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EDITORIAL

A Difference in Names.

Throughout the country the prayer is upon every persons lips that the Commission which is now investigating the ramifications of the lumbering business will be successful in devising some method of bringing down the price of the commodity to builders. It would be but an echo of opinion to say that the present prices of lumber are deterring many from building. They are having a more sinister effect. In many instances they prohibit building and people are put to an increasing inconvenience.

Our timber is one of our greatest assets and one of the largest of our resources, but that same people more ready to use costs the Canadian people more than a similar commodity costs in any other part of the world, and that not because the mills cannot meet the demand if the mill owners are to be believed, not because labor is scarce and high priced, not because of any serious difficulty in moving lumber from the mills to the markets, but because the trade is organized to maintain the prevailing prices on lumber and because the import duty on it is such that lumber dealers outside the organization cannot compete with the market controllers in Canada.

The charge is made that there is a combine in the lumber trade, and the charge is just as stoutly denied. The word 'combine' has a sinister, grating sound and will not be owned by any organization of business men, even though the object of the organization is to carry out the tenets of a combine. The lumber men, while admitting they have an organization to maintain harmony in the trade, deny that they have a combine, and if the same meaning is to attach to their organization that attaches to organizations of manufacturers of other commodities, they may be right in refusing to have their organization designated by so hated a name.

It would seem that the real difference between an organization of manufacturers and a combine of men similarly employed is in the spirit in which their business is conducted. Associations may operate to restrain trade and do several other exasperating things, but when a sufficiently large number of consumers discover that they are paying a very large tribute which represents 'profits' to members of an organization, such a body at once changes from an association to a combine. That is the situation with the lumbermen. To their own minds they are still an association of business men who discovered the callacious policy of competition and who are trying to get all out of their business that it will stand. To the public for the very same reasons the association has become a combine.

The problem of the regulation of the trusts, of associations, of combines or whatever they may be called, is simply a question of the division of the profits which have accrued from the elimination of much of the expense of competition and of keeping prices of commodities down, after making allowance for increased cost of production to the levels at which they stood when competition prevailed. Some say the remedy is in Government supervision, others in the reduction of the tariff. The manufacturers themselves have a better one but it is not human nature to practice it.

The Agricultural College and Its Work.

The farmers of Manitoba are to be congratulated on the success attending the campaign to establish an agricultural college in their province, and have every reason to feel proud of the course and staff, a pride in which the FARMER'S ADVOCATE shares. The first winter course has just been closed and the students have returned to their homes to renew their acquaintance with Mother Earth and incidentally by practice to demonstrate the soundness of the theories imbibed at the college, and further to show that the practical training they received in agronomy, animal husbandry, dairying, horticulture and kindred subjects is of value far beyond its cost.

Although the college work is closed for the summer, the pursuit of knowledge along agricultural lines is by no means to be abandoned, as the announcement of the formation of a Research Association for the working out of problems affecting Manitoban agriculture proves. The scope of the research work has been described in another place (576), but a slight reference here to the subject will not by any means be amiss. Taking the subjects in the order mentioned, the most important work to be undertaken is that with clover. Fifty students in various parts of the province will, with the clover seed supplied them by the college, make an attempt to grow this invaluable legume and take note of causes which may help or deter its cultivation with a view to overcoming the same. If as a result of the work done by the Research Association the growing of clover successfully is made possible in any part of Manitoba, the outlay of the province on the college to date will have been repaid. Attempts will be made to find what influence the care during the period of pregnancy and previous to it has on production by mares of weak and premature foals, and observations will be made as to the length of time male and female offspring are carried. Observations also on the wild plum will be made with a view to its improvement; and it is hoped to arrive at some information as to what effect the care of implements has on their wearing qualities and efficiency. The Research Association includes the staff of the college, students of the college, and any farmers that wish to may also become members. The organization known as the Experimental Union, made up of Ontario Agricultural College students, has done good work, and the example has undoubtedly fired the ambition of our Western college to do likewise. At other colleges similar organizations are working and make a very satisfactory way by which extension work can be carried on. We shall look forward with great interest to the results that may be expected from the labors of the Research Association.

The Country Has Developed Faster than the Transportation Companies.

One of the bad effects of the winter's demoralization of the railroad service, which was rendered more easily accomplished in the case of the Canadian Northern due to lack of engines and cars, is the disastrous delay to settlers with live stock en route to their homesteads. Some people desirous of moving West from Manitoba on lines served by the C. P. R., to the cheaper lands in the territory served by the C. N. R., are finding difficulty in so doing and have complained to this office. We at once referred the matter to Dr. Mills, the farmers' representative on the Railroad Commission, and he to the Commission's traffic officer, whose reply will be found in another column, which we hope will be read carefully. Some justification is given for the attitude of Canada's transcontinental road (the C. P. R.) by their charge, not as yet denied, that the C. N. R. have two thousand cars belonging to the former company which the latter company is unable to return for lack of motive power. In such cases it is hard

to fix the blame, if blame be due, and in the meantime the country and the newcomer must wait and suffer. The breakdown of the C. N. R. system of transportation is the strongest piece of evidence that the policy of railroad bonusing by grants of cash or land is essentially wrong for it encourages weak institutions to reach out further than they should. It is similar to giving hothouse treatment to a plant intended to grow in the open. It is to be hoped that Mr. Mann's pronouncement that the C. N. R. is to devote its energies in 1907 to improvement of its roadbed and in making additions to its equipment will be carried out.

The idea has been advanced that the Government should in future discourage the movement of settlers to districts remote from railroads, but the damage is done, and it is too late now to try and head people off. *The cardinal fault was in the homestead regulations laid down many years ago when only the even numbered sections could be homesteaded, with the result that settlement was sparse and spread out and necessitated an increasing mileage of track to reach the settler. The retention of the odd numbered sections for land grants kept these lands from being settled unless people were willing to pay the speculators' price. It appears, therefore, that even if the pre-emption clause is not favorably considered by the Dominion Government, the act should be amended in future to permit people homesteading the odd as well as the even numbered sections, and that the land granted under existing charters should not be handed over until the railroad to get such land is properly equipped to carry on the business in the territory its charters covers. The tide of immigration cannot be restrained, neither can the production of farm crops be hindered from increase by Governmental regulation.*

The Milkman's Opportunity.

One of the striking features of our expanding agricultural and industrial enterprises is the conspicuousness of the absence of dairying in many of the most thickly settled districts. By dairying in this case we do not simply mean the keeping of cows, their milking and the sale of manufacture of cream, but in every direction there is not milk enough to supply the demands of towns of all sizes, and lots of farm families do without milk altogether. During the past winter it has been a regular occurrence for the travelling public to stop at hotels where only the imitations of milk appeared upon the tables. Some of our new growing cities depend for their milk supply upon not more than two or three small dairymen and a few straggling cows. We do not cite these instances to disparage the towns and cities so circumstanced, but to show what a large opportunity there is for the men who will take up this line of work. There are some dairies we know of, the cows of which are making as much as a dollar per day for their owners and there are three hundred and sixty-five days in a year, upon at least three hundred of which a cow likes to be milked. Often we have read the advertisements of boards of trade pointing out what inducements certain towns offer professional men and industries, and have sometimes thought that there are many worse ways of expending the municipalities' money than in inducing dairymen to establish a business of supplying the town or city with wholesome milk.