

The Grain Growers' Guide

Winnipeg, Wednesday, April 3rd, 1912

MINNEAPOLIS MARKET AVAILABLE

Arrangements have finally been made by which it is hoped that the damp wheat in the West that is in danger of ruin can be saved if prompt action is taken. Last week T. A. Crerar, president of the Grain Growers' Grain Co.; Charles A. Dunning, manager of the Saskatchewan Co-operative Elevator Co., and A. F. Mantle, Deputy Minister of Agriculture for Saskatchewan, personally investigated conditions at Minneapolis, Chicago and Milwaukee. The conclusion reached after careful consideration was that the Minneapolis market would be able to absorb a very large quantity of damp Canadian wheat. This market possesses many advantages over other American markets and the Grain Growers' Grain Co. has made arrangements to assist Canadian farmers whose grain is in danger of spoiling. After investigating the southern markets it was seen that the only thing required to make the Minneapolis market available was the co-operation of the Canadian railways. With this in view there was a meeting held with the freight traffic managers of the C.P.R. and C.N.R. in Winnipeg on April 1. After the case was laid before them they promised that they would endeavor to move all cars billed to Minneapolis as fast as possible.

It is estimated that there are at least 5,000,000 bushels of damp grain in Saskatchewan and possibly 2,000,000 bushels more in the other two provinces. If this does not reach driers or go into consumption by the end of April the chance of saving it from a total loss is small. The aim of opening the Minneapolis market more fully was not to get the Western Canadian farmers a big price for their damp grain. It was to get them any price at all. The facilities at Port Arthur, Fort William and Duluth are not sufficient to handle the damp grain, so it is of the utmost importance that some other outlet be found at once. Any farmer who has damp grain should be active. He should make out affidavits describing the condition of his grain, whether damp, wet or filled with snow and ice, and in danger of spoiling, and send these affidavits immediately to C. C. Castle, Warehouse Commissioner, Winnipeg. The Warehouse Commissioner will then order cars out of turn to these farmers who need them. The cars should be billed to the Grain Growers' Grain Co., Minneapolis, "advise Grain Growers' Grain Co., Winnipeg," and the shipping bills should be sent to the company's office at Winnipeg. The shipments can be made to any other commission firm if desired. The only hope now remaining of getting the damp grain upon the market in time to save it is that the farmers attend to it very promptly and that the railways perform their functions with equal promptness. In addition to the above figures there are over 12,000,000 bushels in the West yet to be threshed, a good deal of which will need prompt treatment, so delay is dangerous. It should be borne in mind that if the reciprocity agreement had been passed by the Canadian Parliament there would have been no car shortage and the resulting losses to Canadian farmers.

One of our subscribers in renewing his subscription says:—

"It is not neglect nor carelessness that kept me from renewing sooner. I didn't see a dollar since last November until I got my first car a few days ago."

This letter was dated March 22 and from a Manitoba farmer. This gives some idea of how the car shortage has handicapped the farmers in the West this year. Of course,

they should go into mixed farming, as the railway men and manufacturers say. This is no doubt good advice but a good many things in the West today are already too much mixed for the general good.

A GIFT TO SPECULATORS

The public, we think, are entitled to some information as to the reasons which lie behind a remarkable change of front on the part of members on both sides of the House of Commons with regard to the extension of time for the location of South African Scrip. It will be remembered that when the Bill authorizing the issue of scrip for a half section of land to the Canadian volunteers who served in the South African war was passed in 1908, one of the conditions was that the land was to be selected by the volunteer or his substitute by December 31, 1910. In March, 1910, however, a bill was introduced by Hon. Frank Oliver, then Minister of the Interior, extending the time for the location of scrip till December 31, 1911. The bill was vigorously opposed by the organized farmers, by The Guide and by Conservative members of parliament from the West, including Dr. W. J. Roche, Arthur Meighen, W. H. Sharpe, R. S. Lake and Glen Campbell, all of whom spoke in the House against the proposal, maintaining that the only result would be the enrichment of speculators at the expense of bona fide settlers. The bill, however, was passed and the predictions of the honorable gentlemen referred to above were fulfilled, the price of scrip, practically all of which had been disposed of by the volunteers to speculators at prices ranging from \$200 to \$500, rising rapidly and reaching eventually \$1,000. Intending settlers, however, refused to pay the prices asked by the speculators and when the extended time for the location of warrants expired on December 31, 1911, there were still about 250 warrants unlocated. Whether or not any of these warrants were in the hands of the original volunteers is not known, but practically all had been disposed of, it being the practice to assign the warrant in blank, leaving the settler to fill in his own name when selecting the land and making entry. The extension of time to December 31, 1911, was granted by parliament in the face of opposition by Western Conservatives on the distinct understanding expressed by Hon. Frank Oliver that this was to be positively the last extension, but Hon. Robert Rogers shortly after assuming office as Minister of the Interior announced that another extension would be granted. Accordingly on March 13, 1912, Mr. Rogers introduced a bill for the purpose, and speaking in the House of Commons on that date he said:

