

work to do, however, but they are capable of doing it, and when the history of Canadian Democracy comes to be written, the United Farmers of Alberta will receive the credit for a great deal of the pioneer work.

### ACUTE YELLOW JOURNALISM

When is a newspaper not a newspaper? This question sounds like a riddle, but it is no riddle to anyone who has seen the Winnipeg dailies lately. The obvious answer is, When a notorious criminal is in our midst. Never, we think, has such a riot of yellow journalism afflicted any Canadian city as that which Winnipeg has had to endure for the past two weeks. A young foreigner, Krafchenko, alleged bank robber and murderer, escaped from jail and was caught again. That has been foundation enough upon which the Winnipeg dailies have contrived to build the most gigantic structures of gossip, guesses, rumors and counter-rumors, sensations and super-sensations. Day after day the newspapers gave themselves up to exploit this incident. The front pages barked forth, in red ink or heavy black headlines about two inches deep, the all-important information that the bandit might be caught, had been caught, or that something else would probably happen before long. Any subscriber who preferred not to occupy his mind entirely on this police case, or who retained any interest in the news of the world, had to fine-comb the paper to find anything else. An important British or American event might by chance be found in an out-of-the-way corner. More likely the police reporters' imagination had crowded out the real news of the day altogether. According to the perspective of the newspaper office, this robber's escape and re-arrest was the most impressive occurrence in the history of the world since the London Fire of 1666. If the sea had swallowed up Great Britain and Europe, and an earthquake had wrecked the United States from coast to coast, our daily press could not have issued a much more lurid front page.

One day, for instance, the front page (not to mention the pages and pages inside) of a Winnipeg daily was taken up with this Krafchenko. But not the whole front page. Exactly two lines of this valuable page were sacrificed to tell Winnipeg and Western Canada that Lord Strathcona was dying! Could any contrast show more clearly the lengths to which unchecked sensationalism will run? Aside from the indecency of this type of journalism, have the newspapers no higher aim than to create, by various artful methods, a morbid appetite in thousands of its readers, and then satisfy it? No one can dispute the widespread harm done by devoting ten times as much publicity to the exploits of a desperado as to the accomplishments of all the great and good men put together. No wonder that the successful crook becomes something of a hero to many youths whose chief reading is the daily paper.

Of course, circulation is boosted at the time by whetting vulgar and unhealthy curiosity. The people are largely to blame. Yet the press has a heavy responsibility, since a large section of the city population will never rise higher than the papers they read. We may be in a minority, but we venture to think that such a wholesale exploitation of crime and criminals as the Winnipeg daily press has lately been guilty of, whatever their motive, cannot fail to do much harm.

### A MALICIOUS SLANDER

In an issue of a Chicago Grain Journal known as "The Price Current and Grain Reporter," dated January 7, appears the following item:

"The Grain Growers' Association of the Canadian Northwest has defaulted in payment of the interest on its bonds, according to a current report last Saturday. This is the associa-

tion to which we referred in our special article on the Canadian Northwest, in November, as being run by men who have practically no experience in the grain business, its immediate department being in charge of mere boys. There are about 15,000 farmers interested in this company, and it is the strongest political organization of its kind in the Northwest."

This item undoubtedly refers to The Grain Growers' Grain Company and is a despicable attempt to injure the reputation of the Farmers' Company in the eyes of American grain dealers. Such a report would not need contradiction anywhere in Canada, as The Grain Growers' Grain Company is too well known and too firmly established. It might be stated, however, that The Grain Growers' Grain Company has no bonds outstanding. Therefore, it could not default in the payment of interest. The whole story is a deliberate and malicious falsehood and has not even the slightest foundation of truth. American grain dealers who countenance such dirty tactics need not expect to build up a business with Canadian farmers even when our wheat is allowed free entry into the American side.

### THE SASKATCHEWAN CONVENTION

Every farmer in Saskatchewan should be seized of the importance of the Annual Convention of the Saskatchewan Grain Growers' Association, which will be held in Moose Jaw on February 11, 12, 13. It is no exaggeration to state that this convention is the most important event in the activities of the farmers of that province, and it is also of vast importance to every other interest in the province. The Saskatchewan Grain Growers' Association is a very influential organization, not only among the farmers, but also in the political field both provincial and federal. It is to be hoped that every local association will send its full quota to the convention. Considering the importance and the influence of the organization, the delegates, we are sure, from past experience, will conduct their business and reach their conclusions with an eye always to the best interests of the common people. Resolutions should be very carefully prepared and should express definitely the will of the delegates as, when backed by the rank and file of the association, they are bound to be effective in whatever quarter they are directed.

