

Editorial

The Responsibility of the Individual

THERE is so much of co-operative effort in these days, and so much assumed by the nation, that we are tempted to forget that each individual has his duties and responsibilities. And in the last analysis it is the action of the individual which counts. We may say for instance that farmers should do so and so, or that manufacturers should do so and so, and we may all agree in our judgment, but there are always bound to be some members of the fraternities who will fail, and their failure may mean disaster everywhere. Where the state controls absolutely, it may be possible to apportion responsibility so that none will escape, and yet even here it is impossible to get justice. A good illustration is found in the effort to enforce conscription. Where the state does not enforce action, and where voluntary effort has to be depended upon, the part played by individuals varies from nothing to infinity. Indeed some people are negative in the contribution while their neighbors work far beyond their powers. One of the most striking examples of this is in the Red Cross work carried on by Canadian women.

Now we cannot get out of this war successfully, nor for that matter can we carry on our national work successfully unless all citizens are enlisted loyally in active service. Not all slackers are among the young men of military age. In every department of life there is an opportunity to serve self or serve the Empire, and he is disloyal and traitorous who at this time takes the narrower view.

The first application of this principle will be found in contribution to patriotic work. If ever there is a time when the action of a man is scrutinized by his neighbors it is in cases of this kind. The wealthy and the poor are being compared, the country and the city are measured against each other, nationalities are weighed and some of them are found wanting. Yes, there are men and women east and west who should be elevated to the rank of saints, and who should receive the highest honors the nation can confer. Some of these are poor people, humble people, yet rich in deeds of love and mercy and proud in the possession of the joy which accompanies sacrifice. Others there are, men with means and women high up in social life, who have given nothing and done nothing beyond that which was necessary to preserve appearances.

A second application of the principle is in the matter of food conservation. Lately a woman in the Motherland was fined five pounds for throwing away the crust of a loaf of bread. How many here on the same judgment would have to pay a fine? The Lieutenant-Governor of Manitoba stated the other day that at his table beef and bacon had not found a place for six months. And there are many like him—some because they believe in food conservation, and some because they have not the price. Isn't it right that here in the prairies as in Quebec and Ontario we should deny ourselves everything possible for those who are in distress and who next year may be in want?

The third and last application of the principle to be made just now is in the case of those actually enlisting for service. The actions of some families is wonderful beyond all praise, and the action of others despicable beyond description. What shall we say of a man, a class or a race that will stand to one side while others pay the price of victory? It is even worse than this, for some are planning how they may own the country after the loyal Britishers are all killed off. Let us not be dismayed. There will be enough loyalists left after the victory is won to ensure that for all time our beloved land shall be Canadian and British to the core. Were it not to be so, we might as well go out of the war and out of life.

After all it is a matter of individual responsibility. The testing day is now. The day of estimating our loyalty and devotion is to-morrow. When the showing has to be made, how will you stand, and how shall I?

No Class Rule Wante 1

A RECENT work entitled "Inside Russian Revolution," by Rheta Childe has many good things in its pages, and one of the best is contained in the following paragraph:

"I am just as much of a socialist as when I went to Russia in May, 1917, and just as little of an anarchist. I believe that the next economic development will be socialism, that is, co-operation, and the administration of all departments of government for the collective good of all the people. I believe that the world is for the many, not the few. But Russia has demonstrated that there is no advantage to be gained by taking all power out of the hands of one class and placing it in the hands of another."

That is what we have been aiming at in Canada ever since there was a Canada. Thank Heaven, the people are beginning to get together. We trust the good work will go on until there shall be no class distinctions, such as laboring men and capitalists, free traders and protectionists, country born and city born. We hope that co-operation will be the law of Canadian life and that all men will serve all, and all serve each.

King Alcohol is Dead

ON April 1, Canada goes dry, that is, after that date no more liquor will be manufactured. That is as it should be. Every ounce of grain spent in liquor is an ounce lost for purposes of food, and the great need of the world to-day is food. The only uses to which grain should be put are food for people and for those animals which in turn become food for people. This, of course, is only one aspect of the liquor question. It is a great thing that Canada will be spared from the moral and physical dangers that accompany the use of liquor.

A Farmer's View

A SUBSCRIBER has written to object to one suggestion made in the Editorial page in February. As he expresses with perfect clearness a view that is held by himself and no doubt by others, his words are given the same publicity as the original editorial. The Western Home Monthly will welcome discussion on topics of this kind. It is in the balancing of opinions that the truth is arrived at. The general public is as capable of judging such matters as the few men who politically control our policies.

First, the farmer is a gambler pure and simple, though we must all admit a very necessary one. To begin with he puts considerable money into land, horses and implements, etc., for a start, more often running into debt to obtain them; then he expends considerable time and labor, often hiring a man or men "who must be fed and paid," to help him prepare the soil ready for the seed. Now, again, he takes more good money, otherwise seed, and sows it in the soil, in other words he has bet all this on the weather, and before he gets any return he must wait several months during which time he is taking chances upon drought, hail, rust and frost while waiting for the harvest; any one of which may spell a dead loss at the end of the season instead of profit, also he has various other pests to fight against, well known to any farmer, which take considerable toll of his crops, so that if at the end of the year he has made a good profit, I say he is fully entitled to it, for he has absolutely no guarantee that the next year or even the next three will bring him any profit.

Even with wheat at the present price, flour, and rightly so, has not advanced as much in proportion as nearly every other necessity has, though for this fact I think we have the Food Controller to thank.

