will be a very effective check on grasshoppers, as the young nymphs, at which stage the grasshopper are at the present time, can stand very little wet weather, and moreover, the vigorous growth of the crop within the last few days will also help in checking these pests as they are too small to work in heavy crop. Some idea of the extent to which the governments are prepared to combat the grasshopper trouble may be gained from the fact that the Manitoba government has shipped 9 cars of bran, 6 cars of sawdust, 30,000 pounds of molasses, a whole car of arsenic, some paris green and a car of lemons to Deloraine, which is practically the centre of the infected area in Manitoba. From this point these supplies are being distributed, while government field agents are supervising the mixing of the poison.

The government of Saskatchewan has purchased 50,000 gallons of molasses, 90 tons of white arsenic, 1000 tons of bran and two carloads of lemons, and these supplies have been placed at strategic points in the infected area. It will be understood that the preparation that the provincial governments are relying on is the famous Kansas mixture.

The school children are watching the roads and edges of the fields as they go to and from school and reporting any fresh developments, while large bodies of volunteers are out to spread the poison along the roadways and vacant lands. There is every reason to hope that in this way no serious or permanent damage to the crop will occur.

Apart from the appearance of the grasshopper the conditions are excellent and the season gives every promise of being a very favorable one. The growth of all vegetation during the past two weeks has been phenomenal. The outlook is for a very heavy crop of wild fruit also. The wild plum and wild cherry trees are one mass of bloom, in fact, it is many years since the fruit blossom has been as heavy as it is this year.

In spite of the high cost of seed, there will be very heavy planting of potatoes this year, as the outlook for a general world shortage indicates high prices. At present potatoes are \$4 a bushel in Winnipeg, and the amount seeded per acre

runs from 12 to 14 bushels, so that the investment is a fairly large one. While there has been no marked increase in market gardens in any of the western provinces, there has been a great increase in individual gardens, and possibly there is more land under cultivation in the small plot gardens this year than at any time during the war period.

## Postal Employees Discontented.

There is much muttering and grumbling among postal employees and it is rumoured that a strike may be possible. Delay on the part of the Government in announcing the new classification for civil servants and uncertainty as to the amount of the salary increases is given as the chief cause of the trouble and unrest. The general public who have to deal with the service of postal employees, if asked opinion as to the value of the service being rendered, would undoubtedly put it very low. Never in the history of the writer has there been such well-founded complaints against the postal service as there is today. One of the reasons given for this is the very great number of changes which have taken and are taking place in the various postal staffs. If better salaries would ensure a more permanent and therefore better quality of service, increased pay might be a good investment.

The forthcoming election in Manitoba is occupying a good deal of attention. Nomination meetings are being held throughout the province and in many cases members are being re-nominated by large and enthusiastic conventions. There are, however, a surprising number of candidates offering who want to run on independent tickets, and only election day will tell who will get in. On the whole, the Norris Government, which is at present in power, have done very well. It inherited a serious legacy of debts and trouble from the previous administration, and that coupled with the war has made it hard sledding for any government. However, it is able to go to the country with a fair show of achievements and in no department is this more noticeable than that of the Department of Education, the Hon. Dr. Thornton having a record for progressive work in the five years of occupation of the office which has never been attained by any minister of education before.

## THE LIVESTOCK SITUATION

Livestock prices continue to soar. Receipts of really first class beef are limited. Today butcher steers reached the highest mark this season, with a few head sold for \$19 a cwt., with bulk selling from \$16 to \$18 on the Winnipeg market. Carcase beef has advanced from 5 to 15 cents a pound during the week, while the prevailing price for select hogs is \$22 per cwt. on the hoof, with a very limited offerings. As the season advances the shortage in the calf crop is beginning to be very noticeable and choice veal calves are \$18 a cwt. Practically the only foods that show any decline are eggs and butter. Eggs are going into domestic storage at 45 cents and 50 cents per doz. for amounts of from 10 to 30 dozen, while creamery butter can now be bought retail as low as 72 cents for No. 1 and 70 cents for No. 2. Flour is \$14.80 a barrel and rye flour \$13 a barrel

Potatoes retail at \$4 a bushel and are limited in supply and of a very poor quality.

## Opinions on The Budget.

The Drayton budget continues to be one of the chief topics of conversation and there are almost as many opinions as there are people. There is a very general feeling, however, that the tax should be on the amount over and above the price at which the tax begins, that is, that the limit for boots, for example, is \$9, and the idea is that where boots are ten dollars, the tax should be collected on the additional dollar and not on the whole price. The fact is, that good serviceable boots fit for country wear can not be purchased as low as \$9 dollars at the present time, indeed, the quality of leather offered at \$9 is a very doubtful bargain. The retail merchants continue to hold meetings to discuss the matter and nobody at the present time just knows where they are at.

## ENGLISH CHILDREN DID WELL IN AUSTRALIA

In 1909 some Oxford Undergraduates founded a farm school in Western Australia for the training of poor English boys under the healthiest and happiest conditions. The headmaster, Mr. Kingsley Fairbridge, is now in England, and his experience is worth nothing. He says that when the first party of these destitute English lads reached Australia, the comment was: "just the wrong class of child." They were typical slum children, and looked after their long sea journey anything but desirable. Two years later the comment is "Western Australia needs tens of thousands of children of this class." The change was wonderful. The boys had received the ordinary elementary education provided by the Government, and after school hours learned to look after their cottages, to make their beds, to keep themselves clean, to play football and cricket (which none of them knew when they went out), to swim, ride, and shoot, and a certain amount of the theory and practice of agriculture. Thus the boys were taught really to understand and therefore to enjoy their work. When they left the school not one of them went into the city. They all took up some form of farming. The children are not crowded together, nor is the society's money locked up in expensive buildings. It prefers to build wooden cottages, each of which holds ten children, boys and girls, with a house-mother.

## Tobacco Market in Sweden.

The financial success of the Swedish Government tobacco monopoly as well as the growing demand for tobacco products in Sweden, indicate an increasing market there for American manufacturers and exporters. In spite of the fact that private importations to Sweden are subject to a fee amounting to 43 per cent on the gross retail price of the goods, these importations also have increased since the war.

On the other hand the American Consul at Goteborg reported recently that Americans could get a larger share of this business by further adapting themselves to Swedish desires and market requirements. The raw material or unmanufactured tobacco is largely supplied by the United States. In 1917 Sweden imported \$87,643 of tobacco leaf from America; in 1918 this had increased to \$357,137, and in 1919 to \$4,713,761.

Halifax shipyards have at present under construction two 8,300 1-ton ships, and two 10,000 vessels. One of the former is to be launched in June and will be the largest ship ever launched east of Montreal.