

The Saturday Press and Prairie Farm

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NATIONAL SERVICE AND QUEBEC.

THE National Service cards are being distributed this week all over Canada and everyone is expected to fill them in. Many will not do so, because there is no penalty attached for those who do not. We have already said that the whole plan looks futile and a mere expedient which will take a lot of time and money without bringing effectual results; but it is the Government's request, and it is the duty of every one to obey it.

The two final questions on the list are as follows:

23. Would you be willing to change your present work for other necessary work at the same pay during the war?

24. Are you willing, if your railway fare is paid, to leave where you now live, and go to some other place in Canada to do such work?

Very few men can answer the above questions with a direct "Yes" or "No," yet there is only sufficient space left for the answer in that form. Most men, for example, would want to know what provision, if any, would be made for their families or those dependant on them; or would desire to qualify their answer by some explanation regarding their business affairs. Owing to this feeling of uncertainty, many will probably either leave those questions unanswered, or neglect to deal with the card in any way. It is unfortunate that the interrogatories have not been made a little clearer.

We are afraid that many are not taking the matter very seriously, and that the response will not be anything like so satisfactory as is anticipated. If the design is to stimulate recruiting, as we presume it is, the problem will still remain to be dealt with after this scheme has been tried out, and much valuable time will have been lost.

It seems to us that the Director General of National Service, Mr. Bennett, is himself largely responsible for the lack of seriousness with which the matter is being taken, and the perplexity regarding it. Speaking in Toronto, after his western tour, he said conscription would mean civil war.

"I say to you in all solemnity, standing here tonight, it is my profound conviction, from information I have been able to gather, that unless the people have one last great opportunity for voluntary service, with the issue fairly put before them, so sure as any measure of force or compulsion is introduced it will bring about the serious situation indicated," he said.

There is nothing at all said in the National Service cards about military duty, so this cannot be the "one last great opportunity for voluntary service" to which he refers; but recruiting officers in different parts of the country are speaking out plainly. Col. Williams, chief recruiting officer, in speaking at Hamilton, said that if the plans of the National Service Commission do not result in more recruits, some form of compulsion would be introduced. Other military men, speaking in different parts of the country, made similar threats.

The information gained by the National Service cards will probably be of some indirect value. It will give an idea, though an idea only, of the available man-power in the country; and the data secured may be

drawn upon later in such a re-adjustment of employment as will make conscription less oppressive, if it comes; but it will not get to the root of the matter. Sir Robert Borden, Mr. Bennett, and everyone else knows what the crux is. It is apparent at a glance from comparing the following statistics:

Number of Males Between the Ages of 18 and 45 In Canada

Province	Total	Canadian Born	British Born	Foreign Born
Pr. Edward Island	16,868	16,592	157	119
Nova Scotia	98,493	85,909	8,437	4,147
New Brunswick	68,710	64,188	2,371	2,151
Quebec	390,897	341,783	23,066	26,048
Ontario	582,897	410,896	106,997	64,353
Manitoba	122,762	49,868	39,806	33,088
Saskatchewan	158,907	61,193	38,871	58,843
Alberta	122,915	37,446	31,954	53,515
British Columbia	158,272	41,508	54,718	62,046

Number of Men Enlisted in Canada up to Oct. 31

London	30,504
Toronto	83,319
Kingston	39,172
Montreal	32,445
Quebec	7,462
Maritime Provinces	33,694
Manitoba and Saskatchewan	74,748
British Columbia	36,580
Alberta	33,671

This means that in Ontario and Manitoba-Saskatchewan one man out of every 3.8 has enlisted; in Alberta, one out of 3.7; in British Columbia, one out of 4.4; in the Maritime Provinces, one out of 5.5; and in Quebec, ONE OUT OF TEN. By far the greater proportion of the enlistments in Quebec have been among the English-speaking; all told, the French-speaking soldiers of that Province at the front number only about four thousand.

