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FURTHER PROGRESS

Since the days of Pym and Hampden very much has been won. The average man now has what politicians refer to as "vote and influence." That is a greater possession than has been commonly realized; and the explanation of the comparative failure of democracy in the last generation or two lies just in the fact that the ordinary citizen has so inadequately recognized his power, and hence so frequently failed to exercise it for the removal of abuses, for the prevention of the rise of new forms of tyranny and for common betterment generally. We have complacently discussed our "limited monarchy" and our "manhood franchise" and our "people's will," but in actual practice we have not as a people in any consecutive way exercised our "will." We have not as a people governed ourselves. We have still been governed. And yet in actual fact the power is in our hands. With their ballots the majority can exercise their will. That power which was wielded by the Eastern King of whom it was written that "whom he would he set up and whom he would he put down," is really in our hands as a people. Occasionally at least we have the power of placing and displacing those who represent us in public affairs. If there is a man in high place today whom people wish to condemn they can condemn him. If there is a man who should be called from private life to public service, by their elective franchise the people can call him. Power and the means of securing further power is in the hands of the people at the present time.

Undemocratic Survivals

If the people only could know how great their power is surely they would act. Here is a population in which by an iniquitous taxation law the whole people enrich a little group of a comparatively few hundreds, while many thousands are pinched in the actual necessities of life. Here is a system of corporations established by law doing business with farmers and laborers, and realizing profits which aggregate millions and which actually constitute from twenty-five to one or two or three hundred per cent., while those who furnish them produce and labor often realize only a bare and toilsome living with no appreciable percentage of gain. Here is a system of judiciary established and salaried in figures which bear no discoverable relation to the wage of the average man. Yet the rich man who can pay is able in the courts to outwit and vanquish the poor and to escape the penalty of his crimes just because he is able to buy the legal service for which the poor man cannot pay. Here is a nation one of whose primary needs is food—the products of the earth—but a few people have craftily secured many thousands of acres of productive soil and refuse to permit the cultivation till a certain tribute is paid them; and the land remains untiled and the people bear the brunt. Here is a people living widely scattered over many thousands of miles. One of their primary needs is intercommunication and transportation. Great steel highways have been built, but they are controlled in the interest of a small group and the people pay the price and endure the condition.

Shall We Keep Them Still?

Do you suppose these things would continue if the people really knew that by one vote in one year they could abolish these conditions and establish in their place agencies based on the ideal of smashing private privilege and profiteering and designed to secure justice and the highest good to all? Would they not rise as one man and in the spirit of the all round square deal banish these hoary anachronisms that lie as degrading blots upon the surface of our democracy? Would they not, forgetting all imagined allegiance to any antiquated party group, seek for representatives whose primary qualification is an intelligent and purposeful love of justice and right and set them at once to do the nation's work? What we need for our further progress is primarily the adequate use by the people of the power which is now in their hands. We are facing a general election. The superlative need is that we secure representatives of principle and honor who will do right, not only with the paramount question of the war, but with all other issues—and they are manifold and multiform—which the coming government must face. War provision, war

maintenance, war cost and the fiscal and economic channels through which national necessities must be met will have to be dealt with; as well as the primary problem of men; and in order that the vital interests of our people be not betrayed they must send to parliament men of vision and principle and judgment and backbone. And if they so act we may yet hope that out of the shadow of war and after all the reactionary and deplorable incidents of recent years there may come further progress in the direction of a genuine democracy—a rule of the people, by the people and for the people.—W. R. W.

THEY'RE THINKING ABOUT IT

Today I had a half hour's conversation with a farmer, just an average Manitoba farmer. We spoke—with him leading—of various aspects of present day conditions as they affect the farmer—grain selling, production propaganda, party government, corporation-owned railways, food control, packing-house profits, etc., and in every phase as he discussed it one thing impressed me. It was his concentrated passion of indignation at the unchecked domination of the moneyed interests in matters that should be controlled from the basis of public well being and of an absolutely square deal for the average man. He is not a party man roused by the oratory of some red hot campaigner. He is not a socialist flaming against capitalism and advocating drastic revolution. He has not even been inspired by some enthusiastic grain grower or political independent. He is simply an ordinary man who is perhaps a little more observant than some others of the currents and conditions of life. And, as he buys his implements and does the other ordinary business of his farm he is finding evidence on every hand that the interests are hemming him in and skimming the cream of life and making the ordinary life conform to limitations which they set. He is discovering in practical ways that the political parties are bond servants of those interests and that in the present public situation there is practically no reason to hope for relief.

