

ABOUT THE PRAIRIES

JACK CANUCK'S 1,000-MILE-LONG FARM.

A Part of Our Dominion That Has Been Over-exploited, But Which Can Be the "Granary of the World" - It Is Not Beautiful But Contains Riches.

ALPHONSE KARR, that delightful master of irony and sentiment, used to say of the little Mediterranean town where he wintered that it was the procession to the Riviera. In the same way Port Arthur of the mighty grain elevators is the procession to the Canadian prairies, or John Canuck's thousand-mile-long farm. The West sends to this treasure house its golden grain, and the grim walls and bastions of these monster structures swallow whole trainloads of the golden harvest. Dust rises in clouds through iron gratings. Big wooden frames, studded with rollers, shed wheat like molten gold. Trays, on which the grain keeps up a wild jig, move ecstatically to and fro to cleanse it of all impurities.

For countless miles beyond stretches the prairie on its long journey to the setting sun. The road that threads it is lined by a strip of wire fence, under which the defiant prairie grass creeps into the roadway and cheerfully sprouts all over it. The ground in the offing rises and falls in huge, faintly rounded undulations, narrowing one's horizon down sometimes to the limits of a ten-acre field, or widening it to infinitude. At times, limp wire, twisted into the travesty of a gate, swings a thin thread of prohibition across one's path. In places, however, the road expands into a broad, field-fringed highway, leaping straight as an arrow across the illimitable plain. Unconcerned as to the town, farmer or the humble homesteader, housed in his lonely shack by the ploughed field, it seems conscious of being some harbinger of empire, a link in the chain of highways with which Britain has sought to belt the world. A hundred or more feet wide, neither settlement nor town can stop it, as, bursting with space and dominion, it careers through the heart of a town. But at last it comes to a halt when its fortunes are temporarily halted by the base and the glory of the prairie, gumbo mud!

Gumbo, black, sticky, unfathomable! Gumbo of the stored-up wealth, gumbo that will grow anything and go on growing it for years and years without rest or ceasing or fertilizer! Gumbo of which the illuminating story goes that a head was seen moving along the highway, just above the level of the mud. An innocent "newcomer," astonished by this extraordinary spectacle, demand-

ed of the head "what I was going, only to receive the somewhat bored explanation: "Can't you see, I'm riding horseback to Winnipeg?"

Land values have gone up by leaps and bounds since the exhilarating days when the prairie was opened out for the citizens that were not, and the town of canvas sprang up in a night. To-day, the comfortable brick residences and the trim garden dominate cities like Winnipeg. They seem to have been consciously built for a future of which the present has not got the measure. The streets are wide and smooth, and the broad avenues are boulevarded with rows of trees. There are no mean thoroughfares, and soon there will be no such things as a shanty amid the palatial hotels and Government buildings.

Outside the town, on the open prairie, where the gumbo may be remorselessly tuck, wheat as far as the eye can see! Wheat that seems to march forever and ever from the dawn to the land of the golden sunset. Nearby, perhaps, is a tangle of alkali outcroppings, that cause the earth around a small pond or "sloo" to glisten white in the tempered sun. At one moment one congratulates himself on the dryness of the region, at another one is splashed from waist to foot by the generous prairie mud. Now and again there are patches of virgin prairie, dotted with bushes of the barberry kind and carpeted with the ever rarer prairie grass, through which run the tracks of wheels marking the typical, neglected trail of the pioneer. Crossing it at right angles, the observant eye may catch sight of that wonder of wonders, the buffalo "trace," a dark brown, narrow, beaten path along which the buffalo marched in single file from "wallow" to grazing ground.

But it is the primitive trail that is the fascination, the glory of the prairie. Sometimes it runs into the stubble or takes a peep into the back door of the lonely homesteader. But always it makes its impression on the imagination, lifting a man above any littleness that may be clinging to him. For it is the virgin path along which the coureur de bois gaily took his way and which the pioneer christened by toll. Gambling gophers scamper on every side to their holes by the burrowing badger, prairie chickens rise with a wry sound of their wings or run into cover of a dell, a coyote skulks along in the mid-distance, and a porcupine waddles along the trail in search of his quarters for the night.

At last the march of the prairies is at an end. The indigo ramparts of the Rockies impose their will. For all those thousand miles there has been little but the gold of the wheat, the silver of the prairies, and the wondrous rise of the ever flanking hills. Hardly a moment more, and the transformation will come. The prairie themselves will narrow and focus upon the black, forbidding passes to the higher plateaus, leaving behind them that unforgettable panorama of farm and ranch, but and the "sloo," the gopher and "chicken," which make up the "granary of the world."

FORTUNATE PRISONERS

GERMANS IN FRANCE ARE KINDLY TREATED.

