

PROBLEMS OF MORE PRODUCTION

The more we realize in Canada the necessity for greater production, the more do we find problems which have been overlooked in the haste of trying to make money quickly by speculation. Despite the numerous cynics who scoff at the idea, one of the solutions to many problems will be the movement back to the land. That movement in turn presents its own problems, but not insoluble. Farm life is not sufficiently attractive to keep youth on the farm or to bring him back to the farm after a taste of the city. Here is a true story, related by the Guelph Herald:

"The local manager of an automobile branch was going to Drayton fair, and when about eight miles from his destination he overtook a young man about 18 years of age, trudging along the roadside, with a small paper parcel in his hand. The lad was dressed—well, as many farm lads are. He asked if he might get a lift, and upon being seated was asked his destination. He replied that he was going to Drayton fair, and, being asked if the distance was not rather great, the lad unburdened himself. He declared he was one of a family of five boys, his other brothers being at home working. His father, he said, owned 400 acres of land, and they all had to work from 6 a.m. to 8 p.m. The lad had never been to Guelph, had for years looked longingly to seeing the Toronto Exhibition, but was disappointed again this year. He then claimed the right to attend the fair at Drayton. 'Well, but why didn't you get the loan of one of your father's horses?' he was asked. 'I was told that if I wanted to get to Drayton I could walk,' he replied, quite naturally, as if such things were a matter of course. 'So you're going to have a good time, eh?' 'Yes, I hope so,' was the bright reply of ever-hopeful youth. 'Got lots of spending money to enjoy yourself?' 'Well,' was the reply, looking at the small parcel he carried, 'I have a dozen eggs here which I'm going to sell at Drayton; that ought to get me through somehow!'"

The Peterborough Review, commenting upon this incident, says: "Farmers like these do not know how to bring up their children." But there is another phase. Probably the boy's father, as a young man, had to clear his farm, with little capital, with little help and with no day off in sight. His boy's lot is a little better. He has his day off and a dozen eggs to exchange for ice cream cones, pop corn and pennants at the fair. But it is not good enough. We cannot expect a lad to be shackled to the pioneer life of his grandfather's time, with all its disadvantages, while the echo of tango music faintly reaches him. Again, while the boy was trudging to the fair the father may have been contemplating bushels of apples, tomatoes and other produce rotting on the ground because we have not learned yet how to bridge the price gap between the grower and the consumer. That gap takes the heart out of one and the hide off the other. In short, farm life is not attractive. The farmer cannot afford to make it attractive to his help because the price gap tends to prevent. We must burnish the attractions of the farm. The rural depopulation will then be lessened and some of the good stock which has drifted to the cities will return to the land.

The fact that the war is costing Britain \$55 per second, should make every citizen of the Empire an ardent peace advocate.

CONSTRUCTION AND PRODUCTION

One of the few critics of the message brought to the Canadian Club, Toronto, by Dr. Shortt is the Toronto News. "According to Dr. Shortt," says our contemporary, "Canada's economic difficulties are due not so much to the war as to our activity in building up populous centres instead of going on the land. In his view, the Dominion is greatly over-developed on the constructive side, we have more factories than we need, and we should roof over unfinished plants until the country catches up to them. This is the sense, if not the actual wording, of a rather untimely statement, which, if seriously accepted, would not tend to increase public confidence or to stimulate trade activity at a time of difficulty for all nations. Fortunately few Canadians will agree with Dr. Shortt or be depressed by such arguments."

The applause which greeted Dr. Shortt's statements, which obtained scant treatment in the daily press, indicated that nearly all, if not entirely all, his audience endorsed his views. The criticism, quoted above, does not quite express the position. As *The Monetary Times* views it, and as we understand Dr. Shortt's position, the situation is this: For a number of years, great activity has prevailed throughout Canada in construction. This included the construction of railroads, steam and electric; factories, pulp mills, water power plants, railroad terminals, drydocks, freight boats, legislative and other public buildings, and the building of towns and cities with their hotels, residences, electric light, water, sewerage systems, schools, fire protection, and so on. This has involved the expenditure of vast sums of money, chiefly borrowed from Great Britain.

The nation's just pride is in its future possibilities and development based on the substantial foundation of the past and present. In the extremely optimistic days of a few years ago, we constantly heard the phrase, "building for the future." That is exactly what has been done and Dr. Shortt drew attention only to what all close observers must have concluded, namely, that the machinery of construction—upon the installation of which we have specialized in the past few years—has reached the point at which the country must take up considerably more production. In other words, having got enough plant to cater to the probable demand for some years to come, we must see that the plant is working to full capacity in normal times, before we increase it again. The point was thus illustrated by Dr. Shortt: "If we have six boot and shoe factories with ample plant, catering to the trade, it is useless to ask capital to finance further boot and shoe factories at present."

It is not a question of more production in the factory only, but in every other sphere. The farmer feeds the city. He does it in two ways, by supplying his produce and by purchasing his necessities from the city factory. Without the surrounding agricultural district or a district which produces something, the city cannot live. Were there not a community of Western Canada farmers to buy Massey-Harris implements, there would be correspondingly less output and employment in the Eastern Canada factory.

On the one hand, we have sufficient equipment for some years to come. With it, there must now be produced more agricultural, animal, mining, forest, factory, fishery and other products. Discussing this phase of Canadian development early this year, Sir George Paish said: "If capital were provided freely for the construc-