

June 1st, 1910

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Prize Essay

By P. B. LOGAN, Winnipeg

This is the Essay which was awarded the Prize of \$25 as the best one written by the Students of the Manitoba Agricultural College of the first and second years.

There is no one who has seriously studied the question of the distribution of farm produce in Canada but will admit that the time is ripe for drastic change. It is strange that in this land, a land whose people are notable examples of self reliance and independence the measure of the well being of her greatest industry should be subject to the will of a few monopolists and combines.

The farmer is the mainstay of this nation, and as time advances he will become even more important as a national asset. Let us look forward to the time when the prairie provinces will team with a population following agricultural pursuits and ask what will be their position if present methods are then in vogue. Now, the farmer is shorn of his legitimate profits; then, when land has increased in price and is cut up into small farms, it will be a different matter for him to eke out a bare existence. Today there are monopolists to fight; but then, there will be huge trusts which not even the power of the nation will be able to break. Let us take warning from our sister nation, and, while we have the strength, fight this evil and obtain the mastery. It does not need any stretch of imagination to picture the ultimate fate of a nation which stands aside and allows the intellectual and material well-being of the community to suffer for the purpose of adding to the already over-swollen moneybags of a favored few.

"Union is strength," and by union only can the farmers of Western Canada ever hope to gain and exercise complete control over the distribution of the fruits of their labor. It is incumbent on every farmer to do his utmost to help in the attainment of the great end which we have in view.

Co-operation stands for union, allied to freedom and justice and it is to the co-operative movement that we look for the realization of our aims and aspirations. Whatever form this movement will take its members must be left absolutely free and unhampered in its conduct and management of its business. It must be lifted completely out of the region of political controversy and out of reach of the whims and caprices of any political party which may be in power. Only upon this basis can we hope to secure to the movement development which shall be progressive, continuous and permanent.

The acquisition of the grain elevators must necessarily, because of the predominating importance of the grain trade, be the first achievement; but the time will come and at no distant date, when equally great marketing facilities shall be required for other kinds of farm produce.

It is our duty to go further and extend the movement that with the advent of these other products, we shall be able to give to the producer a guarantee of fair and honest markets for his goods. The advantages which must of necessity accrue to the farmer by the adoption of a co-operative policy are manifold and diverse. Firstly, it sounds the death knell of all trusts and combines connected with the distribution of farm produce, and this fact alone would make it worthy of attainment. As a direct result it would increase the welfare of the farmer by a considerable amount. Other, perhaps less tangible, but none the less real, results are the forcing of the farmer from the many worries connected with the marketing of his produce, thereby giving him more time to devote to the development and scientific farming of his land; the creation of a healthier and more optimistic outlook on life, and the increased capacity, which his bettered circumstances afford, for intellectual pursuits. Any student of the subject is well aware that an undue and unequal struggle for the livelihood stunts mental as well as physical growth and produces a demoralizing effect on the struggler which renders him incapable of rising to any high degree of intellectual attainment.

It would be easy to cite numerous concrete examples where, under proper organization, a co-operative movement

has been attended with unqualified success. Perhaps, however, the best illustration is the case of Denmark. Denmark is a purely agricultural country, with a low lying, cold soil, exposed to the cold winds of the Baltic and North Seas. Its winters are long and severe and its growing season short. A century ago it was the poorest of all the European countries. In 1881, however, the farmers introduced a co-operative system, in which they had the hearty support of their government. In the comparatively short period of twenty-five years, the tables have been completely turned and in 1906 we find her wealth per head of population, exceeding that of any other continental nation. Her people are prosperous and happy, and as a whole her farmers have a higher intellectual standing than that of the farmers of any other nation. In national spirit and social morality they have attained to a degree of excellence which might probably be copied.

The following statistics are of interest as showing the great increase in all branches of the farming industry since the inauguration of co-operation.

In 1881, the trade in butter, eggs and bacon totalled \$11,840,000. In 1906 it had risen to \$77,800,000.

In a few years the returns from stags have increased from \$7,500,000 to \$25,000,000.

It is interesting to note that the land was of such poor quality as to make grain growing unprofitable.

The system of co-operation established in Denmark is, briefly as follows:

The large co-operative organizations are united into numerous federations through which they co-operate with one another and by so doing greatly increase the efficiency of all. The farmers' supplies are largely purchased wholesale, in large quantities through these federations and are distributed very economically. The farmers produce is similarly sold by skilled business men.

And now, being aware of the unsatisfactory state of the present system, and believing that the remedy lies in our own hands, let us stand shoulder to shoulder and by our united efforts secure conditions which shall make us independent of trusts and monopolies, believing that by so doing we can best fulfil our duty to the nation and thereby strengthen and increase her position amongst the nations of the world.

