

Two Extracts

Here is an extract from the statement just issued by Hon. W. J. Hanna, food controller:—

"But the sixth, the supernumerary, unnecessary and inefficient middleman, whose presence in the community is one of the most serious economic wastes of the day, whose low standards of efficiency set the standards of the whole community, is beyond any but the widest powers of the food controller. Thus one of the most serious aggravations of the high-price situation cannot be removed without precipitating disaster upon the whole country.

"That there have long been too many city people and too few farmers in this Dominion is common knowledge. But it is not so well known that among our city people there are too many mere distributors, too many shippers, packers, carriers, wholesalers, retailers, advertisers, printers, salesmen, brokers, sub-brokers, duty brokers, assistant sub-deputy brokers, and the whole army of people in the services and professions that wait upon these middlemen. I do not say that the functions of these non-producers would be done away with, but I do say that there were and there are too many for each function, too much duplication of effort and equipment. In the city of Toronto in 1910 (the last census year) there were less than thirty thousand actual producers of goods, including a large proportion of those who produced only luxuries. The balance of, say, the one hundred thousand wage earners in the city of Toronto must have been either servants, professional men or middlemen. And this inflated staff of non-producers, not only in Toronto, but in every Canadian city and town, was and still is dependent for its wages upon the movement of farm goods to the city and city goods to the farm and all the over-specialized, over-elaborated processes which a luxurious civilization imagines are necessary to its happiness.

Bearing in mind the reference to the importance of the producers on the farm—that is the point we wish the reader to reflect upon—here is an extract from the platform of Mr. I. T. Brannigan, who has been nominated by the Prairiedale Grain Growers' local, as candidate for the Dominion house in the constituency of Davin, Saskatchewan:—

"As to the principles for which I stand, I will state that I believe in equal rights to all—including women and farmers, and special privileges to none—not including railroad companies, banks and manufacturers.

"I further believe that the nationalization of all railways, telegraph lines, express lines and other public utilities should be accomplished at the earliest possible date.

"That the farmer should not be obliged to pay two hundred dollars for a farm implement which cost less than seventy dollars; that in fact all farm machinery should be placed on the free list, and that the tariff on all tools, implements and goods that enter into the shops and homes should be reduced.

"That the agricultural class should be able to borrow money on as good terms as the manufacturers and railway companies.

"That as our western provinces are the chief base of supplies for England and our allies, the interests of the agricultural classes should be fostered and protected by the government.

"That the boys in the trenches are entitled to receive as much for their heroism and sacrifice as the enemy alien receives for picking stone and pitching bundles on a threshing outfit.

"That obedience to the law is the highest mark of good citizenship.

"That the National Political Platform adopted by the Canadian Council of Agriculture has my hearty endorsement.

"That the government should guarantee a price on wheat for at least three years, naming a minimum as well as a maximum price, the former not being more than twenty cents less than the maximum at the present time for the above period.

"That there shall be no peace until Victory and Civilization stand upon the grave of Kaiser militarism."

We leave the reader to put two and two together.

Why is this country enjoying a large measure of material prosperity, even during the terrible period of war?

Is it not time that we listened to the demands of the farmers?

It must be remembered that there is an unpathetic relationship in trade. Charge farmer too much for his implements, and the price of his products must be enhanced.

The high cost of living follows the high cost of the materials necessary in production, the high cost of building material, etc., etc. Arbitrary taxation of what is

necessary to the producers is bound to make the consumers' lot an unhappy one.