

THE FOOD PROBLEM

Every reader of the Manitoba page knows by this time that among the pressing problems of the next twelve months the food problem must receive careful consideration and must be solved.

It is abundantly clear that the Allied forces must for many months to come depend largely upon Canada and the United States. The shortened tonnage and the great distance make it impossible that any large amount of supplies could be brought from Australia or New Zealand or the southern hemisphere generally. The countries of western Europe must get their supplies direct across the Atlantic. Europe as every one knows has been eating into her capital of food supply for three years at an increasing and alarming rate. Canada had been doing little more than supplying her own needs until the call came. It is now required of her that she shall establish her capital supply so strongly as to be able to meet the increased demand and to prepare for any further increased demand which coming months may impose.

It is not only grain production that is involved, but also the supply of animal products which forms so essential a part especially of army food. The supply of cattle, hogs and sheep must be largely increased and wisely conserved in order to yield the greatest possible present and future supply.

This means that thousands of people must purposefully begin to concern themselves with providing additional cattle, hogs and sheep in their own farm work and in their communities generally. The increase can only be made by individuals concerning themselves with the problem. Many who have hitherto bought their animal food supply will plan to rear animals which shall provide food for the family and for others. Many a family which has never thought of such a project before will accept the injunction to "keep a pig," and the scraps from many a table, and the sour milk and the half plate of porridge that Johnny left at breakfast will go to feed the grunter in the back yard and ultimately to provide Al pork for the family table.

But the principle which must be recognized is that every one ought to be considering the situation and finding out what the conditions are and in particular what he himself may do to increase and extend food production as his share of the nation's task. —W.R.W.

NEEPAWA CONVENTION

Thursday, November 29 was a very big day with Neepawa Grain Growers. The workers' conference in the forenoon had only a small attendance, but a beginning was made on the day's work and some hints given for more effective local work. The afternoon session was well attended and was a busy and interesting session. Resolutions dealing with the extension movement to include a Dominion-wide convention, the constitutionalizing of the women's department, the increase of the dues of the local branch and the problem of securing sufficient help at reasonable rates were discussed and passed. Short addresses were given on the local library, the opportunities of the movement for young people and the responsibilities of the local official board. The election of officers for 1918 issued as follows: President, A. J. M. Poole, Springfield; vice-president, Mrs. Montgomery, Glenholm; secretary, L. G. Thomson, Arden; district director, William Milne, Keyes.

The event of the day, however, was reserved for the evening, when 172 guests gather around well-furnished tables in the Hotel Hamilton. In the absence of Mr. Henders and Rev. F. C. Middleton who had been expected, addresses were given by Rev. A. W. Kenner, of Franklin, on Community Organization, by Mrs. A. Tooth of Pitt on Women's Work, by Mrs. A. McGregor on Service and Progress and by W. R. Wood on Democracy and the Grain Growers. Splendid music was rendered by a

talented Neepawa quartette—Messrs. Carlow, Coutts, Ferris and Van Sickle, while Miss Florence Young presided with her accustomed grace and talent at the piano. Neepawa Grain Growers not only had a good day but gave fresh evidence of the power and solidarity which the movement has attained in the community.

Plea For the Use of Schools

We should use our school houses as community centres. If we have a school board who object to furnishing lights for the building for fear they might be used for evening gatherings, try to make them change their attitude. If that can't be done relieve them of their responsibility by furnishing a place where their sons and daughters can congregate with their parents for an evening of profit and pleasure. They haven't yet awakened to the needs of their community and shouldn't be allowed to hamper a good movement by their narrow mindedness. It would be well if our organizations could all have halls to use for their work and pleasure, and in the near future we may have them, but until we do, let us use our school houses. They were built for education and certainly the boys and girls need them just as badly after school age as during the time they are actually in school.—Organized Farmer.

ROARING RIVER RESOLUTION

At the November 28 meeting of the Roaring River G.G.A. the following resolution was passed and copies sent to Premier Borden and Hon. T. A. Crerar:—

"That we the members of the Roaring River G.G.A. see the necessity of formulating some plan for the conscription of alien labor, and that the alien be placed on the same basis regarding wages as the boys at the front, and that labor battalions be formed of the said aliens to be distributed throughout the country, and set to work wherever required."

John Livesay, Secy.
Swan River, Man.

A PROGRESSIVE BRANCH

Up to date the Morris G.G.A. appears to be the premier association in regard to numbers. Some other branch may however report before the close of the month with a large membership to their credit. A little rivalry in this regard is very interesting. Some secretaries have reported that they have nearly all the available farmers in their districts enrolled as members; which speaks volumes for the officers in charge.

Swan River District meeting will be held at Kenville on December 13, at 3 o'clock. There ought to be a rousing good time at this northern centre. There are lots of live subjects to discuss and Swan River has a number of members both men and women capable of handling them in an interesting and instructive manner. Be at Kenville.

Verona Branch

Secretary J. E. Colquhoun of the Verona Branch reports that they have now a membership of thirty-one, and that they have had a profitable year in their branch. This branch was formed less than a year ago.

OUR SPECIAL THREE

1. The Memory Gem.
Perhaps the greatest hero is the man who does his best and signally fails, yet is not embittered by his failure. A life here in which you fail of every end you seek, yet which disciplines you for a better life is not a failure.

2. The Definition.
Books are not absolutely dead things, but do contain a progeny of life in them to be active as that soul whose progeny they are; nay, they do preserve as in a vial the purest

efficacy and extraction of that living intellect that bred them.—Milton.
3. The Joke.