The Government does not need any Commission to get at the facts of the situation with regard to recruiting. The whole thing is before them, only too plainly. Canada is, presumably, in a state of war; but Henri Bourassa is permitted to go up and down among the simple people of Quebec, preaching treason, and the Government has not the courage to put an end to it. "When the Empire is at war, Canada is at war"—all but Bourassa and his bob-tail following; and apparently Bourassa is more powerful than the Government.

BIG PROJECTS

PROFESSOR McLaurin of the University of Saskatchewan is doing good work in directing public attention in a striking manner to our vast, undeveloped resources. In dealing with the lignite coal deposits, as he does in an article contributed to this paper, he touches upon a subject of the most vital interest to every individual in Saskatchewan. Cheap heat is undoubtedly the one commodity which all would agree upon as being our greatest requirement; and when a chemist of Professor McLaurin's standing points out with what comparative ease it may be obtained, it seems to us that the securing and development of our coal deposits for the benefit of the public is a matter which should be no longer delayed. If delay is permitted, we shall find very soon that they will be no longer available for the public benefit, but will have passed into private control.

It would be rather a big undertaking to exploit the lignite coal deposits in the public interest; but one good thing which the war has done is to remove the fear of big expenditures. Canada is expending a million dollars a day on the war—an absolutely non-productive project, though a very necessary one—and could easily spend as much more,

if necessary. It should be no harder to secure money to develop our resources—we do not mean to exploit them for speculators—than to blow away in cartridges.

An example of the changed way in which nations are coming to look upon such projects is furnished by little Holland. It is proposed to drain the Zuider Zee for the purpose of re-claiming a half a million acres. The estimated cost is over 44 million dollars. A similar plan was under consideration some years ago, but the cost was then considered prohibitive. Since the Kaiser took up old Oom Paul Kruger's role of staggering humanity, ideas of costs and expenditures have changed rapidly.

The difficulty about the lignite coal areas and other of the natural resources of Saskatchewan, is the dead-lock between the Dominion and Provincial Governments regarding their control. Premier Borden made a definite promise to Saskatchewan people that if elected he would restore control of them to the Province, from which it should never have passed. After a lapse of five years, that promise still remains to be carried out. We are sometimes informed by our Conservative friends that the Dominion made a mental reservation in this form—"if you return representatives to support me in parliament."

The first step towards securing a development of our coal resources, then, would seem to be to settle the question of ownership between the Dominion and the Province.

A GREAT STORE

M R. J. F. CAIRNS recently gave some figures regarding the business of his store during the past year, which are very striking, and show the value of this establishment to a city like Saskatoon, as well as to the whole district. During 1916 he paid out nearly a quarter of a million dollars in cash for goods to local wholesalers, and to the farmers of this district for produce, in addition to nearly one hundred and fifty thousand dollars for wages, light, power, heat, taxes, advertising, etc. This is far from being the total expenditure of the business, but covers the larger items of a strictly local nature.

So far as the farmers end of it is concerned, Cairns' might really be called the Saskatoon Market, as it offers by far the largest single channel in Saskatoon for disposing of market produce at a good price. Cairns' has long been the trading centre for the city and district and continues to strengthen that position.

SASKATCHEWAN STANDS HIGH

SASKATCHEWAN is doing its duty nobly, not only in the way of providing recruits but in contributing to the different war funds as well. The following are the amounts received from the different Provinces for the Red Cross fund since the beginning of the war:

Alberta, \$83,860.39; Quebec, 103,439.20; Maritime Provinces, 106,569.79; Manitoba, \$180,908.75; Saskatchewan, \$257,702.29; Ontario, \$1,163,089.59.

Quebec stands second from the bottom, in proportion to population, it should be second from the top. From a racial standpoint, it should be at the very top, helping fellow-racialists of both French and English origin. We presume Dictator Bourassa has scruples about paying as well as fighting

MAK

MANY and varied being made ro with the raisin why? Is it not on showing up again in the as anything begins to one wants a slice? A this, we as a people and we feel more or the proper handling slice. Remember, of saying nothing about and wool prices. The they exist and in looki from different angles, likely that they will long after the cessati Europe. Appearances the sheep industry is boom such as it has before.

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