

### Seed Grain

AT this writing, March first, there are still scores of men, with well prepared land, who do not know if they will be able to secure seed to plant in it. The whole history of the seed grain problem of 1915 has been one series of blunders after another and will undoubtedly end in a very considerable amount of land that was well prepared remaining unseeded. This now seems inevitable. I am no party politician and possess no vote and can hardly be accused of viewing the matter from a party standpoint. To the normal minded citizen it seems incredible that any government or members of a government could be so deaf and blind to the interests of the country at large as to handle this matter in the way it has been done. The various circulars and instructions sent out by Dominion Government officials with regard to seed grain during the past four months, should be framed and glazed and hung in conspicuous places as a warning to all succeeding governments of "how not to do it." We are told that even the amount of help that it has decided to give settlers in burned out districts, together with the seed grain, will cost the government \$12,000,000. That is, it will cost the unfortunate farmers who have received this aid that amount, for every dollar of it is charged up against their land and will have to be liquidated before any transfer of the land so encumbered can be made.

However, it is wasting time to write about it, what seed had been bought has been bought at the outside prices, and it is very nearly, if not entirely, too late to buy more. Government officials are shielding themselves behind the statement that farmers did not put in their applications soon enough to enable them to buy seed at more reasonable prices. Yet scores of men who put in their applications in September last do not know to-day that they will get a bushel of seed. Some of them have twice been told they would get it and twice that they would not.

At the Grain Growers' convention at Regina I could not help feeling that an opportunity was lost, when this matter was not

more fully discussed and all possible pressure brought to bear on the government at Ottawa. A convention with 1,500 delegates should carry considerable weight and there were many men at it who could speak with first hand knowledge of what was required and where the government was falling down in supplying the pressing needs of the country, both as to seed and feed.

What I really set out to write about was to issue a little word about barley. I have been following this whole question of seed and seeding very closely and it seems to me that there will be a great demand for barley next fall

like the above may be useful.

### Manitoba Methods

Fortunately, Manitoba, as the older province and following more intensive methods of culture, is suffering much less from shortage of seed and feed than the other provinces. Have been discussing this whole matter of increased production with a number of men who are farming from a half to three-quarters of a section and find that they are not altering their farming scheme one iota on account of the increased production cry. That is, they are not withdrawing one acre from the area set aside for summer-

carried into her own territory during the coming summer, as it undoubtedly will be, very little of that crop may be reaped and still less area will be seeded for 1916. "Crop as usual" will be a pretty safe motto to follow. Not such increased areas but better work on the land, more care in planting, early seeding.

### The Harvest

It is well to bear in mind that crops that are planted have also to be harvested and what two men plant it takes four to five men to reap. Labor will be both scarce and dear next fall, with the heavy drafts of men going to the front. People seem to forget that the West has always had to draw heavily on the East for men to reap her harvest and that by the time the crop of 1915 is ready for the binders probably at least 150,000 Canadians will be on the fighting line or at least overseas. That would not make much impression on the harvesting strength of Russia, but it is likely to make a very material difference in Canada. It is no use wasting good time and strength on preparing land and good seed on sowing it, if the crop is not to be reaped.

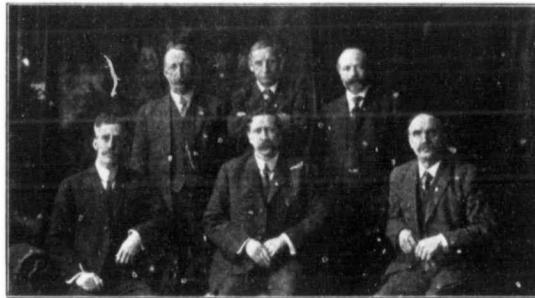
### What Women May Do

Crops in Russia and France and indeed in Germany also, are being largely attended to by the women. I think during the coming autumn we will find that the time has come in Western Canada for women to show that they can help with the harvesting. A few women, more especially those of foreign birth, do so already, but there has been a silly idea abroad that it is derogatory for women to work in the fields. Heaven knows why! Much of the work done in farm houses is much heavier and more unpleasant than work done by the men in the fields. Modern machinery is so constructed that much of it can quite as well be operated by women as men. My advice to the women of the West is to be ready to drive the harrows and the binders, if need arise, and let the men do the stooking and the pitching. This is a word in passing.

### Ignoring the Farmers

The budget speech announcing the new tariff was given to a

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EXECUTIVE OF SASKATCHEWAN GRAIN GROWERS' ASSOCIATION, 1915  
Standing, from left to right:—J. F. Reid, Oreadin; F. W. Green, Moose Jaw, and Thomas Sales, Langham  
Sitting:—J. B. Musselman, Moose Jaw, Secretary-Treasurer; J. A. Maharg, Moose Jaw, President; A. G. Hawkes, Perceval, Vice-President.

and there is a greater shortage of barley for seed than any other grain. The man who has good barley as well as wheat can very well afford to sell a little of his seed wheat and increase his barley acreage, putting it in early on thoroughly well cultivated land. A heavy barley crop that is ready to cut and thresh round the first week in August will be quite as valuable as wheat this year. Then a little word as to flax. The country as a whole will seed little flax and this is well, as indications point to a restricted demand. There will, however, be a demand and, as the United States will seed very little flax, the man in the Canadian West who has good flax seed and is short of wheat, oats or barley or of all three, may safely seed a considerable area of flax, there will be a market for all that is likely to be grown and at very fair prices also. The farmers have been so deluged with armchair advice that one hesitates to even seem to suggest instruction but sometimes little

fallow or to be seeded to grasses or alfalfa or fodder corn, indeed, the only change apparent with a very large number is that they will increase their acreage to fodder corn, possibly in some instances curtailing their wheat land to do so. They argue, and rightly it seems to me, that the need of wheat will really be more urgent in 1916 than in 1915 and any curtailing of summerfallow can only be at the expense of that crop.

The war is far from over and as it continues, normal conditions in the countries actually involved in the struggle will be more and more disturbed, and as more and more men are drafted into the armies, there will be great difficulty in keeping the land under cultivation and getting crops seeded. This year Russia has been very little affected but as men continue to be drafted into the army, shortage of help on the farms will be increasingly felt. Germany has got in a pretty good crop this year, but with the war

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