

The Grain Growers' Guide

Winnipeg, Wednesday, June 5, 1918

The C.N.R. Award

The arbitration-board appointed to value the \$60,000,000 of common stock of the Canadian Northern taken over by the government has announced that it is worth \$10,800,000. When the board was appointed, the government, by order-in-council, fixed the maximum figure at \$10,000,000. The board has, apparently, not considered the government order-in-council, but has fixed what they believe to be the correct value of the stock. The members of the board were, Sir William Meredith, Judge Harris and Wallace Nesbitt, K.C., all men of outstanding ability.

The Drayton-Ackworth commission which investigated the Canadian railway situation a year or two ago, reported that the C.N.R. stock had no value as it was not represented by assets. The new board quite apparently disagrees with them. Evidently there is a certain amount of guesswork in the figures. The \$10,800,000 is the amount the government is now supposed to pay to Mackenzie and Mann in full and final settlement of their claims against the C.N.R. As was to be expected, Mackenzie and Mann are making a great outcry about not getting what they claim to be entitled to. The general public, however, will believe that this demonstration is merely for the benefit of the public.

Mackenzie and Mann naturally want to get every cent they can and they have never shown any disposition to be satisfied with the money they got from the public treasury. They have had money out of the public treasury by the barrel, by the wagon load and the carload, but nothing ever seemed to satisfy their appetite. They were always ready for more. Then they had such a winning way with them that they always got it, and finally, after all the millions they have had they are to get another \$10,000,000 in final payment. It is doubtful if they are entitled to a red cent. It is true they built a railroad, but anybody could do that if they had money enough. It is generally believed that in building the railroad they have done much to corrupt the public life of the country.

It is claimed on behalf of these railway knights that they never drew any salary from the C.N.R., nor received any financial return for all the efforts they expended in the building of that road. If this be true the public would like to know how these gentlemen secured the money to buy street railways, power plants, coal mines, iron mines and other enterprises, running up into the neighborhood of \$100,000,000. It is the wonder of the age. Canada can well afford to be relieved of the enterprise of these railway knights. It is the kind that does not tend to elevate the moral tone of the nation. They are mighty lucky if they get the \$10,000,000. In private they are no doubt very much tickled to get this vast sum.

Even if they never got anything else, \$10,000,000 is not bad payment for 22 years of their railroad career. Most of us would be satisfied with half of that amount and even less. But perhaps the price is not altogether too high if it keeps these gentlemen away from the public-treasury henceforth.

The Miller's Profits

The government has just made public the report of the investigation of the profits made by the big Canadian milling companies. The report has been in the hands of the

government for some time and why it was not given out while the house was in session is difficult to understand. The members of parliament quite reasonably might ask the government for some explanation on this point. The report shows that the profits of the big milling companies has been fabulous. Their profits were limited by the government to 25 cents per barrel when wheat prices were fixed.

On another page of this issue is published a summary of the report showing the profits made by the individual companies. Even after allowing for their war tax their profits have been greater, and in some cases double and treble what they were before the war. The 25 cents per barrel profit fixed by the government has been a gold mine for the big milling companies, while affording losses through ample profits for the smaller companies. It is stated that a reduction of the 25 cents say to 15 cents a barrel or even 10 cents, would make practically no difference in the price of bread, while it would cripple if not ruin some of the smaller mills. The government, it is announced, will increase the tax on the profits of the mills. Public opinion will certainly demand this.

There is no reason why the flour mills or any other institutions should be permitted to make huge profits out of the war. The suggestion that the profits of the mills should be limited to 11 per cent., as was done with the packers, would be a drastic way of handling it. On general principles it would seem better to make a heavily graduated tax on the profits, so that the bigger the profits the larger slice would go into the federal treasury. No person wants to kill off any necessary industry and certainly not the milling companies which are one of our most important manufacturing institutions. But their profits must be cut down to a reasonable basis, and the best way of doing it is to tax them in proportion to their profits.

We are building up an enormous war debt and the only way to meet it is to tax every person and every institution who can afford to pay taxes. The government has announced its intention of putting a stiff tax on miller's profits and public opinion will be highly favorable to such action. The announcement of the government scheme will be eagerly awaited.

Thy Brother's Keeper

Though unsung and unspoken and little known a great irresistible force is constantly turning more easily the wheels of our farmers' organizations. It is what Shakespeare calls the "milk of human kindness." In these days of grim reality and materialism sentiment is too often at a discount. But 'tis love that makes the world go round" and in addition to economic, social and political reform agitation, brotherly love among the farmers' organizations gives many a lift on their way. Each organization can be a great community pilot and safeguard for every individual in the neighborhood. In scores of cases they are too. But no publicity campaign scatters the news of their acts of kindness to the four winds. The support of the organization given to the individual in his misfortune is an unique work that will bear a rich harvest. Every member of an organization, and especially the organization as a whole, is a "brother's keeper."

Recently an incident occurred that beautifully illustrates the power and value of this

phase of the association's work. A farmer was unable to make a payment on his tractor, though with abundant assets. The machine company refused an extension of time. They served notice that if payment were not forthcoming they would take the engine. The story of his plight reached the ears of some of the directors of his local. They appointed a committee to investigate and to interview the machine company regarding the matter. The committee told the machine company that it could either extend their neighbor's time or take the local's cheque in full payment. "But," they added, "if you take our cheque you may not sell any more machinery in this neighborhood." The machine company immediately gave an extension of time.

Some years ago in Manitoba a farmer's barn was burned to the ground at a time well on in seeding. He lost barn, horses, stock, and feed. His seed grain was in the granary and his land was prepared. His neighbors to a man turned out with their outfits and in the first day by combined effort put in 150 acres of crop. The next day completed the operation. A little brotherly kindness that cost the neighbors nothing, saved the situation for a man whom misfortune had visited.

Another man was plainly up against it. His wife had been ill for months in the hospital. He could not get a housekeeper to look after his family of small children. Nor, indeed could he have afforded a housekeeper. A payment was due on a heavy mortgage. The company was threatening. While he was trying to persuade the mortgage company to give an extension of time a staggering bill from the doctor and hospital came in. His fellow members heard the circumstances. The executive interviewed the mortgage company with the result that an extension of time was given. They also backed his note to the hospital. The members of the Women's Section took the children, baked their neighbor's bread and put his house in order. It was not charity. Charity never stalked into the minds of either the benefactors or the beneficiary. They simply gave a helping hand until their friend was able to clear himself and to pay his obligations.

And so on we could give specific examples but these serve the purpose. Has your organization availed itself of every opportunity to do the little kindness that lies within its reach? Does it stand as a big brother to those persons whose problem economic reform cannot solve? And what of the value to the local itself of expending a little human sympathy? Perhaps there is no truer statement in the Book of Books than that it is more blessed to give than to receive. It is a satisfaction and happiness indescribable. Perhaps the local associations instanced might try to tell you what it has meant to them to do a little act of kindness, but you can really only know by yourself doing likewise. We commend the development of this phase of the association work to every local and every member.

Farmers Must Be Active

Some months ago a war-trade board was organized in Eastern Canada. It comprised largely of leading protected manufacturers. This board was to advise the government in trade matters relating to the war. At that time our trade with the United States was heavily against us and the rate of exchange in New York was about two per cent. The war trade board immediately rushed to the