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TO MY WAY OF THINKING

The Strikers

WILLIAM HENRY

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When labour strikes—when men lay down their tools and wheels cease to grind—some one gets hurt. It may be capital that is hurt, it may be labour, but always it is the man who is dependent upon the service. Transportation may be tied up and factories closed, and it is necessary to comfort, life itself, may be without it. But if you are one of those dependent upon the supplies, no matter how desperately bad the situation holds on—if there be brickbats.

Brickbats are never-failing signs of the soundness of the industry over which they are thrown. They fly only when there is some one who wants to supply the discontinued service—when there are strike-breakers and where there are strike-breakers there are profits. That's the point—the profits.

When you see brickbats hurled through the air rest assured it is only a family quarrel over the division of spoils, which will eventually right itself. Somehow, the picketing, brickbating and striking will cease, and the service will be renewed. The industrial parties may wipe out each other in the struggle, but in due time other capitalists and other workers will take their places. For there are profits in the service.

It is the strike is minus strike-breakers, minus pickets and pickets, that you should worry. It is a ordinary trouble then, that, like mumps, whooping cough, or measles will spend itself into a normal condition. Something is wrong with the vital forces of the capital gives up its dollars, and labour lays down its tools, something mightily serious has happened. Keep both eyes and ears open for the crash. When there are no profits in the business, or inadequate profits—the results are the same—the service will not permanently renew itself, and those who are dependent upon it are going to be squeezed as surely as municipalities mismanage.

And that is just what has happened with our food supplies. For nearly twenty years the food producers have been striking; not all at once; by twos and twos they have been quitting—treking from country to waterside to the city.

Now, food is not produced in cities; it may be made over adulterated, or even improved in cities, but it is produced in the tall factories that line the streets and tracks. Food comes either from land or water. The flesh pots of the city must be filled from the outside.

Each time the great silent strike has been growing. The war has stayed rather than speeded the course, but only temporarily. There are no pickets, no brickbats, no angry gesticulating mobs guarding the reapers and vacated lands—for there are no strike-breakers.

For we have known something was wrong, or ought to have known, for many of You, Us & Company are actually strikers, or the sons and daughters of strikers.

Many a man once complained that everybody talked about the weather and did nothing, or words to that effect. And in like effect everybody now-a-days is talking about the shortage of food, talking about we have done something, you protest. We have appointed a food controller, and this may do good, but more people die from over-eating than

PERSONAL and Impersonal Observations on Topics of General Interest to Particular People.



"Confound you! I might have gone on strike myself, but I never thought that smoky lunatic asylum you call a city ever needed me; and the old farm did."

starve to death, so the doctors say. But control will not break the strike. Control cannot restore the old-time prices, for there will still remain too many consumers, and too few producers.

The food controllers of Canada and the United States are trying to conserve cereals, beef, pork and sugar, that there may be more of these products for the consumption of our European Allies. And we should all help to their end. But let us do something more. Let us try to realize why conservation is necessary. Let us stare at the facts and get rid of the confusion which seems to have filled some minds that control is a substitute for production, that by control there is going to be more food.

Many years ago seven loaves of bread and a few little fishes were turned into a supply out of which a multitude were fed. But not even the Honourable W. J. Hanna—big, brainy man as he is—can do it to-day, nor can any other mere man thus satisfy the hunger of a twentieth century multitude.

(To be continued.)

A Peck of Potatoes

By AGRICOLA

LISTEN to my tale of woe, my Thanksgiving ode of ingratitude for what I am not about to receive. Four pecks of potatoes, one back-yard, two loads of manure and an economic jackass, made

the combination which prompts this Threnody of Potatoes.

The seed potatoes cost \$1.25 per peck. I planted four pecks. Price \$5.00.

The back-yard was a neglected orphan, a clay belt gone to seed, sod and weeds.

The manure was two dollars a load; price \$4.00.

I wheeled the manure in a barrow from the sidewalk to the rear; spread it one morning and by afternoon dug it in. The rains came and beat upon that digging. They delayed the digger and made the potato plot a patch of cementine. On the odd dry day I pried and poked it loose, hoking out sods and lugging them to a pyre in the corner. I made sixteen drills, cut the seed potatoes on the back lawn, put them in and covered them up.

The price stayed round \$1.25 a peck. It might go higher. Potatoless days came with mounds of rice.

My potatoes came up. I hoed them. More rains. They grew mightily. I hoed them again. More rains. No more hoeing. The tops became a jungle. Rains beat them down. Bugs came along with the blossoms. The bugs multiplied and grew under sprays of Paris green at 65 cents a pound.

A month ago I pulled up a hill.

"That's two meals for my family, no matter what price," said I. "Even if they're only a dollar a bag, I've added so much to production."

The joke came when a street huckster came along hawling out, potatoes at 33 cents a peck.

The joke was on me when I began to dig my potatoes. By a strict census I had enough to do me till long past Christmas. But more than half my potatoes were rotten. The other half are worth 30 cents a peck. I may have 7 pecks. I planted 4.

Book-keep for me, O farmer.

My total cost of production, not counting labour and rent, was \$9.00.

My total crop value in potatoes is 30c. x 7.

To balance the books I indulge in a wail of Thanksgiving whose dominant motif is,

A Peck of Potatoes.

Canadian Nationalism

By LT. W. J. H. MUSTARD

MANY Canadians—far too many—are unwilling to consider Canada as a nation. They hate to be sentimental in the matter of Canadian citizenship. They have their own way of estimating the Fathers of Confederation; those old co-ordinators of scattered provinces differing in ideals and temperament were just a convenient way out of a political difficulty. And the new Confederation, promising to grow in peoples and wealth far surpassing the dreams of the farseeing statesmen who conceived it, they content themselves to think of as just so many more British subjects and just so much more British territory. But the glory of it all is forgotten.

National sentiment in this country, if it has ever existed to any real extent, is provincial rather than national. The Easterner expresses his pride in having been born a Nova Scotian, an Islander or a New Brunswicker, but says nothing of his pride in being a Canadian. The same is true of the people of Quebec and Ontario; while the Westerner, who is cosmopolitan, is content with being a Westerner.

In the minds of the Fathers of Confederation we were to cease being provincial and become Canadians. Clear expression of this is to be found in the