"When the original Volunteer Bounty Act was passed in the month of July, 1908, the limit of time within which to locate land certificates issued thereunder was fixed as the 31st December, 1910. This was considered amply sufficient, as it gave the claimants a period of eighteen months within which to exercise their rights of location. A very large number of the claimants complied with the requirements of the law in this regard, but in the spring of 1910, it was felt that those who had not been able to make proper selections should be given a further opportunity to do so, and with that end in view, the Act 9-10 Edward VII., chapter 60, was passed, extending to the 31st December, 1911, the time within which certificates could be located. Evidently most of the claimants realized that they had thus been liberally treated by the Government, because it is found now that when the time expired on the 31st December last, 250 certificates only, out of a total of 7,258 had not been redeemed by the department in exchange for land. Of these 250 certificates 188 are held presumably by the original volunteers themselves, the remaining

62 having been transferred to substitutes prior to the 31st December last.

"The object of the present bill is to afford an opportunity, until the 31st day of December next, to the original volunteers to exercise their right of location, provided they are willing to remain on the land themselves and earn title thereto. The right of providing a substitute, as provided under the original Act, will not apply to these volunteers, because it is considered that it would not be fair to the rest of the claimants who have made their selections within the required time, if the government were to extend more favorable treatment to those who have been dilatory in this regard.

"The Act further provides that as regards the outstanding certificates, whether held by the original volunteers themselves, or by their substitutes, the government will undertake to redeem the same by a cash payment of \$500 in each case. While it is quite true that in the case of scrip issued to the volunteers of the Rebellion of 1885 extensions for location were granted by Parliament from time to time till the year 1908, such a policy would not appear to be in the public interest, as instead of protecting the interests of the volunteers originally concerned, the action of the government has rather been to stimulate speculation in favor of persons who had no direct interest in the settlement of the public domain. It is true that the redemption of the outstanding certificates may involve an expenditure of perhaps \$125,000, if all these certificates are exchanged in this way, but the lands that will thus remain vested in the government will more than compensate for the expenditure."

This, most people will agree, was decidedly generous treatment. South African warrants entitled the holder to a half section of land on condition of settlement, provided the land was selected by the end of last year. After that date they were valueless, and if any one was so foolish as to neglect to select his land he could not complain because his rights had expired. This new bill, however, gave volunteers another year in which to make their selection and gave them and persons who have bought scrip the alternative of redeeming the scrip for \$500. This generosity, however, did not satisfy the speculators who hold the scrip and they at once sent delegations to Ottawa to see if they could not obtain further concessions. The result was that in the early hours of the morning of March 27, when the attendance of members in the House was very small, Hon. Robert Rogers, without offering any explanation, moved the insertion in the bill of a few words which entirely changed its effect, and extended the right of location of all scrip whether held by volunteers or speculators to the end of the present year. Hon. Frank Oliver objected to this being done at that time, pointing out that it was a direct contradiction of the statement made by Hon. Mr. Rogers when he introduced the bill. Mr. Rogers admitted that this was so, saying that he had since met many deputations who had urged him to make the change which he now proposed. The Bill was at Mr. Oliver's request left over for two days in order that other Western members might have an opportunity of expressing their opinions, but it is remarkable that when the bill came up again not a single Western member raised the slightest objection to the change. Mr. Meighen who, when speaking of the previous extension said: "The principle is bad and cannot be defended," was silent. Hon. Dr. Roche, who had said at the same time: "The speculators will use the scrips for their own aggrandisement and to the disadvantage of the bona fide settler," was also dumb. Dr. Molloy, who had said in 1910: "I am in favor of a year's extension to the veterans, but I also wish it to go on record that I shall never vote for any extension for the speculator," made no protest. No one in fact made any protest except Mr. F. B. Carvell, a New Brunswick member, who said a gentleman had been lobbying