Election time was drawing near, and an enthusiastic politician was addressing his constituents in a frenzied speech. Not a few of his assertions, reduced to cold thought, were diametrically opposed to one another, but each proposal was received with applause. A judge turned to his companion and said; "That reminds me of an Irish leader who was cheering his men on to battle. 'Min,' said he, 'ye are on the verge of battle, an' I want to ask ye before ye start, will yez fight or will yez run?'"

"We will" came a chorus of eager replies.

"Which will yez do?" says he.

"We will not," says they.

"Aha, thank ye, min," says he; "I thought ye would."

—Selected.

The secretary of the Little Souris Women's G.G. Auxiliary has forwarded \$10 as a contribution to the Y.M.C.A. Overseas Fund. Little Souris Auxiliary have been making good progress and hold regular monthly meetings.

ENDORSE FARMERS' CANDIDATE

At a meeting of the Elm Bank G.G.A. held on December 3, the following resolution was passed by unanimous vote:—

"Be it resolved that Fred. Shirliff, a leading member of our local association is a candidate for member of the Dominion parliament for the constituency of Portage la Prairie. Whereas Mr. Shirliff is a win-the-war liberal, a believer in free trade and conscription of wealth, and a staunch supporter of the Grain Growers' movement and the Farmers' platform as laid down by the Canadian Council of Agriculture.

"Whereas this constituency, being largely a grain growing district and Mr. Shirliff being a wideawake farmer and acquainted with present day conditions.

"We, as an association, endorse Mr. Shirliff and urge upon every grain grower and others to support and vote for him at the coming election."

H. A. FOSSAY, Pres.

Dacotah, Man.

SOURIS DISTRICT MEETING.

The Grain Growers of the Souris district held their convention at Nipinka on November 28. Members from all parts of the constituency were there. In the evening the meeting was addressed by Mr. Henders. He impressed on us the growing importance and influence of the farmers' movement. Recognized by all the organized interests of Canada, its officers were from time to time called into consultation with them. No important matters of public interest were put forward by the government, either Dominion or provincial, without first obtaining the views of the farmers through their leaders. The press of town and city were now behind us, convinced of our intentions to work for the betterment of conditions. He urged the strengthening of the locals and reminded us that the only danger of failure was from our own apathy or indifference. He expressed his views on conscription, favoring the application of the principle to wealth, labor and man power. A resolution in favor of a Union government for the duration of the war met with the unanimous support of the convention.

F. RAMSON,

Sec. Souris Dist. Ass'n.

THE RURAL POINT OF VIEW

The mind of the western farmer is acquiring a distinctive character which in the next ten years will become more

obvious than it is today and will make it a still more powerful factor in the shaping of social and economic life and of public policy.

The man who works the land has not lived all his life on the farther side of a prairie bluff. Very often he has negotiated other bluffs elsewhere which have helped to make him the man he is. The up-bringing far removed from the quarter section he now cultivates—down by the "misty Atlantic," on in the "Queen's Bush" of old Ontario, or on the fertile plains of Iowa or Missouri, or across in some of the older mother lands beyond the sea. Possibly it was not rural but urban, in some of the great industrial centres of the new or of the old world. And his mental make up takes some of its essential features from these distant and varied sources.

Their Cosmopolitan Nature

In many cases he has seen something of the world as a young man before settling down upon the prairie. Perhaps the Yukon called him in the days of '98 and '99, or he tried a year or two at "the coast." In some cases he served a loyal apprenticeship to some other line of craftsmanship before he began to learn the art of agriculture. Blacksmiths, carpenters and storekeepers are frequently met who have gone "back to the land" and in not a few districts there are farmers who have served as doctors, ministers or school teachers before they found their ultimate vocation on the farm.

And even if he has not travelled far afield he has in any case come in contact with varied types and with people from circumstances differing widely from his own. His neighbor on one side was an Ottawa River lumberman. On the other side is a Canadian Scot from the Ontario township of Dumfries. Over the way lives an Iowa American and just beyond him a Highland man from the Lewis. The minister of his church is an Ulster Scot, educated in Belfast and in Princetown. The settlement just south is from old France and the one north from Norway via North Dakota. Influences from the ends of the earth converge upon him in his prairie home and are creating him a new and composite type. He has been brought into contact with life and has learned thereby.

H's Practical Acquirements

And he come in contact with life still. The problems of agriculture face him with new questions every new day. He is experimenting with various crop rotations. He is testing methods of weed extermination. He rubs up against business men and gradually becomes a match for the keen intellects and the sharp methods by which he is confronted. He has to do with deeds and mortgages and liens and contracts. The questions of taxation and of price variation and of the effects of tariffs press upon him season by season. He is aware that there are startling differences between the prices he realizes for his product and the prices which the consumer a dozen miles away pays and he is led to search into the cause. And he is coming to know some of the practical meanings of mergers and combines and tariffs and thereby life is teaching him things which he will use bye and bye.

And so he is coming to be that comparatively scarce phenomenon—a man who does his own thinking, and who reaches his own conclusions. He realizes that his work is an integral and essential part of the manifold activities which constitute the nation's life. He is becoming increasingly aware of human inter-relationships and interdependencies and of individual responsibilities for right and wrong, for justice and injustice. The tremendous fact of the existence of vast financial organizations whose purpose is to exploit the primary production of the nation is gripping him more and more. And he is watching, resolving, and in an hour not far distant he will unify his strength and strike his blow for freedom and for economic justice. And in the coming reconstruction the rural mind and the rural resolve will be one of the factors that will be steadfastly and strenuously exercised in the direction of equity and the all round square deal.—W.R.W.