

The Grain Growers' Guide

Winnipeg, Wednesday, September 8th, 1915

HOLD YOUR WHEAT

From present indications the only way by which wheat prices can be kept from falling to a figure which will mean an absolute loss to the producer is to hold the wheat off the market. The rate of exchange has fallen so low that it is now costing from 5 to 8 cents on every bushel of wheat, and the farmer pays it. Before the war it cost from 7 to 10 cents per bushel on ocean freight, while today the ocean freight charges on a bushel of wheat are from 27 to 30 cents. The difference in cost is enormous and it very largely, if not entirely, comes out of the farmer's pocket. On these two points alone the price of wheat this year is adversely affected from 25 to 28 cents per bushel. In view of this situation it is very urgent that the market be not glutted by heavy shipments. So important is the matter considered that the leaders of the organized farmers, at a meeting held in Winnipeg, on August 31, issued the following statement:

At a meeting held today, at which representatives of the farmers' organizations of Western Canada were present, the matter of prices likely to be received for the present crop was discussed. It was the unanimous opinion of those present that a heavy movement on the part of farmers to sell their grain at the present time would be almost certain to force prices to a lower level, and that if a more leisurely method of marketing were followed by the farmers in the disposal of their grain, a better average price all round could be secured for it.

While it was recognized that the matter of giving advice on the selling of grain was a difficult one, it was thought advisable by all present to make a public statement advising the farmers of Western Canada, as far as possible, to store a portion of their grain on their farms, and, in this way, spread the marketing of it over the next eight or ten months, rather than place it in immense quantities upon the market in the next few months with the certainty—as far as the present outlook is concerned—of bringing prices to a considerably lower level.

Lake and ocean boat space is more scarce than in previous years; rates for such space are higher than ever before; rates of exchange between this country and Europe are also more adverse than they have ever been, and, undoubtedly, the flooding of the market with grain immediately after threshing will mean that these charges, which ultimately have to be paid by the farmers, will go higher than ever.

It was thought advisable to publicly request the co-operation of the banks and business interests generally in the matter. Their co-operation might take the form of extending the time for payment of liabilities that farmers might have to such banks or business interests, rather than to force the farmers to sell their grain at a sacrifice in order to meet liabilities falling due in October and November. The banks, particularly, by taking advantage of the powers recently conferred, could make advances to farmers on the security of grain on the farm.

If this method of marketing can be followed, we feel certain that it will result in a greater monetary return for the crop to the farmers of Western Canada than they will otherwise obtain, and it seems apparent that such a result will be a direct benefit to every business interest in the country, and at the same time, will insure a steady flow of grain sufficient for the needs of the Empire.

More leisurely marketing of our grain has always been advocated by the leaders of the farmers' organizations, and we make this statement at the present time for the purpose of directing attention to this very important matter at a period when our crop is just commencing to move. We believe that if farmers follow our suggestion in large numbers, the result will prove that the scheme is far more practical than any other that could be suggested to insure a fair return for the crop.

Signed, on behalf of the farmers' organizations:

JAS. SPEAKMAN, Pres., United Farmers of Alberta.

P. P. WOODBRIDGE, Sec., United Farmers of Alberta.

JOHN A. MAHARG, Pres., Saskatchewan Grain Growers' Association.
J. B. MUSSELMAN, Sec., Saskatchewan Grain Growers' Association.
R. C. HENDERS, Pres., Manitoba Grain Growers' Association.
R. McKENZIE, Sec., Manitoba Grain Growers' Association.
C. RICE-JONES, Pres., Alberta Farmers' Co-operative Elevator Co.
CHAS. A. DUNNING, Gen. Manager, Saskatchewan Co-operative Elevator Co.
T. A. CRERAR, Pres., Grain Growers' Grain Co.

Every business interest with the welfare of this country at heart should assist the farmers in this matter. If reasonable prices can be maintained it will be a tremendous benefit to the country at large.

