

The Grain Growers' Guide

Winnipeg, Wednesday, August 12th, 1914

Owing to Monday, August 10, being a public holiday in Winnipeg it was necessary to go to press with The Guide on Saturday, August 8, which explains why late news and market reports are not given.

CANADA IS AT WAR

For the first time in the memory of living Canadians our country is now at war and our citizens are being called upon to bear arms in defence of our shores and in upholding British arms in Europe. When war is in progress and the nation's resources are being taxed to the utmost the season for peace and disarmament discussion has passed. When Germany declared war against Britain then Canada automatically became a party to that war and is regarded by Germany as proper territory for invasion and destruction. Regardless of opinions as to the status of Canada the die is cast and Canada is at war, and must fight in the defence of her homes and her institutions. Great Britain has been forced into this war with Germany. It was necessary either for Britain to fight or to admit to the world that her guarantee of the neutrality of Belgium was but a fair weather promise. Germany's original quarrel was with Russia, and but for the arrogant and insolent attitude of the German war lords towards France the war might have been confined to a struggle between the Teutons and Slavs. Germany, however, in the pride of her might violated her treaty obligations and sent her armies into Luxemburg, whose neutrality she had solemnly guaranteed. Next she sent her armies across the French border without declaring her intentions and, knowing the attitude of the German war lords, France had no alternative but fight. Britain had given solemn obligations to protect Belgium and Luxemburg, and to preserve their integrity, and when Germany flagrantly violated these treaty obligations and refused to withdraw her troops from neutral territory on Britain's demand, Britain could only back down or fight. Germany readily promised that when the war was over she would make no attempt to annex any of these smaller nations on her borders. But when Germany could violate her solemn treaties respecting the neutrality of Belgium and Luxemburg her word is useless and could no longer be taken. Therefore, to maintain her honor Great Britain was forced into the fight and once in she must now fight to defend her shores against German invasion. When the war is over it will be seen that Germany took no hasty action but was deliberately preparing her plans for some time, tho she may not have intended to array against herself the might of Europe. For some years past Britain and Germany have been piling armament upon armament in a ruinous race for supremacy. Both have declared that their preparations were for peace entirely, but now they are at war and the supremacy of the seas will very shortly be decided. The German navy must be defeated by the allies and, for the safety and peace of Europe, the German Emperor must be deprived of every warship he now possesses. The fight will be one to the finish. The cost will be stupendous, but there is now no alternative. Canada must bear her full share in the cost of the struggle and the people will be behind Parliament when it meets on the 18th in voting a very generous war appropriation. Nothing must be left undone which will in any way add to the certainty of the British victory and the downfall of Germany. There is no place in the

present crisis for noisy protestations of loyalty nor for any blubbering about the "dear old motherland." It is no time for jingoistic performances nor for the bombastic utterances of many of our titled Imperialists. It is merely the time for Canadians to act like men and to join with Great Britain in the face of a common danger, and to fight a common foe. The Canadians who make no loud protestations of their loyalty and spend very little of their time "saving the Empire" will fight just as valiantly and will pay their portion just as willingly as those whose preparations are more audible. Let us all be Canadians together, without differences of opinion until we have joined with Britain and driven the foe to utter defeat, and once more secured for the world the blessings of British justice and British democracy.

CAUSE OF WAR ECONOMIC

One of the chief underlying causes which undoubtedly led Germany and Russia to embark upon the present war with very slight provocation was the economic condition prevailing among their own people. In Germany the war lords have been in the ascendant and the military class have dominated for many years, while the civilians, the great mass of the people, have been taxed almost to the limit of endurance for the creation of a vast army and navy to be used for the aggrandizement of the Emperor and the ruling class. The steady growth of the Socialist movement in Germany has indicated that even among the Germans themselves there were grave suspicions of the peaceable designs of the Emperor. The German Government is very largely autocratic, vast powers being held by the Emperor, and it was only to be expected that, with the wonderful advance in education thruout Germany democracy would force its way to the front. A great war, in which the entire resources of the Fatherland will be taxed to the utmost will, of course, unite all the people of Germany for the protection of their homes, and in the event of Germany's triumph would undoubtedly leave the militarists predominant in German affairs for many years to come. If the outcome of the war is, however, disastrous to the German forces it will probably be very advantageous to the cause of German democracy.

