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DEPARTMENT UNDER FIRE.

The Greater Production Movement is severely handicapped in several particulars. The greater territory has not been plowed, as it could have been had some of the ginger which is now in evidence, been pumped into the masses last fall, and by the representatives of the government. Why was the organization of the resources of the provinces put off until March? Last year it was known to men in high places that the reserves of food from the preceding year were fast disappearing, that there would be little, if anything, left to carry over into 1917, and that something should be done to mobilize the food, or seed for food products, and nothing was done by the Department of Agriculture in Ontario.

The colloquy in the Commons between Mr. McCole, an agricultural representative from Kent, and Hon. Mr. Burrell, astonishes everyone. Mr. Burrell, during the recess, announced that Canada had a large surplus of potatoes, and when the farmer came to look for his supply a terrible scarcity was reported. Potatoes rose suddenly in cost from \$2 per bushel to \$4, \$5 and \$6. Minister Burrell caused a surprise by adding that when, in answer to his enquiries, in February last, he learned that there were over a million and a half bushels of potatoes, principally in Alberta, New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island, he advised the provincial governments to watch the situation and guard against shortage. And to think that, after this solemn warning, or admonition, the heads of the Department of Agriculture, of Ontario, dozed off and failed to wake up until a crisis was on, until the demand for supplies could not be met!

Nothing that has happened could damn the government and its mismanagement as this experience has done. Fancy men who are supposed to be leading in this business, who are supposed to keep themselves in touch with passing events, letting things drift and not having a word of explanation or apology. Sir Wm. Hearst may be disposed to place the blame upon his deputies or assistants, a host of them, but he cannot dodge his responsibilities in that way. He is minister of agriculture and his department has been found terribly deficient, and at such a time!

Soldier claims against the insurance companies and associations in 1916 call for a payment of \$4,560,938. Since the beginning of the war the outlay on this account has been over \$6,000,000.

STILL MARKING TIME.
The public statistics of the recruiting, especially in connection with the defence forces, are very discouraging. There are more officers than men in the records, and this suggests that the expense of regimental staffs is altogether out of proportion to the work which has been accomplished. The exhibit is against the staff in spite of the fact, probably, that its members may have done their best under the circumstances. They cannot succeed, because the plan of the militia department has failed to attract men to the ranks.

The officer who worked out the details, and expected prolific results. Col. Mewburn, has resigned. Following this incident comes the clamor for conscription, or selective draft, which the American government has adopted. But the admini-

stration at Ottawa has not of late considered the subject, and it may not be disposed of until the return of Sir Robert Borden from England. The difference between conditions in the United States, and Canada, is purely political. One remembers what occurred in the presidential campaign. Mr. Wilson, a candidate, preached peace. He claimed credit, and got it, for keeping the country out of the war.

With the election over the outlook changed. Mr. Wilson was freer to act. Under certain provocations from the Germans he had no hesitation in acting, with the result that the United States is in the war, and with an activity that is most surprising. One reason for an election in Canada is that the department which is conducting the war would be able to do that which it cannot assume to do at present without timidity. The days for marking time would be over.

The nationalization of railways cannot be dealt with at the present session of parliament. The commission which considered the subject has not saved the government from embarrassment, but rushed the government into it. In other words, the commission has acted too quickly.

CONFERRING LARGE POWERS.

The railway commission was a wise and practical creation. It was designed—and it has been true to its design—to relieve unpleasant conditions promptly. It was to be the people's court, where all ceremony would be laid aside, where men with a grievance could ask for and receive redress. The commission has large powers now, all that it really can desire and fairly exercise. But parliament is willing to give it more, not because this is necessary, but because it is not willing to deal with some questions that come before it. There has been a rare duel, for instance, between the C.N.R. and the Hydro-Electric Commission, with regard to certain routes in the western part of the province which it is proposed to parallel with steam and electric railways. Appeals have been made to the railway committee without result. There has been no decision that can settle the controversy. Now parliament proposes to give the railway commission the right to refuse privileges or concessions which it cannot, or will not, refuse itself. The matter came before the railway committee for consideration. It will be interesting to see in what way the commission will be given the power to deal with certain cases without appearing to rob parliament of the responsibility that properly belongs to it.

EDITORIAL NOTES.

The most acceptable present to a friend these days is a peck of Grech Mountain potatoes. Nothing is more precious.

Parliament has discussed, academically, proportional representation, but without giving any action which would give effect to its views.

Senator Richardson is a busy man, hunting up seed for the city and county and for Leeds and Hastings. He is one of the Resources Committee who is doing things.

The man who, for any purpose, would start a canard to worry and distress the people—a canard about the loss of a steamship and its passengers—ought to be hung up on the nearest lamp post as a public example.

When the United States wants a man it commandeers him. Even the great Schwab, whose iron and steel interests absorb so much of his time, has been called off to Washington for consultation with the government, and he has gone without hesitation.

All any distinguished convict has to do, as indicated in the Kelly case, is to hire a doctor and a lawyer, and prove that he is not able, physically, to wear prison clothes, eat prison food, and suffer prison hair cuts. The thing is easy when one has money.

In Toronto the faculty for organization is being rapidly developed. The insurance men, the public and Sunday school children, the teachers, the clerks and others, are being grouped for work in gardening and farming during the summer. The plan is to make every one who can help in greater production.

