

# The Brain Browsers' Guide

Winnipeg, Wednesday, March 28, 1917

## THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Probably the most important department of the Manitoba government is that of agriculture. Under the old government this department was conducted very largely as a political side line and the agricultural interests of the province suffered in consequence. When the new government came into power with progressive policies it was hoped and expected that the Department of Agriculture would take on the progressive character of the government's program. But, instead of this the administration of the Department under Hon. Valentine Winkler has not come up to expectations. Almost from the beginning there has been more or less friction between the minister and the Agricultural College authorities. Finally it has reached an open rupture between Mr. Winkler and the advisory board of the college. The advisory board is composed of men and women who know Manitoba and its needs, who were selected for their capabilities and who under the Act have authority to conduct the college. The faculty of the college consists of men and women who have been selected from all over the continent because of their special ability to conduct the various departments of the college work. Yet the Minister has apparently determined that it is his duty to run the college. He has overruled and defied the advisory board and quarrelled with a number of the leading members of the teaching faculty. He has made regulations that have decidedly curtailed the effectiveness of the college work. It has been apparent for some time that unless a radical change is made the Agricultural College will deteriorate rapidly. No good men and women with ability and independent spirit will consent to act on the advisory board, nor will it be possible to secure or retain capable teachers on the college staff if the present situation continues. The Minister of Agriculture is not an agricultural expert and is not in touch with the work of the Agricultural College. Neither has he in his department experts capable of judging of the work of the Agricultural College. He is however apparently determined to dominate the college regardless of the danger of such an attitude towards this great institution. The Agricultural College should be the centre of a great educational work which should reach the farthest corners of the province and have the unqualified support and co-operation of the Department and Minister of Agriculture. If the advisory board and the teaching faculty are not capable of performing their duties it would be different. But their qualifications have never been questioned. It would be dangerous in the extreme and would be an unheard of precedent to place the administration of the college in the hands of the Minister of Agriculture. The present system of college administration has been decided upon as the best and is the one adopted by other agricultural colleges and by most educational institutions. The future of agricultural education in Manitoba depends largely upon the development of the Agricultural College and its extension work and it will be a great loss to the province if this work is crippled by arbitrary interference and domination on the part of the Department of Agriculture. But the complaint against the department does not end with the college. It extends into almost every branch of the departmental work. It would appear that the department is not well organized. It is also suspected that many of the employees were appointed because of their political activities in support of the party more than because of any special ability for the work they are supposed to do. There has been no Deputy Minister of Agriculture for more than

a year and there is no definite leadership in agricultural policy in the department. The Manitoba government holds the record of being one of the most progressive governments in Canada. We believe that it has fulfilled its pre-election pledges better than any other government that has held office in Manitoba or any other province in Canada. Its general administrative record stands high. It is unfortunate that the most important department should be the weakest. If this weakness were of a passive character it would not be nearly so dangerous as the present situation which is crippling and retarding agricultural development throughout the province. On another page in this issue are given some of the facts of the trouble between the Minister and the Agricultural College.

## THE RUSSIAN REVOLUTION

There is world significance in the Russian revolution. A great people, hitherto governed by the caprice of officialdom, has suddenly asserted its adherence to the principle that governments should be subservient to the will of the governed. It is too early to speculate as to how far the swing of events will carry Russia in the direction of popular government, but indications are not lacking that the empire is ripe for at least a constitutionally restricted monarchy with the real power in the hands of the representatives of the people. In any case the events of the last few days must profoundly influence the progress of world events. Hopes are entertained that the immediate effect will be a more vigorous prosecution of the war. Another effect must be the strengthening of democratic sentiment now smoldering in Germany and which may yet be worth many army divisions in the overthrow of German militarism. History clearly shows that with each successful revolution against entrenched autocracy the fires of liberty have burned brighter in other countries. Even on the American continent the hands of those who are struggling for greater political freedom will be strengthened by the success of the great and bloodless revolution that has taken place in Russia within the last few days.

The hope that internally the revolution will result in more than a change of rulers is strengthened by the fact that the nominal representatives of the people have triumphed in a long drawn out contest for power with the bureaucracy in whose hands the control of the empire was centred and which represented all that was undemocratic and reactionary in Russian politics. The not representative in the sense in which we understand the term the Duma does represent the progressive and democratic element in the national life of Russia. Created in 1905 by the edict of the Czar, its members are not chosen directly by the people, but are elected by delegates which are chosen by town or district assemblies; these representing all classes of the population. Tho not entrusted at the time of its creation with the power of initiating legislation, provision was made that its assent should be secured before a law could come into force and it has also had some supervisory power over the acts of authorities appointed by the Czar. Brought into actual touch with imperial affairs and with its actual powers so circumscribed there naturally resulted a contest with the well-entrenched and reactionary bureaucracy for a wider control in the government of the state. In this contest the Duma voiced the democratic aspirations of the Russian people. Its triumph in the present crisis is, therefore, an indication that a permanent forward step has been made by a great people in their struggle for liberty. The revolution has been hastened by the circum-

stance of war. Ever since the outbreak of hostilities there have been rumors of divided councils in the conduct of that colossal enterprise. In spite of the strictest censorship it has become widely known thruout other nations, and doubtless thruout Russia as well, that German influence was at work in high places by which the conduct of the war was prejudicially affected. The Duma evidently stood for greater efficiency and energy in carrying on the war. The struggle with the constituted authorities over this question has been one of the chief factors in hastening the political climax in which the Czar and his family have been deposed, the old bureaucracy removed and its place taken by men who are close to the Russian people, and the ground cleared so that the foundation for a truly democratic government can be laid. Much is said of the new and chastened world that will emerge from the present conflict. If Russia's participation in that conflict results in democratizing her institutions and freeing her people from the thralldom of the bureaucrats she will be amply repaid the millions of men and billions of treasure be the measure of her sacrifice.

## WIN THE WAR CONVENTION

The movement in support of the Win-the-War Convention to be held in Montreal next month is being supported in cities all over Canada. The aim is to have about 1,200 delegates present from the nine provinces, representative in numbers as well as by occupations. Executive committees from the provinces are to have a two days' session in advance to prepare a program for the larger convention.

The movement originated in Toronto and has the support of citizens of both political parties, according to the announcement to the public. It is to be hoped that this convention will be able to crystallize into concrete form a plan for national action which will win the support of public opinion. Nothing is to be barred from discussion and by getting all the provinces together it is hoped to get a united action that so far has not been all that could be desired.

Every good citizen of Canada is anxious to bring the war to a successful termination at the earliest possible moment. Anything that will facilitate this desired end will receive the hearty support of the people. The Ottawa government needs more ginger and if this convention can only bring this about it will have accomplished a great deal. It can also aid towards a better understanding between East and West and between French and English. Whatever tends towards these good purposes is much to be desired.

## SUCCESSFUL WAR LOAN

Announcements from Ottawa are to the effect that the new war loan of \$150,000,000 will be very considerably over subscribed. The bonds selling at 96 with five per cent. interest make a very attractive investment and large financial institutions as well as individual investors have taken large subscriptions. A very considerable number of small investors have also purchased war bonds in smaller amounts. It is quite evident that there is plenty of money in Canada to finance the country's part in the war. Domestic borrowing which has now been instituted since the war will no doubt be followed in the future for financing the needs of the country. With so much money in the country it is unfortunate that a larger part of it has not been secured by taxation for war purposes. The government could quite easily have secured larger revenues and kept down the