And, as I noted the unanswerable logic, but especially the personal force of his impassioned demand as to why we must remain subject to these scoundrel robbers of the public heritage, I concluded that we have here a factor in our Canadian life of most hopeful significance and one whose meaning we should not miss. If the average man is thinking in this way, if the man on the land is becoming personally conscious that he is circumscribed and handicapped by a system which has superimposed itself upon what we have been fondly imagining was democracy, and which is fattening upon that of which it robs the common man, there is reason to hope that he will begin to devise some means of breaking the yoke. I believe my friend is one of thousands in Western Canada who are being vitally impressed with the fact of our national, political, economic and even personal subservience to, the special privilege groups who are our masters; one of thousands who are beginning to quote to themselves the old line, "Who would be free themselves must strike the blow." Canada is facing the opportunity of electing her representatives to the supreme legislative body of the nation. If there is, as I believe, a concentrated body of personal resentment and indignation against the long continued submission to the sinister control, her electors will see to it that with all their other mighty responsibilities, the men elected will be such as will once and for all banish the plutocrats and set our people free.—W. R. W.

JUST HUMAN SYMPATHY

A young Scotch widow was telling of the sad, sad days just a few brief months ago when her husband, stricken in the prime of life, was taken from her side and she was left in a strange country among strangers. And she said, "I have a letter from the Grain Growers. He belonged to the Grain Growers. He had been their secretary." She had found that the

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Grain Growers not only individually but as a body took thought for her in her loneliness; and in her future life her thought of the association will be colored by her grateful remembrance of their kindness to her in her time of need. The ministry of human kindness and the visiting of the fatherless and the widows in their affliction is an essential part of the Grain Growers' creed and will be practiced wherever the ideals of the association are fully assimilated. So mote it be.

THE EFFICIENCY IDEAL

The ideal of efficiency is very old. It may be presumed that our pre-historic ancestors applied it to their implements of labor. If the rude spade or hoe which a man had made for his work didn't fulfil its purpose, couldn't be used for digging or cultivation, it was adjudged unsatisfactory and either made over or cast aside and replaced by another. We apply it today to our implements and machines. If a binder doesn't bind or binds one sheaf and misses three; if an automobile persists in stopping every 25 feet or demands 30 minutes work for every fresh start; there will certainly ensue either a re-making or a replacing. It is demanded of a machine that it be efficient, that it actually do the work for which it was constructed. And we are applying it in business and industry. If a stenographer cannot take—reasonably well—your dictation or having taken it cannot—reasonably well—read and type what she has taken; if a clerk behind your counter cannot sell goods to your customers, some change is likely to be demanded. It is reasonable to require that an employee do the work he or she has engaged to do.

And similarly in these days farmers are demanding of themselves efficiency on the land. This does not mean that a man can always guarantee himself a crop. Some conditions of crop production are always beyond his control. But he can see to it that the land is thoroughly cleaned and cultivated, that it is protected by necessary fencing, that suitable rotation is arranged for and that clean seed is provided and sown at the proper season. He can be efficient so far as meeting the conditions which are under his control. And till he becomes intelligent and industrious for that he will not be in the first class of the tillers of the soil. And so the local Grain Growers' Association must be required to be efficient. Its officers must have some standard or ideal of what they expect it to do and it is up to them to secure from it at least a fair approximation to that standard. The more definite their ideal is, the more unanimously it is agreed upon by the leaders, the greater will be their success in securing efficiency. The fact that a certain branch fell somewhat short of efficiency last year is no good reason for slackness this year. What is needed is mutual and cordial understanding, purposeful planning and energetic pursuit of the general co-operation which is the primary condition of success. This month, this very October, ought to see the officials of every branch in careful consultation for efficiency in the work of the approaching winter. Plan your work today—and tomorrow work your plan.—W. R. W.

