

The Grain Growers' Guide

Winnipeg, Wednesday, November 4th, 1914

BELGIAN RELIEF FUND

We have received several contributions from our readers for the Belgian Relief Fund. News which comes to hand daily shows the Belgians to be suffering very severely. Out of a population of a little more than 7,000,000 in that country, already 2,000,000 have fled to Holland and England for safety, and families have been separated which will never again be brought together. There are a great many children who have lost their parents and will have to be cared for until they reach the age to which they can care for themselves. These Belgian sufferers, both in their own land and in other lands to which they have fled, are worthy of all the assistance we can give them. We shall be pleased to receive donations from any of our readers to this fund, and will forward the same to the British Government to be used in the best manner for the purpose for which it is intended. As we stated before in The Guide, we do not wish to interfere with any of the other funds that are being raised, but merely afford this opportunity to those who feel they can do something more to help those who are innocent sufferers in the great war now raging in Europe. On another page in this issue the donations received up until Monday of this week are acknowledged, and further acknowledgements will be made every week as other donations come to hand.

THE PROPER SPIRIT

The farmers around Oak Lake, Manitoba, have decided to contribute a car load of flour to the Prince of Wales' fund for the relief of distress in Great Britain due to the war. By an arrangement with their local mill these farmers are hauling in their grain on November 7, having it ground and devoting the proceeds to the relief of suffering. The action of the Oak Lake farmers is in keeping with the spirit manifested everywhere by the farmers throughout Western Canada. Out of whatever they have, whether it be much or little, they are glad to devote something to the aid of those who are without means of support, for various reasons, on account of the war.

EFFECT OF WAR ON CANADA

The people of Canada have great cause for thankfulness that this country is located far from the field of the great world struggle now devastating Europe. It is possible, but not probable, that the sound of guns in battle will be heard in Canada during the present war. But while this is true, Canada is a party in the war and in self-defense, as well as for the cause of democracy, we must play our part to the best of our ability to bring the war to a successful termination. Canadian soldiers are being sent to the front as fast as they can be trained and equipped, and it is highly probable that before the war is over there will be from 150,000 to 200,000 Canadian soldiers under arms. The cost to the Canadian taxpayers will be enormous, but it will be borne without complaint. Another duty which falls upon the Canadian people is to keep business running as usual and prepare for the return of peace. A careful review of the

situation leads us to believe that Canada as a whole will emerge from the war with less damage and with better prospects for the future than any other nation now engaged in the struggle. Our loss of life will probably be heavy, but our homes will not be destroyed, and, tho Canada will be deep in mourning from shore to shore, it is part of the price we must pay. Materially, however, Canada will have an advantage over the other warring nations. The food shortage in Europe has already given our farmers a very high price for their wheat, and every prospect points to continued high prices for at least one more crop and possibly two. These prices will bring prosperity to thousands of our farmers. Some of our manufacturing industries will suffer thru loss of export trade, and others will suffer because their source of raw material is closed by the war. On the other hand many of our industries will profit from new markets opened to them, which were formerly supplied from the factories in the war zone. Canadian industries generally will profit from the increased trade at home due to the general feeling that during this crisis it is necessary to support our own industries as much as possible. In every city in Canada today there are large numbers of factory hands out of employment, and this large army of unemployed not only places the burden of their support upon the Canadian people but also creates other problems which seriously menace our country. If we can keep our factories running and provide work for these people it will vastly strengthen our position at the close of the war.

SUCCESSFUL PUBLIC OWNERSHIP

A very interesting and instructive example of public ownership of public utilities is provided by the Winnipeg City Light and Power Department, which recently completed three years' operation. Winnipeg has \$6,750,000 invested in the enterprise, and the balance sheet shows that after paying operating expenses and all fixed charges, including interest on the capital employed, the plant made a profit in the last fiscal year, ending April 30, 1914, of over \$60,000. During the first two years, when the business done by the department was comparatively small, there naturally were losses, but the profit of last year has reduced the net deficit to \$82,000 which it is expected will shortly be wiped out. The gain to the people of Winnipeg, however, is by no means indicated by the balance sheet of the department. Before the installation of municipal hydro-electric power in Winnipeg, the lighting and electrical power business of the city was a monopoly in the hands of the Street Railway Company, a Mackenzie and Mann concern, and the charge for light was 10 cents per unit. The city council, with foresight which has been amply justified, put the rate for light down to 3 cents, and the company immediately followed suit. A similar reduction was made in the cost of current for power and heating purposes, and it is estimated that the people of Winnipeg save \$1,500,000 a year thru the establishment and operation of the City Light and Power Plant. The private company, by the way, is still doing business also, giving better service than in its monopoly days and paying satisfactory dividends. An increasing number of citizens, however, are buying their light and power from their own plant, realizing, as the city council has been careful to impress upon them,

that at the low rate charged it was only possible to make the enterprise a success by finding a market for a large proportion of the maximum output of the plant. The city council of Winnipeg has made a success of the light and power scheme by applying business principles to a business proposition. The people of Winnipeg having so much at stake, realize that they are shareholders in the enterprise, whether they are customers or not, and public opinion demands and secures the same efficiency and economy in the City Light and Power Department as is found in private corporations engaged in a similar business. The one great difference between this municipal enterprise and an ordinary private company is that the one is conducted for the purpose of giving the people the best possible service at the lowest possible cost, while the other is conducted for the purpose of making as much profit as possible for the shareholders. Winnipeg is saving \$1,500,000 a year thru publicly owned light and power. What could Canada do by public ownership of railways, managed with equal efficiency?

AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION

Data recently collected by the New York state school of agriculture, at Alfred, N.Y., which is a state supported secondary school of agriculture, shows that the average salary received by its students the first year after graduation is \$350 per year more than they were earning or were capable of earning when they entered. This is equivalent to five per cent. interest on \$7,000. In other words, their training is worth to them at least \$7,000. The course at this school is of but two years' duration or approximately 430 working days. Dividing \$7,000 by 430 we have \$16.27. That is, the training received is worth to them \$16.27 for every day they spent in the school. It is apparent that it will pay the young man who expects to become a farmer to secure as much education as possible. And, if possible, a part of this education should be along technical agricultural lines.

SELLING FOR FUTURE DELIVERY

We have had reports regarding quite a number of farmers in the West who, in July, with prospects of a good crop contracted with their local grain dealers to deliver their wheat in October at from 70 to 80 cents per bushel. Weather conditions changed, however, and a short crop was the result. These farmers had not the grain to deliver, and in the meantime the war broke out, prices went up, and they now are being called upon to deliver the wheat they contracted to deliver, and at the price stated in the contract. This season illustrates some of the dangers which farmers face in contracting to sell their wheat for future delivery before it has been harvested. In the cases we have mentioned, if the price had dropped five cents per bushel the farmers would easily have been able to purchase enough grain to fill their contracts and the grain dealer would have been forced to accept it because he is licensed and bonded to fulfil his contracts. At the price contracted for the farmers, in such an event, even with their short crop, would make a profit on the deal. As it is, however, the farmers, who contracted at 70 or 80 cents, stand to lose from 20 to 25 cents per bus. Some have asked us whether they can be forced to fulfil their contracts at existing prices and suffer the loss it will mean to them. It seems only fair that the contract should work