In Russia there has been much murmuring on the part of the peasants for some years past, and the Czar and his court have realized that absolute power can only be retained in their own hands for a comparatively short number of years to come. As with Germany, so with Russia. A war such as the present one will unite the Russian people, and if the result is victory for Russia it will mean very largely a personal triumph for the Czar and his court, and will enable them to retain absolute power for many years to come. For this reason the outcome of the war is not very promising from the standpoint of the Russian peasants.

WHY 1913 WHEAT WAS CHEAP

In the report of the Board of Grain Commissioners for Canada, just published, there are some very important references to the marketing of the 1913 wheat crop, and the result to the farmer. In speaking of the moving of the crop, the report reads as follows:

"The climatic conditions during the harvest time of 1913 were good, and the grain ripened early. This, of course, favored a rapid handling of the crop. In addition to this, everybody concerned in the handling of western grain was well prepared. The different railway com-

panies had marshalled their cars, locomotives and staffs, with an adequacy suggestive of the most scientific of war offices. The terminal elevators were ready and had sufficient capacity. The Government offices and staffs engaged in the handling of grain had been enlarged; and the various commercial agencies were all ready and eager.

"The result was unprecedented in the handling of grain. During the months of September, October and November, 116,385 cars were handled in Winnipeg alone, an average of 53.7 cars per hour, seven days a week and twenty-four hours a day, for three months.

"It is difficult to appreciate the magnitude of this work, and it is still more difficult to appreciate it when consideration is given to the fact that complaints about car shortage, car distribution and congestion were fewer this season than they ever were before. It is quite true that the rushing of this enormous quantity of grain into the market in such a short time was bound to have a depressing effect on the price. This is the other side of the picture. It was magnificent railroading, but it was bad grain trading."

The figures given in the above extract, indicate the splendid work done generally by our railways in handling the wheat as it was offered to them, and give some idea of the organization work necessary on the part of the railway companies to handle such a tremendous volume of business in such a short time. The sequel to this great piece of railroad work is found in another part of the report, and reads as follows:

"The price offered for Canadian wheat of the crop of 1913 was very adversely affected by the enormous quantity pressed upon the market during the months immediately following the harvest. An inquirer cannot help raising the question whether Canada has not lost heavily by her method of selling grain. Crop estimates of an optimistic character, the publication of the large amounts daily inspected, the advertising of the financial difficulties of the moment, the method of trading, which is almost that of public auctioning, and the concentration of all the energies of the country upon the rapid marketing of the crop, are conditions that must tend to 'bear' the market. What prices would a merchant obtain for his stock if he (1) proclaimed that his financial position compelled him to sell immediately; (2) advertised that he had an enormous amount of it on hand; (3) and put his stock up to public auction? Yet Canada acted almost that way in regard to the crop of 1913.

"The Russian Government made provision for enabling the Russian grain to be held back while the torrent from Canada poured into the market. It is probable that this action tended towards preventing a still lower price being offered for Canadian grain. Whether this was so or not, it would be instructive to ascertain how the experiment will work out in regard to the price of Russian wheat. A glance at the grain calendar of the United Kingdom is enough to suggest that it would be difficult for Russia to find a period in which the held-back wheat would not find competition in the British markets."

The above words were written by Dr. McGill, chairman of the Grain Commission, who has made a very careful personal study of conditions affecting the Canadian grain trade both in Canada and the European markets. The striking manner in which he summed up the situation makes it clear to every farmer that present conditions are forcing him to market his wheat at less than its real value, and naturally brings the question, "What is the remedy?" In our correspondence columns this week is a letter from John Kennedy bearing vitally upon this same question and which should receive careful consideration. The problem is one which the organized farmers must work out for themselves, with the assistance of other interests affected. With the large volume of grain now going thru the hands of the farmers' companies, it must eventually be possible to devise some means by which the market can be fed slowly and systematically, in order to secure the highest possible price for our wheat.