They Fare Better than the Teutonic Civilians at Home, and Would Be Happier Still if Their Government Had Not Il-treated the Allies in Their Prison Camps.

A SEARCHING investigation of conditions among the German prisoners in France is manifestly impossible for one who hopes to do anything else during the period of the war. The 200,000 or more Germans and Austrians held prisoners by the French are scattered all over the country, from the lines to the Midi. Also, they are arranged, to a great extent, in small groups, sometimes of only five or ten men. For civilians transportation is difficult, and especially in winter. As a matter of fact, a search investigation would take a man furnished with an automobile with unlimited petrol, and with all special papers, from six months to a year. Such conditions are fulfilled for the investigators of the Swiss Embassy, who look after the prisoners on behalf of Germany, and the work keeps two or three men continually busy.

Unable, for lack of time, to make an investigation of this kind, I have chosen the next best course. Provided with a blanket order from the Swiss Ministry of War—an order virtually permitting me to visit any camp at any time—I have looked into five of the larger camps in three main districts and into several of the smaller ones. In every case but one I made these visits without previous warning of my coming, in order to see the prisoners, not when they were arranged for visitors, but in their ordinary routine.

The number of inmates found among 200,000 prisoners, most of them conscripted from civilian life at the beginning of the war, is of course almost infinite. The mechanics among them are in great demand. Both a military measure and to maintain business, the railroads of France must be kept running. Owing to the demand for skilled labor in munition works, the railroad shops are constantly short of expert mechanics to make repairs. The men in charge of German prisoners who follow conventional channels in peace time have for the greater part been turned over to the railroads, where they work in the shops beside native workmen and under French foremen. Next greatest demand, is the demand for carpenters, they being needed for temporary camps, for all kinds of war uses, which dot the face of France just now. Shoemakers and tailors, turned up in the general combing out of the prisoners, are set to repairing clothes and boots, both for their fellow prisoners and for the military. Bakers are let out to the military and civilian bakeries; butchers go to the abattoirs—and so on through a great number of useful trades.

So far as possible, prisoners are given the same hours of labor as civilian workmen. Since the military labor unions have patriotically relaxed their rules in response to the common emergency, and the hours of labor run from nine to ten—nine and one-half is probably about the average. And that is exactly the average for some five or six thousand prisoners, whom I have seen working at unloading vessels and trains, in the railroad shops or in factories. Usually they start to work at 7 o'clock and return at 6, with an hour and a half for luncheon. In the dead of winter, when dark sets in early, they usually knocked off work at 5 o'clock, making their hours for that period about eight and one-half.

Now we come to the more important primitive needs—shelter, clothing and food. Let us take them in order. The five large camps, which I visited house each between 750 and 1,500 prisoners. In construction all are monotonously alike. A double barbed wire entanglement, electrically charged, surrounds a block—a hollow square of one-story buildings, wooden but substantial. They were all erected, in the early days of the war, by the first batches of German prisoners. These houses are water tight and well lighted—by day with windows and by night with electricity. They afford, in fact, about the same accommodations as the best barracks for our American soldiers during their training period. Indeed, the German prisoner has rather the better of this arrangement, for while our boys were stationed in one of the coldest parts of France, most of the Germans live further south, where the climate is milder. In only one item is the comparison unfavorable to the prison camp.

When the German is taken prisoner he has, of course, a uniform. This, after it has been fumigated and cleaned, serves for fatigue clothing, worn on Sundays and days off, during his term of imprisonment.

While the custom varies according to the situation in the various districts, as a rule the prisoners wear, for working clothes, the worn-out uniforms of French soldiers. These, after proper fumigation and cleaning, are repaired by prison tailors and dyed apple green to make them conspicuous as the garments of prisoners. The tunics and overcoats are stenciled on the breast with the letters "P.G." (standing for prisoner de guerre). It follows, therefore, that in the matter of comfort the Germans are clothed, so far as outer garments go, in exactly the same fashion as the French soldier.

Finally, comes the vital, all important question of food.

In the beginning the French adopted the rule of giving prisoners exactly the same rations as their own people got on active service. The

French are an economical people. Though they insist on good cooking they eat less, in bulk, than the British, the Germans or the Americans. So this ration is slightly smaller than the liberal allowance of the American or British soldier. Still, it is enough. Later in the game it was established that French prisoners in Germany were not getting the same treatment; that, in fact, they received far less food than the German reservists or idle troops. The French maintain that their only way of protecting comrades in German hands is to take reprisals, and to threaten more reprisals, against the prisoners which they hold. The Germans cut down the meat ration for French prisoners to 86 grams a day. The French at the time were giving their German captives 250 grams a day.