THE CITY WORKS A FARM

A balance sheet issued by the Town Council of Glasgow is an illuminating and suggestive document which might well be pondered by some cities in Canada which are subject to the affliction of arrears of taxes and to the constant difficulty of adequately providing the funds necessary for city expenses. The Glasgow Council works a farm of some 400 acres. In 1913-14 there was a clear gain over all expenses of £473. In 1915-16, when the expenses included higher wages, implements, seeds and feeding stuffs, the profit rose to £1,490. It is even possible that some rural municipalities in Canada might do worse than acquire a section or two on occasion and get some pointers from Bonnie Scotland. Why not?

A PLEA FOR JUSTICE

The editor of the Country Homemakers page has very clearly and fully informed the women of their position in the next federal election and once more we are forcibly reminded that "ma can't vote." Of our disappointment it is futile to speak; but surely it is up to every woman's local of the Manitoba Grain Growers' Association to voice their indignation by resolutions at their first meeting and forwarding the same to the Central organization to be published in The Guide, and also forward a copy to the government that has perpetrated the outrage. I do not doubt many of us are in the same position—our husbands are past the age limit, one boy is needed to run the home farm and other sons are doing what they have been asked to do, "produce," and having as many as five nephews at the front does not count, even though a sixth has paid the extreme penalty.

Surely the men of the West who have so consistently upheld the claims of the women for justice will see that our next government has a truer vision of the rights of the people.—A. Tooth, Eli, Man.

OAKVILLE WOMEN'S AUXILIARY

The women's auxiliary at Oakville are keeping busy holding their meetings on the second Tuesday of each month. A village lot has been donated to them for the Belgian Relief Fund and the women are preparing for its disposal. On August 13, a canning demonstration took place conducted by Miss Crawford of the Agricultural College. There was a good attendance and gratifying interest manifested. The topics discussed at the monthly meetings are proving very helpful and may be expected to assist materially in the taking up of the responsibilities of citizenship.

Acknowledgement is hereby made of \$143, received per W. I. Ford from the Harlington branch for Y.M.C.A. work in connection with the war. There is no more deserving cause and many branches throughout the province have helped splendidly and the opportunity is still open.

QUOTABLES QUOTED

"A great economic wrong has been inflicted upon the world by the exploitation of all natural resources, a waste made possible by modern means of transportation and manufacture employed under control of the purpose of present gain alone, untempered by the thought of service or of responsibility for the future; a wrong of such magnitude as to amount to actual spoliation of coming generations, of such magnitude as to amount to actual defiance of the God of Providence."—John MacDougall.

"The one pervading evil of democracy is the tyranny of the majority that succeeds by force or fraud in carrying elections. To break off that point is to avert the danger. The common system of representation perpetuates the danger. Unusual electorates afford no security to minorities. Equal electorates give none to minorities. Thirty-five years ago it was pointed out that the remedy is proportional representation."—Lord Acton.

"New Zealanders have a much more social, a much less rigid, conception of property than that held by the 'citizens' of Europe. They accept expropriation not only when it is necessary, but whenever it is for the public good. If a large landowner does not cultivate his lands, public opinion thinks it quite right that he should be forced to sell in order to make way for a crowd of settlers."—Siegfried.

"The colony (New Zealand) does not want these large estates. Their owners should be the last to seek protection from the state. I regard large estates, whether partially in use, or not at all, as a social pest, an obstacle to trade and a barrier in the way of progress."—Reeves.

"Autocracy must be banished from Canada, whether it takes the form of a bloated plutocracy which has grown rich on the profits of war, or comes in the garb of intolerance, setting race against race and creed against creed."

"The foundation of democracy is the franchise law under which its people register their will, the method in which the franchise is exercised and the machinery of government by which the wishes of the people are carried into effect."