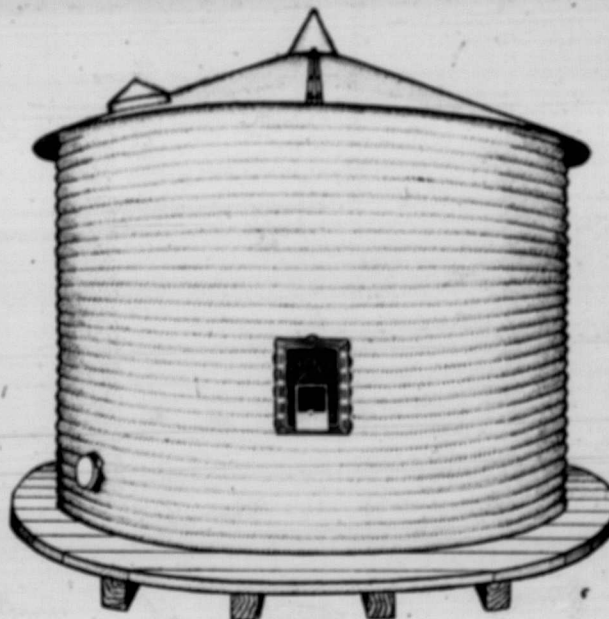
AN AMERICAN TRIBUTE TO EDWARD THE PEACEMAKER

Continued from Page 23

This was the work of the late king; and it is this work which has earned for him the proud title of Peacemaker. Never was there a greater personal triumph than that achieved by King Edward in bringing about the entente cordiale between France and England. The time when he first began his efforts towards a better understanding between the two countries could not have seemed more unpropitious. The Fashoda incident still rankled in the breast of every Frenchman; Dreyfus was as yet unjustified, and the attitude taken by the English press upon his condemnation had caused intense bitterness in France; finally, the Boer war was but just concluded and French sympathy was wholly in favor of the weaker nationality. Besides this was the ancient, historic enmity of the two races, broken only, since the time of the Norman conquest, by a brief coalition during the Crimean war. Nevertheless the king set himself manfully to the accomplishment of an apparently superhuman task, and, by his unflinching tact and diplomacy, seconded by his personal popularity with the citizens of Paris, converted that age-long hostility into what all the world must hope will prove an equally durable friendship.

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There is some degree of similarity in the passing of the late king and of his revered mother. Both occurred at a time of crisis for the nation. In 1901 England was still engaged in her struggle with the Boer Republics and, by the irony of fate, the queen who, all her life through, had striven so earnestly for peace, went to her last rest amid the clash of contending arms. Edward the Seventh had passed away in a time of crises even more momentous. The clouds that have been threatening the constitution of parliament for a century have descended yet lower and loom more blackly. There has been free talk of the prerogative of the crown being invoked to settle the constitutional issue; and it is likely that, within the next few months, the King of England may be called upon to play a more important part in the domestic affairs of his country than has been the case for the last hundred years.

The deep and natural sympathy which the people of this country feel for their kinsfolk in the calamity which has overtaken the nation, will also be extended to the new king, who, at the very outset of his reign, is faced with the necessity of finding a solution to the most perplexing problem which has faced any constitutional sovereign of modern times. George the Fifth, however, albeit, from the nature of his anomalous position as heir apparent, his opportunities of proving himself have been few, yet, when such opportunities have offered, has always risen to the occasion and given indication that, beneath a quiet and somewhat retiring manner, may lie the most essential qualities of kingship. There have been occasions, notably in the course of the prolonged Colonial tour which he took some years ago in company with the Princess, when, by the acuteness of his observations and the happy aptitude of his speeches, he revealed himself as a man of keen intelligence and sound judgment;

while the experience and knowledge, which he gained during his travels, will have given him as a ruler a sympathetic insight into the conditions and requirements of the various peoples of his empire.

It would be futile within the scope of this article to attempt to express to the people of Britain a tithe of the sorrow and sympathy which America feels in the death of King Edward. His loss is felt almost as a personal one on this side of the Atlantic, since his popularity here was second only to his popularity in his own country, and his well known sympathy with the democratic aspirations of America had won him a secure place in the affections of her citizens.

He was a good and a great monarch, and no truer or nobler epitaph could be written on his tomb than that "He sought peace and pursued it."

Becoming convinced aren't you, that the cattle feeders feel certain of future prosperity? At any rate they show no keen anxiety to unload just now.

It is a point well settled in the farmers' minds that they are not getting any more of this world's goods than they are justly entitled to.

Judging by the large numbers of farmers who are buying 1910 model automobiles the high cost of living hasn't been noticed much by them.

It's a hard matter to convince the cattle feeder that he is not entitled to a high price this year for his hard work in handling his steers and the high-priced feed they have consumed.

The opinions your enemies have of you are always more matter of fact than the opinions of your friends.

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