

# The Brain Growers' Guide

Winnipeg, Wednesday, July 19th, 1916

## PROFESSIONAL FARMERS

George W. Russell, editor of "The Irish Homestead" and one of the foremost leaders in the great co-operative movement among Irish farmers, has repeatedly pointed out in his paper the necessity of the Irish farmers realizing the importance of their own industry and organizing themselves as professional farmers the same as people in other callings are doing for mutual benefit. In a recent issue of "The Irish Homestead" we find the following letter from J. R. Cahill, of London, England, who is regarded as one of the greatest living authorities on agricultural organization:

"To the Editor of The Irish Homestead. Dear Sir:—In your interesting leader this week on the French war organization of agriculture, you once more draw attention to the general principle of the professional organization of farmers. If we look abroad we find that this has been the guiding principle in the reorganization of agriculture which has been effected in the principal European countries during the last thirty or more years. During this period there has been in vigorous operation everywhere on the continent a steady movement on these lines towards the organization of farmers for the representation and protection of their general interests as a class, as well as for their purely business interests, such as agricultural science, production, distribution and banking. Governments have given it impulse either by placing farmers (whether they like it or not) in self-governing and self-supporting but strictly professional organizations, or by making it their obvious interest to attach themselves to such professional groups. The chambers of agriculture established in Prussian provinces in the years 1894-99, and copied elsewhere, afford an example of the first type of organization. Membership is restricted to landowners, who must contribute to the upkeep of the chamber of their province, and who direct the chamber thru representatives elected by the councils of the districts into which the area of the chamber is divided. Within the short period of their existence these chambers have developed into powerful institutions for representing and promoting agricultural interests, whether political, economic or technical, within their areas. Their activities are very great. They maintain travelling, trained advisors for the main branches of agriculture, for building operations, for insurance; labor exchanges; bureaux of information (as to prices, markets, creditability of customers); dairy schools, forestry, fruit-growing, seed-growing and poultry breeding institutions; experiment and testing stations; cattle selling agencies at the chief markets; agricultural booking agencies at the chief markets; agricultural book-keeping and auditing departments and so forth. And in all their activities they work in the closest union with the local co-operative societies and with their federations, the offices of the latter being frequently situated in the same block of buildings. In fact, the Act creating these chambers enjoins upon them to pay special regard to the more complete co-operative organization of farmers." Examples of the other systems of the professional organization of farmers are to be found in France, Belgium, Holland, Denmark. In some continental countries the State Agricultural Departments may be said to be directed by agriculturists as regularly combined in local, provincial and national organizations. The remarkable changes in method and the achievements in agricultural production which have been due to this reorganization of the agricultural classes are widely known. One need cite only the cases of Belgium, Holland, Denmark, Germany. European communities grasped the necessity for organizing completely an industrial group which by its own conditions of life and of work tends to be disintegrated to an unusual degree, and took all possible measures to bring it into line with other great economic groups that have to maintain themselves under modern conditions in international and national markets. But in the United Kingdom little heed has as yet been paid to the solution of this fundamental problem. One can but hope that out of the prevailing conviction that a far higher permanent yield from agriculture in these islands must be secured at all costs, some light will appear. Yours truly, J. R. Cahill."

It will be noted that Mr. Cahill points out that the professional organization of farmers has been the guiding principle of agricultural development in the European continental countries for the past thirty years and it is more encouraging to learn that in many of those countries the farmers are so well and ably organized that they control the State

Departments of Agriculture. We are all familiar with the remarkable agricultural organizations in Holland, Denmark, Germany and France. In Germany particularly has rapid strides been made in the work of organizing farmers for mutual help, and tho there are some things in the German system that must be corrected and which will be corrected as a result of the great war, we should not hesitate to learn all the good we can from these people. Among the Anglo-Saxon peoples on this continent as well as in Great Britain agricultural organization has been slower than in almost every other part of the civilized world. Anglo-Saxons are not behind other countries in business organization and commercial development, but Anglo-Saxon farmers have the individualistic spirit developed to a most remarkable degree. Here in Western Canada we have made great progress in the past few years in organizing the farmers and yet today not more than 25 per cent. of them are numbered in the various farmers' organizations. Despite the work we have done of which we are all so proud and which has accomplished great benefits for the farming communities we have but made a nice beginning. Farmers, if they are to get the full benefit of their labor and to develop the social life to its highest, must organize to do their own business and no longer depend entirely upon outside organizations to do their business for them.