### BIG BUSINESS IN UNITED STATES

J. Pierpont Morgan, junior, the head of the most powerful banking house in America, announced a few days ago that he and his partners were resigning from the directorates of many leading railway, industrial and financial companies in the United States. Mr. Morgan says that his firm is giving up this method of doing business in deference to public sentiment. A few days later George F. Baker, rated as the biggest figure in American finance since the death of J. P. Morgan, senior, similarly resigned from many directorates. This radical action is highly significant. Does it mark the turning of the tide in the history of Big Business? Up to the present the trend has been towards concentration and consolidation. By means of interlocking directorates more and more power has come to be centred in fewer and fewer hands. During the Congressional investigation last year into the money trust, the late J. P. Morgan testified that his banking firm controlled over \$10,000,000,000 of the nation's wealth. Facts such as these could not be published broadcast without having a deep effect. The same popular uprising which revolted against the iniquities of Protection showed itself also in a demand that no group of men be allowed to acquire such power over the nation's commerce and industry as a few Wall Street magnates had already secured. President Wilson recently spoke of this menace in these words:

"The real danger is that the same group of men control chains of banks, systems of railways, whole series of manufacturing enterprises, great mining projects, great enterprises for the development of the natural water power of the country, all threaded together in the personnel of a series of boards of directors in a community of interests more formidable than any conceivable combination incorporated under the laws."

It would perhaps be too much to say that the Morgan firm is retreating before the storm of public disapproval. The step, however, is frankly credited to public sentiment. It may have been simply the giving up of some power in order to forestall more drastic action by the Government. But, in any case, it shows that the Interests are getting a wholesome fear of what the Government or people of the United States may do. Nor is this surprising when one remembers the low tariff and banking reform measures enacted in the teeth of the most dogged opposition by the combined forces of manufacturers, bankers and Big Business. The Canadian horizon can be searched in vain for any sign of the Special Interests trying to appease popular discontent on account of the abuses suffered. And instead of our Canadian Triple Alliance showing any anxiety over Government action, the cart is before the horse, and the only anxiety apparent is that of the Government to stand well with the Interests.

In reporting the Direct Legislation debate last week in the Manitoba Legislature, the Government organ says: "Mr. Taylor saw only evil if our Legislators were to be relegated to the status of rubber stamps to record merely the expressed will of the people." Apparently The Telegram prefers the present status of 98 per cent. of our politicians—rubber stamps to record the expressed will of the party caucus. This is so much more honorable and dignified than recording "merely the expressed will of the people," who have elected them to the office they now hold, whose interests they are supposed to represent and whose good money they put into their pockets to the extent of \$1,500 for five to six weeks' work.

The City of Winnipeg and the Manitoba Government were each very prompt a couple of weeks ago in offering \$5,000 for the finding of an escaped young criminal. Social workers among the foreigners of Winnipeg remember him as a bright lad. But society neglected him, and the motherless boy grew up without home life, education or other helpful influences. The result was that he developed into a dangerous criminal, who has already taken a fearful revenge on society by a life of crime, and by causing thousands of dollars to be spent on his capture and trial. How long before we realize as communities and as a nation that both money and human life would be saved by doing away with the economic and social conditions under which criminals are now allowed to grow up?

The only way to abolish trusts is to do away with the special privileges on which they flourish. For years anti-trust legislation was tried in vain against the Telegraph-Telephone trust of the United States. But no sooner did Postmaster-General Burleson recommend the taking over of these services by the government than the combine surrendered and announced its willingness to dissolve. Trusts do not fear the "Thou Shalt Nots" of the lawmakers. It is easy to get around or to walk over laws. What trusts fear is the abolition of the Special Privilege they enjoy and by virtue of which they now exact undue profits from the people.

The results of The Guide Referendum will be published in full next week. It was crowded out this week by the full report of the U.F.A. Convention.

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