When, after representations through neutral channels, the French failed to get any adjustment of this matter they adopted the reprisal policy and cut down the ration for German prisoners to 86 grams. As things have finally worked out, the French have adopted, in this item, the threefold principle, which is known as "favorable." It is for Austrians forcibly mobilized in the German army, for the Czechs among the Austrian prisoners, and in general for the members of subject races fighting for the Central Powers against their will. They receive 300 grams a day. The "ordinary" regimen is the one followed at the beginning of the war, before the action of the Germans made reprisals necessary. Under it live the Austrian prisoners; since Austria is still giving prisoners the same rations as their own troops. It allows 250 grams of meat a day. Finally, as mentioned before, there is the "special" regime, made necessary by the conditions of the times for the Germans.

To summarize the discussion of the food situation: On his exact ration the German prisoner fares better at present than the free German workman at home. He receives 600 grams of bread a day; his brother in Germany receives just half of that allowance, and the quality is probably inferior. Last August and September the German allowance of food was an essential to life—was 50 or 60 grams a week. In that scientifically compounded if monotonous stew the German prisoner in France gets 20 grams of fat a day, or 140 a week. Even the scanty allowance of meat is far greater than the one accorded the working class of Germany. And above all that there are mitigations like the right of purchase in the canteen and the additional meals given to peasants or other employers. When this fact is taken into consideration they must fare nearly as well as the workman, well—as the laboring class of France in these tight times.—W.H. Lewis in the New York Times.

Khaki Dates Back to 1845. Khaki is said first to have been adopted in British India in 1848 by Sir Henry Burnett Lumsden, who had been asked to equip a corps of guides to collect intelligence and to conduct a British force on the northern frontier of India. The cloth was a light cotton drill, as suited the climate of Hindustan, and took its name from a native term "khaki," which means in the Urdu language "dusty," being derived from "khar" or dust. Thus the term applied to the color of the cloth rather than to the material. According to the dictionary, it is pronounced kaykee by the natives, but the English pronounced it khakee, and this is correct. But as cotton was not warm enough for all climates, uniforms of the same kind were made of serge, and the term khaki thus included woolens.

Because it was well fitted for the climate of Cuba and the Philippines, the United States chose khaki for the soldiers' uniforms during the Spanish-American War.

All typewriters are not types of feminine beauty. The Kaiser's Alphabet. A is for Absolut; that's how I rule. B is for Boivium—dense little fool! C is for Chivalry, a word I don't know. D is for Decalogue, likewise de trop. E is for Europe, a shambles I've made. F is for Frightfulness, my stock in trade. G is for God, He's a partner of mine. H for Humanity—not in my line. I is for Imperial, such as I am. J is for Justice, naught but a sham. K stands for Kultur, the world will have none of it. L is for Lunacy; I find much fun in it. M is for Murder, though wounded men are men. N is for Negotiat, favoring my own. O is for Oligarch, which describes me. P is for Power; I'd rule every sea. Q is for Quarry, the world is my prey. R is for Rapine—it's done every day. S is for Slavery—my will be done! T is for Teuton, though they call me Hun. U is for U-boats, which strike in the dark. V is for Viciousness—my, such a lark! W is for Wantonness; terror I've made. X is for Xenith, my favorite shade. Y is for Yoke, which all ethnic must wear. Z is for Zero, which eases my mind.

OUR DEFENSE In the spring we may be attacked at any moment. Toxic poisons pile up within us after a hard winter, and we feel "run-down," tired out, blue and discouraged. This is the time to put our house in order—cleanse the system and put fresh blood into our arteries. You can obtain an alternative extract from Blood root, Golden Seal, Stone and Queen's root, Cherry bark, rolled into a sugar-coated tablet, and sold by most druggists, in fifty-cent vials, as Dr. Pierce's Golden Medical Discovery. This blood tonic, in tablet or liquid form, is just what you need for "Spring Fever," for that lack of ambition. It will fill you full of vim, vigor and vitality.

LINDSAY, ONTARIO.—When my little daughter was five years old her liver was so sluggish that I feared she might be troubled with habitual constipation. I had read a great deal about Doctor Pierce's Golden Medical Discovery and decided to try it with her, giving her small doses. I found that it not only helped her liver but it also proved to be a splendid tonic, as well. I would advise mothers that I would advise mothers to give it to her again if she needed it, and I also advise mothers to recommend it to other mothers who have little ones who need a liver tonic and blood maker.—Mrs. M. J. Lindsay, Lindsay, Ont.

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ORIGIN OF OLD TERMS.

Gerrymandering Derived from Name of Massachusetts Governor.

"Bolshevism" as a term of reproach promises to break into the English language along with many other words never thought of before the war. Therefore the activities of the Kaiser's agent will probably be immortalized in future dictionaries, as were the acts of Judas and Simon Magus. Scattered through the English language are many words derived from proper names, some resulting from derogatory acts and some from just the opposite. "Gerrymander," comparatively recent coinage, is familiar to almost all New Yorkers as the name of the author of the state law which started one of the largest and most sensational political investigations ever held in the Empire State.