## MORE TITLES IN PROSPECT

It is announced in the Press that the members of the War Munition Purchasing Commission will be honored by having knight-hoods conferred upon them and being permitted to attach "Sir" to their present names. It is also intimated in certain quarters that some more of the members of the Shell Committee as well as those prominent in the Patriotic Funds thruout Canada will likewise be honored. It is time that a vigorous protest was made against this promiscuous distribution of so-called titles. If the title means anything whatever it has a very close relationship to the system which has been very largely the cause of the war in Europe. The purpose of these titles is to show that the recipients are entitled to honor and distinction far above their fellowmen. The next step upward in the title business is a membership in the House of Lords with legislative powers. This means the creation of a permanent nobility or a race of what are supposed to be super-men. The logical climax of a permanent nobility is autocratic rule such as exists in Germany, Russia and Austria. While there is no danger of any autocratic ruler ever holding power in Canada, there is taking place at the present time a concentration of power, both political and financial, in the hands of a comparatively few men and these are the men chiefly selected for these so-called high honors. At the present time both of our political parties at Ottawa are very largely dominated by the influence of wealthy men and corporations and it is a very serious danger to the well-being of this country. In Great Britain there was at one time autocratic rule but it has long since disappeared. In the beginning the power was transferred from the king to the nobility and for hundreds of years the House of Lords practically ruled England. The people, however, found that even the nobility were not safe and that a hereditary nobility was especially dangerous. For that reason the powers of the House of Lords were curtailed and all power was transferred to the House of Commons the members of which are elected by the people. Are we now to transplant to Canada a system which is becoming less and less popular in Great Britain and are we to build an oligarchy or

aristocracy in this country which has been one of the greatest curses of European countries? If we are to have titles or honors in Canada, they should be a "made in Canada" brand and bestowed only for merit. The distribution of these tin-pot titles is becoming entirely too common and the influence which they radiate is decidedly dangerous to the development of the true democratic spirit in this country.

## TIME FOR UNDERSTANDING

Signs are not wanting to indicate that the Protectionist forces of Canada are preparing the way for increases in the tariff, either at the next session of Parliament or at the close of the war. Various Eastern writers are advocating "a scientific tariff" and "protection for our home industries" and other well-known protective arguments. The Winnipeg Telegram is putting on a campaign designed to encourage protection and in this action is no doubt voicing the opinion of the Ottawa Government. It was the Protectionist and Financial interests which put the present Government at Ottawa into power. On the other hand the leaders of the Liberal party are maintaining (in the East, at least,) an absolute silence on the tariff question. Experience has shown that the Liberals when in power were under the control of the Protected interests the same as the Conservatives up till the time of the reciprocity campaign. An election must be held within another year unless the life of Parliament is extended again and with the present feeling thruout Canada it would not be surprising to see the Government defeated. So far as the West is concerned it makes little difference which party is in power unless there is going to be some decided reform of Western abuses. If there is no hope for either of the two parties in the East, then it's time that we had a Western party in support of Western views and Western needs. It has been established absolutely beyond argument that the Protective Tariff is simply bleeding Western Canada for the benefit of a comparatively small number of institutions in the East. If this is permitted to continue we will never have a well settled and prosperous country West of the Great Lakes. Up till the huge crop and high prices of 1915 there were a comparatively small number of farmers in Western Canada who were making substantial financial progress. With the close of the war grain prices will go down but the prices of things the farmer has to purchase will not go back to normal nearly so quickly. It is time for an understanding on the Tariff question. If neither one of the parties in the East are prepared to grant any redress to the West it is time for the West to act independently. This would be a good subject for the farmers to take up with their Western members and find out where they stand on the question. The time for evading the issue is past. We need something clear and definite. If we are going to continue in this country to be simply Grits and Tories and allow these two old parties to betray us to the interests as they have done regularly for the past thirty years, then our franchise is of very little value to us.

## A PRUSSIAN METHOD

We recently received a letter from a farmer who requested a loan from one of the branch banks in Western Canada. The manager of the bank, the farmer tells us, was also agent for a hail insurance company and a life assurance company. Before the farmer was able to get the loan he required he was forced to take out a hail insurance policy with the company represented by the banker, altho

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