CANADA'S PLANS
VERY DEFECTIVE

The belief is common that the defence force is intended, merely as a training school for overseas recruits and that after the members of the force have been in training some time they will not be averse to going overseas. Well, it is possible that some can be lured into service that way; but such a way is objectionable because it is not honest and above-board. It savors too much of trickiness, and the majority of soldiers in training would be sure to resent it. The only fair, manly, honorable way to get reinforcements for our divisions at the front is the resort to

the selective draft. Fortunately for the United States, President Wilson has had the sagacity and courage to realize the fact and to urge such a policy on congress, and congress has been wise enough to act in accordance with the president's advice. After thirteen months of war, the Canadian government is still too timorous to do its duty and act as the military needs of the country demand.

GOVERNMENT CAN'T
FOOL THE PEOPLE

Weekly Sun Toronto.
If the government sought political advantage in an approaching election, by taking the duty off wheat and flour, loss of the advantage is threatened by the claim of the Liberals that free wheat and flour are only temporarily assured. Reciprocity in wheat, it is claimed, rests not on the solemn assurance of an act or resolution of parliament but on an order in council, which may be repealed after the election or, if not repealed, will become of no effect, when the War Measures Act, by virtue of which the order was made, ceases to operate. Conflicting opinions of lawyers will not settle the matter. It is pretty clear that, if the government is not to be in a worse way than it would have been had it done nothing, it must put a bill through parliament.

G. E. Moore has disposed of his drug business in Carleton Place to W. P. Pattie, a graduate of the same shop, who will continue the business. Mr. Moore will go to Smith's Falls, where he has another store.

Random Reels

"Of Shoes and Ships and Sealing Wax, of Cabbages and Kings."

THE ELECTRIC WASHER

The electric washer is an ingenious device which was invented so that husbands could procure something to eat on Monday as well as other days of the week. Prior to this discovery, thousands of stout, voracious American husbands refused to affiliate with the wash-day dinner at home for fear of being permanently disabled in the alimentary canal by housewives' displays. This was a simple process and requires no mental effort whatever, except at the end of the month, when it is necessary to climb a stepladder and read the meter. Many people have been severely injured by falling off the step-

ladder after taking one glance at the meter, but the majority of patrons prefer to trust to the mercy of some calloused representative of the electric light company who is an expert in mental arithmetic.

Perhaps the greatest advantage in favor of the electric washer is that it has forever done away with that popular form of entertainment known as the straddle in the back. This was used by beating the family wash with the bare fists against a corrugated rubber board at an average rate of 2,400 revolutions per minute, and resulted in covering the rubee with perspiration and lint. Now, however, all that a woman has to do is to turn the washer loose and sit down with a light heart and some lighter reading and wait for the machine to deliver the finished product, ready to be strung in all its tempting proportions on the back porch.

The electric washer has done more to make the average woman contented with her home and what she received at the marriage altar than any other device of the age except the electric brougham. If there were more electric washers in our homes there would be fewer divorce actions and considerably less indigestion.

Rippling Rhymes

THE GIANT

You have had a lot of woe, Kaiser Bill; and a lot more you will know, Kaiser Bill; for the giant of the West straps his harness on his breast, and will knock you from your seat, Kaiser Bill. Patient was the Kaiser Bill, hoping that a ray of sense would pervade your cranium dense, that you'd let up your offence, Kaiser Bill; and you tweaked the giant's nose, Kaiser Bill; and now you see the giant rise, with the war light in his eyes, and he'll soak your Prussian guys, Kaiser Bill. You're exhausted by the strain, Kaiser Bill; full of weariness and pain, Kaiser Bill; you are going stony broke, and your folks will bear the yoke of taxation till they croak, Kaiser Bill. You have strained your last resource, Kaiser Bill, in your work that's rude and coarse, Kaiser Bill; dotards who are bent and gray, children from their schoolyard play, you are dragging to the fray, Kaiser Bill. But the giant of the West, Kaiser Bill, has an ample treasure chest, Kaiser Bill; tortured by no bloody thirst, by no war lord visions cruel, he will chop you into wurst, Kaiser Bill.

—WALT MASON.

THINGS THAT NEVER HAPPEN
By GENE BYRNES



Gene Byrnes

WHY RECRUITING
HAS BEEN KILLED

It was announced that Canada would raise 500,000 men. Three months later, according to the statement of the man who was Minister of Militia at the time, orders were given that recruiting was not to be pressed, as the manufacturers were objecting to their workmen being taken from them. The Prime Minister has denied issuing such orders. His Minister of Militia at the time says that such orders were given, and everybody knows that recruiting at that time was checked in full stride. At first employees used to offer to pay full wages or half-wages to any employee who would enlist. They used to enter their works and make recruiting speeches. When it seemed that the war would ruin industry, the owners of the industries used every influence to have armies raised, and shunned no sacrifice. This soon changed. Business boomed and recruiting declined. Men were sacrificing their lives in the war, but the Government could never bring itself to require that business and capital should sacrifice themselves as men were doing. There must be no interference with the makers of money. No questions are asked as to how money is made in these war days. There is no supervision of industrial activities, or the use to which labor, material, and resources are put.

Wilson McCue is at present confined to his home in Smith's Falls with an attack of typhoid.

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