"Gerrymander" from the name of a Massachusetts governor, has been used for more than 100 years in the United States to mean the division of election districts in an unnatural and unfair way for political purposes. It has been proved, however, that Governor Gerry was not entitled to the dubious honor of having the word named after him. John Fiske gives the origin of gerrymander in this way:

"In 1812, when Gerry was governor of Massachusetts, the Republican (corresponding to the Democratic in modern nomenclature) Legislature redistributed the districts in such wise that the shapes of the towns forming a single district in Essex county gave to the district a somewhat dragonlike contour. This was indicated on a map of Massachusetts which Benjamin Russell, an ardent Federalist and editor of the Sentinel, hung up over the desk in his office. The celebrated painter Gilbert Stuart observing the uncouth figure, added with his pencil a head, wings and claws, and exclaimed: 'That will do for a salamander.' Better say a Gerrymander," growled the editor and the outlandish name, thus duly coined, soon came into general currency."

"Lynch" is said to be derived from a Virginian named Lynch who took the law into his own hands. Turks Burn Great Library. Authentic news has been received from Bagdad that the famous Oriental library, collected there by the Carmelite Fathers, was burned by the Turks. The Carmelite Fathers, it may be explained, went to Bagdad in the seventeenth century. The library consisted of more than 50,000 volumes on subjects connected with Mesopotamia, consisting in the main of French and English, but also some Italian and German works, and including many rare books. The most important part of the collection was the 2,732 Arabic manuscripts, most of them unique, which were bought in the course of last century at a cost of thousands of pounds. There were the works of Arabic scholars written between the seventh and eleventh centuries; most of them had not been printed and no other copy of them exists.

It is not entirely clear how the library was destroyed, but the following are the known facts: During the night of March 5-7 two Turkish soldiers who were billeted in the library in order, as was alleged, to take care of its contents, took books and manuscripts and used them as fuel for their fire. From this, it is believed, arose a conflagration which consumed the contents of the library. But there is some evidence that the destruction was intentional. On Feb. 25, Fakr Bey had been appointed by Khail Pasha, the Turkish commander, to be his aide-de-camp. Immediately on assuming this office he wrote a letter to Father Anastase Marie (a Carmelite monk and a native of Bagdad), who had some days earlier returned from internment, ordering him to return all the books which he had borrowed from the Carmelite library, and threatening to send him, in case of refusal, to the remotest spot of the Sublime Empire. Eight days after the borrowed books were returned no book was to be seen out of the library more than 20,000 volumes—all were gone.

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THREATEN REPRISALS. Two Russians For Every Austrian Prisoner Shot. Moscow, May 7.—Austrian military authorities have sent a wireless message to M. Tolstoyev, Foreign Minister, threatening to shoot two Russians for every Austrian prisoner shot.

In retaliation for the execution of any Austrian prisoner shot when trying to escape, reports of which have reached Vienna, the Foreign Minister denied the charge and demanded proof, saying that Austrians in Russia enjoy greater liberty than Russians in Austria and that the shooting of innocent Czechs was a crime.

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The Road of Much Travel! In order that war efforts may be unhampered, we have placed at the disposal of the military authorities for their exclusive use, certain of our long distance telephone circuits in various parts of the province. Meanwhile, we are hurrying necessary construction of additional facilities to keep up the quality of our long distance service. When you are obliged to wait for a connection, please do not overlook the fact that the war has made unprecedented demands, among many other things, on telephone service and on the supply of telephone material.

Children Cry for Fletcher's CASTORIA. The Kind You Have Always Bought, and which has been in use for over thirty years, has borne the signature of Dr. J. C. Fletcher and has been made under his personal supervision since its infancy. All Counterfeits, Imitations and "Just-as-good" are but Experiments that trifle with and endanger the health of Infants and Children—Experience against Experiment. What is CASTORIA Castoria is a harmless substitute for Castor Oil, Paregoric, Drops, and Soothing Syrups. It is pleasant. It contains neither Opium, Morphine nor other narcotic substance. Its age is its guarantee. For more than thirty years it has been in constant use for the relief of Constipation, Flatulency, Wind Colic and Diarrhoea; allaying Feverishness arising therefrom, and by regulating the Stomach and Bowels, aids the assimilation of Food; giving healthy and natural sleep. The Children's Panacea—The Mother's Friend. GENUINE CASTORIA ALWAYS Bears the Signature of Dr. J. C. Fletcher In Use For Over 30 Years The Kind You Have Always Bought THE CENTAUR COMPANY, NEW YORK CITY.

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