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**Notes and Comments**

**Suit of Clothes \$800 With No Price Ceiling**

Last week we encountered a newspaper man who was totally opposed to the price ceiling in Canada, and we had quite an argument which ended in changing nobody's mind on the issue. There is an old saying, replete with country wisdom, that a dollar in your pocket is your best friend, and we firmly believe that to be true from experience.

One need only look at some countries where there are no price ceilings to see that the value of money has all but vanished. China has already experienced seven years of war in which the value of her money has fallen so low that plane-loads of currency have to be flown in, over the high hump of the Himalayas, to keep the wheels of industry, business, and war turning at all. Missionaries, loyally sticking to their posts, have been forced to sell even household goods to buy rice and other bare necessities of life. Rev. Howard Veals, writing to his sister in Canada, told of selling household and school supplies to keep from starvation. Among other prices he quoted was \$600 in Chinese money he received for a pair of used flannelette sheets. Another missionary recently returned told us that a 50 cent meal would cost about \$125 in Chinese funds, while a \$30 suit would bring between \$800 and \$900.

Although Rome was spared the horrors of bombardment, she has not escaped inflation and black markets as Canadian soldiers know to their cost. One lad wrote home that "soldiers in this area are being charged far too much. One old farm woman charged us 150 lire (about three dollars for two eggs, some chips and a slice of bread." According to the Italian edition of "The Maple Leaf," a front-line newspaper for the troops in Italy, "more than 150 shops were put out of bounds for Allied troops on account of skyrocketing prices."

Prices in Ireland have increased about 70 per cent since 1939. In Newfoundland a dollar will buy what ordinarily would have been 40 cents worth of food, groceries or services, and in India—land of gold and precious stones—it is estimated that prices have increased from 200 per cent to 300 per cent.

Iceland also feels the impact of war. From a little-known island lying well within the Arctic circle, it became suddenly a very important outpost of defence and with the coming of hundreds of troops, its cost of living spun a steep spiral and now stands at 257.3.

In Canada a dollar is still your best friend, and with the cost of living risen by only 18.1 per cent since the start of the war, it will still purchase a substantial amount of food, shelter, clothing and services.

**Weekly Papers and the War**  
(Globe and Mail)

The weekly newspapers of Canada are rendering a fine service in helping to maintain morale on the fighting front and at home. Perusal of town and village papers reveals an inspiring interest in the welfare of the armed forces. They are giving leadership in every direction—cigarets, socks and sweaters for the men who fight on land, on sea, and in the air; bundles for Britain, jam for British children, comforts for "bombed-outers." Steadily they support such worthy causes as the Kinsmen's Milk for Britain Fund, the Evening Telegram British War Victims' Fund, and the Queen's Canadian Fund.

It would take columns to tell of the valuable work which the rural press of Canada has done to stimulate recruiting, to raise money for comforts, to sell Victory bonds, and the like. They have kept up a sustained effort since the commencement of the war. Many a lad fighting in Italy or France or sailing in the corvettes which guard the precious argosies crossing the Atlantic could testify to the pleasure he has been given by letters and parcels which might never have been but for the promptings of the weekly editors. Some of these editors fought in the Great War. They know what a letter from home means to a lad in a far country.

Canada is indeed fortunate in possessing a weekly press which is capable of rendering great patriotic service at such a time.

**Pop it on the Beer, Too**

One thing the government overlooked when bringing down the budget will be apparent to a great many dregs at least. A big source of revenue was passed up when a tax on beer similar to the tax on soft drinks was not imposed. The man who drinks beer can just as well afford to pay an extra nickle as the kids who drink pop.

**How To Keep Good Men Out Of Parliament**

During the session of Parliament which has just closed the question of taxing members' indemnities was discussed. It was pointed out that under present tax schedules the \$4,000 indemnity was reduced to about \$2,800. Members pressed for some relief but Mr. Isley held his ground. Now Mr. King has promised that the matter will come up for consideration at the next session.

This question of indemnities is an important one. In the difficult days ahead Canada needs the ablest men possible in Parliament. The present indemnity paid members may be a definite hindrance to such men coming forward for public office. Some of them simply cannot afford to do so.

A member of Parliament is expected to live in Ottawa for a good portion of the year while maintaining his usual domicile in his own constituency. While in the capital his living expenses are necessarily high, but cabinet ministers salaries, we imagine, are higher than ordinary members since they are provided with secretarial help and free offices. Probably a little levelling up would be a good idea.



**A WEEKLY EDITOR LOOKS AT Ottawa**

Written specially for the weekly newspapers of Canada

By Jim Greenblatt

As a bit of vacation diet, it might be interesting this week to delve into some of the history of Canadian agriculture. I ran across some reference papers compiled by the Wartime Information Board at Ottawa which intrigued me, because like others we generally think of this industry in terms of wheat, cows and chickens, barns, chores, etc. Possibly few people in the rural and semi-rural areas ever think of agriculture except that it's here, but as a matter of fact there's romance attached to it, the romance of achievement. So here's something about it.

