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The Grain Growers' Guide BOOK DEPARTMENT **Winnipeg, Man.**

Recent Manitoba Legislation

A Synopsis of the Legislation Passed during the Session just closed

Legislation enacted during the session of the Manitoba legislature, recently prorogued, included several measures of more than passing interest. Conspicuous in the long list of enactments were those which provided respectively for the establishment of a civil service commission and of government employment bureaus, the levying of new taxes and securing to married women a life interest in "the homestead."

Having suffered, in common with the remaining western provinces, a considerable loss of revenue through the elimination of the traffic in liquor, and facing demands for increased expenditure in several departments, not the least important of which are the augmented grants to be made to schools, the government was obliged to consider the imposition of new taxes. A levy of one mill will be made on all rateable property in the province; this tax is expected to yield a revenue of \$750,000. A tax will also be imposed on unoccupied rural lands. This tax will be a levy of one-half of one per cent. of the assessed value, with the provision that no land shall be taxed under the act at a rate higher than 20 cents per acre, and that, when the tax payable on any lot or fraction of a lot, or section of land, is less than \$1.00, the amount entered on the roll as payable shall be \$1.00. This tax is expected to yield a revenue of \$60,000.

Persons attending places of public amusement will be called upon to contribute to the general revenue. The tax will be one cent on an admission charge of ten cents; two cents up to 25 cents, and by an ascending scale up to 25 cents for an admission charge of \$2.50. The proportion of the levy is in each case approximately 10 per cent.

Municipalities were empowered to borrow an amount not exceeding \$60,000 for the purpose of furnishing seed grain to farmers and to those wives of soldiers who are managing farms in the absence of their husbands on active service. The municipality must itself purchase and distribute the grain and the quantity supplied to any individual must not exceed in value \$600.

Government Labor Bureaus

An act of far-reaching importance in

its effects upon the labor problem is that which provides for establishment of government employment bureaus. This measure is part of a Dominion-wide scheme, agreed upon at a recent conference in Ottawa of representatives of the federal and the several provincial governments. If similar action is taken by the remaining provinces, in accordance with the agreement reached, and if the work of the several provincial bureaus is intelligently co-ordinated through the central bureau to be established in Ottawa, machinery will have been set up which should make it possible for the government to ascertain at any time the labor needs and resources of any province. As a necessary part of the plan, the act provides for the closing of all private employment agencies. All farmers and other employers will register with the provincial bureaus, of which there will be one in Winnipeg and one in Brandon, with two or three offices at other points to meet seasonal needs.

There will be a permanent official, to be known as the superintendent of the employment bureau, assisted by an

advisory board, to be composed of four persons: the secretary of the provincial bureau of labor and three who will be selected respectively by the trades and labor council, the organized farmers and the employers of non-agricultural labor. This act will go into force on proclamation of the Lieutenant-Governor in Council.

Noxious Weeds Act Amended

Some important amendments were made to the Noxious Weeds Act. The provision of 1917, under which the expense incurred in cutting weeds was chargeable as a lien on the property, having precedence of all mortgages, was deleted, and the practice established by the act of 1916 again resorted to, so that in future such expenses will be charged as a tax on the property.

A new clause provides that any owner or person interested in land may serve notice on the secretary-treasurer of the municipality in which the land is situated, giving the name of the owner or agent, resident in the province, on whom notice may be served. The inspector can then take no action towards incurring the expense of cutting weeds until the owner or agent has been notified. Toad flax and annual sow thistle are now included by amendment in the weeds of Class One. The penalty for failure to cut weeds after notice has

been served, which was formerly a fine of \$15 for the first offence, will now be not less than \$15 nor more than \$50.

An amendment to the Animals Purchase Act provides that, after a community has been formed for the purpose of the act, the organization shall not be, as in the past, closed to others, but that additions may be made to the membership from time to time. The Sheep Protection Act was amended so as to establish the obligation of the municipality to reimburse the owner of sheep killed, or injured by a dog whose owner cannot be identified. An amendment made to the Horse Breeders Act has for its object the protection of the stallion owner in that every colt will now have against it an automatic lien until service fees have been paid. It is worthy of note also that inspectors under the Horse Breeders Act are now empowered, and it becomes their duty under the act, to prosecute all violations of the act.

Legislation Affecting Women

A life interest in the husband's holding is secured to the married women of the province by the new Power Law. In the case of farm women the interest extends to 320 acres, and of city dwellers to the home site, not exceeding six lots. This interest in what is termed the "homestead" is secured by the provision that it shall not be sold or transferred by the husband without the consent of the wife. No husband can dispose of his property by will without leaving at least one-third of his whole estate to his wife. The protection of marriage settlements is also provided for by a clause included in the act. The act will come into force on proclamation and it is understood that the date decided upon is September 1.

An amendment made to the Public Schools Act will also be of interest to women. It declares that the wife, or husband, of any qualified ratepayer in any town, village, or rural district, shall be eligible to vote for or to be elected to the office of school trustee. The amendment recognizes the principle of a community of interest between husband and wife in the ownership of the homestead, in so far as concerns the franchise under the Public Schools Act, except in the cities, where there are many women qualified in their own right. Many women throughout the province have always been eligible to vote for, or to be elected, school trus-



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