Now regarding the hired man, how much does he risk. When ever he works he is assured of plenty of good wholesome living, "because if the farmer does not provide it he does not get the hired man," and at the end of the season no matter even if the crop may have proved a failure, he is assured of his wages, for the law protects him fully in this matter. Now I ask you where will you find the hired man who will gamble on the crop, he may at other things, but he would not bet his board and wages upon a share of the crop, he wants to be sure of that much, therefore, in considering conscription the farmer and the hired man cannot be classed together. The farmer is really a capitalist in varying degrees and should be taxed if necessary upon his bank account rather than upon the grain itself, over the yield of which he has absolutely no control.

In conclusion I would say that in considering the conscription of the farm worker these facts should be noted in comparing him with the soldier, while in no sense does he risk his life in the same degree as the man at the front, neither is he entitled to free doctors, nurses, hospitals and convalescent homes in case of illness or bodily injury, neither can he draw a pension in case of permanent injury, also even though in health his pay is not always assured for 365 days in the year.

Let no one think that for one minute I wish in the least degree to disparage the boys in khaki, for I honor them to omuch to do that, simply I have tried to be fair to all parties discussed."

A Saskatchewan Farmer.

Our Immigration Policy

WE should surely be criminally careless and culpable if we did not learn from this war our duty in the matter of the future settlement of the country. One thing stands out in clear outline. We must have our plains peopled by those who are loyal to Canada and the Motherland. In the past we have given away homesteads for the asking to those who demanded them. We made no stipulation as to language or national sympathy, and took no pains to protect ourselves from that hiving of nationalities which in every country in the new world has been productive of evil. In the future we must sell land only to those of British birth or to the Americans, our first cousins. All others can have land leased to them, their children when grown up to receive free-hold title provided they prove their loyalty and familiarity with our language and institutions.

More than this it is necessary to prevent the hiving

of foreign peoples. Not even the returned soldiers if given land should be encouraged to live in groups. They will be much more valuable to the country if scattered among the other elements of the population. They can always be depended upon in times of trouble.

There should be in Canada, henceforth no possibility of a conspiracy pro-German, pro-Austrian or pro anything else than British. What the United States has experienced, what has been experienced in Russia, Italy and France, we must be free from. There is room on our broad prairies only for those who are Canadian and British through and through.

Look Pleasant!

THERE is enough to cause sadness and depression at this time without adding to evil conditions by wearing a perpetual frown. People of the Empire have no reason to feel gloomy for they have done nothing of which they need feel ashamed. And after all it is the feeling of shame and this alone which should cause people to feel badly. He who is fighting for a great cause should feel glorious and triumphant. Let the German frown if he will—he has reason enough to wear a hang-dog expression, but as for a free people, who have in their history over and over again shed their blood for liberty of person and liberty of conscience, why should they be in mourning? The other day I met a mother who had lost two sons at the front, yet she was the true heroine. Her eyes glowed with triumph as she talked about her boys—once so dear to her as children, now so exalted as saints. So let us get the gloved look out of our faces and smile, smile, smile. There are worse things than the death of loved ones. There are two spirits struggling for the souls of our loved ones. One is called death-in-life. It is the spirit of sloth and cowardice. The other is life-in-death. It is spirit of courage and victory. Let the noble spirit possess our souls.

A Serious Problem

TAKE the young men out of a country for four years or more and what does it mean? Among other things that the older men must remain young or do young men's work longer, that boys must assume men's work earlier, and that women must learn to take the place of men. The second problem is the difficult one. It will probably necessitate the opening of a new class of schools—schools in which a measure of vocational training will be given side by side with the instruction in the ordinary branches. It will also mean that continuation schools or part-time schools will be organized throughout Canada—that is, in the provinces which have sent their young men to the front. And when the young men who left us return—no longer so young and so boylike, they will take some time to get back to the old way of living, and they too must have schools of a different kind. The problem of ending the war happily is only one of many, but the people of Canada will face each as it arises in the same brave spirit as they met the first.

A Welcome Change

ISN'T it a change to read the newspapers these days—that is the editorial columns—and find that there is no reference to the old line parties? There has been great discontent with officials of the government—food controllers, directors of asylums and the like, but so far the government itself has escaped attack. Everyone is waiting hopefully for the action that will be taken at the coming session of Parliament. Everything points to something new in the way of legislation and something new in the way of conducting business. New times demand new men and new measures.

Does an Education Pay?

THERE are sound words from "Success Magazine" Boys and girls should read them. Does it pay an acorn to become an oak? Does it pay to escape being a rich ignoramus? Does it pay to learn how to make life a glory instead of a grind? Does it pay for a rosebud to open its petals and fling out its beauty and fragrance to the world? Does it pay to acquire a personal wealth, which no disaster or misfortune can wreck or ruin? Does it pay to learn how to focus thought with power, how to marshal one's mental forces effectively? Does it pay a diamond to have its facets ground, to let in the light, to reveal its hidden wealth of splendor? Does it pay to have expert advice and training, to have high ideals held up to one in the most critical years of one's life? Does it pay to make life-long friendships with bright, ambitious students, many of whom will occupy high places later on? Does it pay to open a little wider the door of a narrow life; to push out one's horizon in order to get a wider outlook, a clearer vision? Does it pay to change a bar of rough pig iron into hairsprings for watches, thus increasing its worth fifty times the value of its weight in gold? Does it pay to experience the joy of self-discovery, to open up whole continents of possibilities on one's nature which might otherwise remain undiscovered?