Look at it this way. At the last census in Canada the number of farms totalled 732,715, with a combined acreage of 175,000,000 acres. Well, in 1535, just 400 years ago—and that's really a short span in time—Jacques Cartier reported the Indians around Hochelaga, where Montreal now stands, were cultivating small patches of land for the production of maize. The Huron Indians, living in the area close to Lake Huron and Georgian Bay, were growing corn peas and beans when first visited by white men. Primitive as they were these were Canada's first organized agricultural ventures.

After the first French colonists came to Acadia, on Canada's eastern shore, Canadian agriculture went through several distinct stages. It developed slowly until 1750. Its earliest forms were noted in the Maritime Provinces and Quebec. Settlement became brisker in the next hundred years in Upper and Lower Canada and agriculture kept pace. Then came Confederation in 1867. Completion of the Canadian Pacific Railway in 1886 opened up Western Canada and development of agriculture moved swiftly, while that of eastern Canada went through a period of adjustment.

Now we jump backward again from our 732,715 farms of 1941 to the early Acadian era of 1671. That year the census showed only 441 Acadians having 429 arpents (an arpent equals 0.84 acre), under cultivation with 866 cattle, 497 sheep and 36 goats. The mighty development that has taken place in the three hundred years since that time is emphasized by the figures which show us that there were 8,833,700 head of cattle on Canadian farms on December 1, 1942 and sheep numbered 2,482,700.

In the lower St. Lawrence valley some attempt at agriculture appear to have begun as early as 1608 when Champlain, the founder of Quebec, came to the country. The first real farmer is said to have been Louis Hebert who started farming in 1617 on the site of what is now Quebec City. It was some time before the people of that day were able to become self-sufficient in food-stuffs.

It was the French who introduced agriculture in Upper Canada (Ontario), with the first settlement started by Frontenac at Kingston in 1671. Here again transportation

and communication hindered development and it moved along slowly, but it is interesting to know that by 1852 there were close to 100,000 farms in Ontario.

It was in the year 1812, not so long ago, that western Canada's agriculture history starts, with the Selkirk Red River Settlement in Manitoba. A little over a hundred years later western Canada produced in the 1942-43 crop years 9,400,000 bushels of flaxseed which is only one of the smaller products of its grain crops. The Selkirk settlers had a hard time, not only with the Indians, but also because of the rivalry between the Northwest Company and the Hudson's Bay Company. The population didn't increase fast and agricultural development was equally slow. However this changed—and quickly—once the Canadian Pacific Railway reached St. Boniface, opposite Winnipeg in 1878.

Settlers from eastern Canada and the United States flocked to the west, many of them bringing their stock and equipment, but to meet new soil and climate conditions it was necessary to change many farming practices. However it wasn't long before large farms—compared to the eastern conception—were built up. Wheat production for export became increasingly important. The history of agriculture in the west has been brief but solid, with many important developments, chief of which as everyone knows is the recent change over to mechanization.

That brings us across to the province which touches the Pacific ocean, British Columbia. Agriculture was started in the Fraser Lake district about 1810. Cultivated areas were of necessity small, and expansion was blocked by the rugged nature of the wooded country. The Hudson Bay Company maintained a number of farms in and around Fort Vancouver and on Vancouver Island in the early days. Then agriculture got a fillip, indirectly of course, from the Cariboo gold rush in the 1850's because produce had to be supplied to the camps. It was not until the 80's however, that commercial planting really started properly. Since then British Columbia has built up an enviable reputation for the production of apples and other fruits. Its scope can be gauged by the fact that when contracts were made up for 1943-44 to supply fresh apples to the United Kingdom, this province or the growers were able to supply 200,000 bushels.



**T. P. GALBRAITH**  
 Editor of The Advocate, Red Deer, Alta., was last week elected president of the Canadian Weekly Newspapers Association.

**CHRISTMAS GIFTS FOR OVERSEAS**

"Do not open until Christmas." That exciting phrase should soon be making its appearance on parcel mail despite the fact that many places in Canada are just recovering from the hottest spell on record. Postmaster General William P. Mulock advises that it is time to make plans for Christmas gift parcels to members of the Armed Forces Overseas. The Christmas mailing period this year is September 15 to October 25.

Naturally parcels sent to those serving in the more remote theatres of war should be sent the earliest. Suggested "deadline" mailing dates are: September 15—The far East, India, Burma, Ceylon, etc. October 5—The Middle East area—Egypt, Iran, Iraq, Syria, etc. October 10—Central Mediterranean Forces. October 25—The United Kingdom and France.



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