BATTLES AT HOME

Every great achievement, every deed of heroism, every great victory won, be it conquest of territory or the attainment of some high principle which had formerly been held under subjection by unrighteous influences, receives in normal times due recognition at the hands of the people. But the world today is not living in normal times. Every channel of news is congested with tales of battles fought and brave deeds done on land and sea in the great war now in progress, to the exclusion of some acts fully as worthy of mention. Battles are being fought at home. Not sanguinary ones, 'tis true, but struggles occasioned by much more laudable ambitions than the present horrible conflict in Europe. One of these little recognized fights, but one which vitally affects this country, is that waged by the Veterinary Director-General's Department against the spread of foot and mouth disease from the United States into Canada. When this dread cattle disease broke out last fall all those fully alive to the many ways in which infection could be carried were very doubtful as to the possibility of confining it south of the boundary. This, however, has been done, and the Veterinary Director-General and his staff are deserving of the highest praise for the efficient manner in which this disease has been kept away from Canadian herds. The danger has not entirely passed, but the order of May 5, 1915, prohibiting the importation of cattle into Canada has been removed in so far as seventeen states in the affected area are concerned, and it is expected that, in the near future, it will be possible to remove all restrictions and the livestock trade will be again resumed between the two countries.

MARKETING PROBLEMS

It should be a matter of satisfaction to Guide readers to learn, as was mentioned in a recent issue, that it is the intention of the Minister of Agriculture to introduce in the Manitoba legislature a bill designed to deal with the bonding of produce merchants. The adoption of such proposed legislation will place the farm produce trade on a much more satisfactory business basis than in the past, but it is not by any means the only reform necessary. It has been constantly pointed out that the blame for the present unsatisfactory state of affairs rests as much with the farmer as with the dealer. Hence only half the battle will be won unless the farmer does his share. One of the reasons why farm produce does not fetch top prices on the

market in the towns and cities is that there is a lack of uniformity in the product. Carelessness is shown in the packing and grading, and, unfortunately, sometimes the quality or proper weight of the product cannot be relied upon. Then, again, many farmers do not go to the trouble of finding out the particular market requirements of the town to which they consign their produce. Take eggs, for example. There are two classes sold on the retail market in Winnipeg; one grade is guaranteed new laid and retails today for 30 cents a dozen, and the other is made up of ordinary farm shipments, retailing at 23 cents per dozen. Now the difference between these two prices will much more than repay any extra trouble which will be occasioned by selecting only first grade eggs. The same is true of other classes of produce. Farmers should remember there is always a ready sale in cities and towns for the first class article, but that inferior grades of produce are very much harder to dispose of. The question of marketing will have only begun to be touched when the producer is insured payment under a legally imposed bond, and, while this is a step forward, farmers must realize that their part in producing a marketable article is of the utmost importance in assisting towards the complete solution of this difficult problem.

GENERAL HUGHES KNIGHTED

The King has bestowed a knighthood upon our Minister of Militia, and henceforth he will be known as Sir Sam Hughes. Undoubtedly General Hughes is as much entitled to a knighthood, and much more so, than most of those Canadians who are now carrying these adornments, but we cannot see that such a title adds any honor to General Hughes. The rank of Cabinet Minister which he holds, and the position of Minister of Militia comes from the people of Canada, and is one of the highest honors which this country can bestow upon its own people. It would have been higher honor for General Hughes to have declined the title than to have accepted it, because the day is coming very rapidly when titles in Canada will be held in very low esteem by the people of this country.

CONSCRIPTION UNNECESSARY

In spite of official declarations that the Canadian government is not contemplating the adoption of conscription, there is a considerable section of the public which seems to be convinced that compulsory military service will have to be instituted in order that Canada may do her fair share and part in overcoming German militarism. The idea of conscription is repugnant to the great majority of Canadians and in a country where a large percentage of the citizens are of other than British birth, the attempt to force men to take up arms and go overseas to fight would be fraught with grave danger. But apart from these considerations, conscription is not necessary. Canada, we are quite safe in saying, can secure as many men as she can equip and maintain without resorting to compulsion. Give them a chance and the boys are willing and anxious to fight. The number that are rejected because of slight imperfections of sight, insufficient height or chest measure-