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Paroid makes the one roof which cannot crack, rot, rust, or dry out, and is endorsed by the National Board of Fire Underwriters for its fire protection qualities.

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19
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Current Comments on the Farming Business

Mr. Hanna's Real Job

SPEAKING in Montreal last week, Lord Northcliffe, head of the British War Mission to the United States, warmly defended the Canadian Food Controller, Mr. Hanna. His Lordship said that Mr. Hanna had been subjected to the same series of attacks that were showered on the British and United States Food Controllers. "The Food Controller in a democratic country," said he, "needs the courage of a lion, the eye of a hawk and the hide of a buffalo." He then defined the work of the Food Controller as the elimination of waste and stimulation of production.

This is Mr. Hanna's real job. A large section of the public are evidently under the delusion that Mr. Hanna was appointed to regulate prices downward. He was appointed to conserve and, if possible increase, the food supply of the nation. If he can persuade Canadian consumers, on the farms and in the cities, to save every available ounce of food and stimulate the farmers to greater production, he will have fulfilled his mission. To regulate prices downward would be inimical to both his aim; cheap food would increase waste and discourage production. We hope that Mr. Hanna will keep his real objective ever before him and not be led away by the clamor of some sections of the city press.

Beware of Oleomargarine

THE interests that are demanding the lowering of the bars against the importation and manufacture of oleomargarine in Canada have apparently made many friends in high quarters. The rumor was current some months ago that even the Hon. Martin Burrell might be forced to leave the Dominion Cabinet because of his opposition to the margarine interests. For months now the big packers have been exerting every ounce of their power to get margarine into Canada. Their enemies seem to be organizations city women, labor unions and similar societies of consumers. On the other hand, producers of the real article, butter fat, have been seldom heard from. So quiet have producers been, in fact, that officialdom is beginning to wonder if there would be any real opposition were restrictions to be suddenly removed.

Unquestionably the chief conspirators on behalf of free oleo are those who hope to boost financially in its manufacture. Just recently, for instance, we were reading an article in a contemporary magazine strongly lauding the food value of oleo, its cleanliness and its palatability. A little investigation revealed the fact that the writer was a chemist in the employ of a big Toronto packing company. There are many, however, who really believe that the Canadian people would be benefited by the free importation and manufacture of oleomargarine. These people labor under two misconceptions. One is that oleo will be "dirt cheap" and the other that it is a satisfactory substitute for milk fat. In the first place, oleo will not be cheap. At the present it wholesales for 32 cents a pound in New York and it will cost more on this side of the line. In the second place it is not a substitute in the human ration for butterfat. Recent investigations conducted in Wisconsin and elsewhere tend to show that animal fats lack some vital principle of growth that is present in butter fat and the natural inference is that the substitution of butter fat by oleomargarine, would result in stunted growth and development. A mere comparison of the chemical properties of the two fats is not sufficient and our medical authorities should be cognizant of this fact before declaring themselves so unqualifiedly in favor of margarine.

That Potato Surplus

THE surplus potato crop of Canada this year is estimated at 18,000,000 bushels. In the United States the surplus is proportionately greater. This surplus cannot be exported because of the British embargo on potatoes and it would not do us any good if it could be, as Great Britain has a potato problem of her own. The British crop this year is the greatest in the history of the country and how to market it at profitable prices is a problem as yet unsolved. It has been suggested that a maximum price of \$1.35 a bag in Canada would be fair to all parties. This price, however, would net the farmer only 60 cents to 80 cents a bag, or \$60 to \$80 an acre with a good crop. When we consider that the cost of seeding alone ran as high as \$45 to \$50 an acre, it would look as if the farmer, even did he realize the highest price allowed as a maximum, would be sure to lose money on the big crop of this year, even as he did on his short crop of last year. It is even possible that the price might drop far below the maximum suggested by the food controller.

An interesting feature of the situation is that the extra production of this year was brought about largely at the behest of our Departments of Agriculture, federal and provincial. Statements were issued from our various departments urging that the greatest acreage possible of potatoes be planted. Full page advertisements were run in the agricultural papers to stimulate the production of food, particularly potatoes. Where seed was scarce, the government aided the farmers in bringing in large loads of seed potatoes—at \$4.50 a bag. Good prices, we were told, were assured. Now with a surplus of potatoes on hand, the question is, What are our departments going to do "to save their face." We understood that the Fruit and Vegetable Committee of the Food Controller's office is planning measures to ensure that no part of the crop be lost through unequal distribution or lack of storage facilities. Their task is a big one and we wish them success. One thing is certain. If farmers are allowed to lose heavily on the potato crop of this year, any appeal for greater production next year will fall very flat.