

The Brain Growers' Guide

Winnipeg, Wednesday, June 17th, 1914

HOME STUDY

Arts Course may be taken by correspondence, but students must attend one session.

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MR. DUNNING AND THE MANUFACTURERS

Chas. A. Dunning, general manager of the Saskatchewan Co-operative Elevator Co., is to be heartily congratulated on the outspoken and vigorous address which he delivered as a representative of the Western farmers, before the convention of the Canadian Manufacturers' Association, at Montreal, last Wednesday. Everyone who knows Mr. Dunning expected that he would be frank and forcible in his presentation of the Western farmers' problems and their expectations were fully realized. Lack of space and the necessity for The Guide going to press some days before the date of publication, makes it impossible to print Mr. Dunning's address in full in this issue, but we hope to be able to do so later. From telegraphed reports we learn that the convention expressed its appreciation of Mr. Dunning's address by a standing vote, and we trust that the effect of the plain truths which they heard will be seen in the adoption of a more reasonable attitude on the part of the manufacturers and their organization towards the farmers than has usually been evidenced in the past. Mr. Dunning pointed out in the first place, that the increase in the cost of producing and transporting grain, coupled with a falling price, had, as shown by the report of the commission appointed by the Saskatchewan Government, made the occupation of grain farming insufficiently remunerative to be attractive. To go into mixed farming, on the other hand, required considerable capital, and it was found that when any large quantity of mixed farming products was produced the prices of those products went down to an unremunerative figure also. In addition, he pointed out, large tracts of land in the West were entirely unsuited to mixed farming, because of the lack of water. Touching on the credit problem, Mr. Dunning said that companies whose agents urged farmers to buy implements on credit when they could not afford to do so, must take some share in the responsibility for the consequences. Mr. Dunning well expressed the hope which is held by all true friends of the West, that the division of feeling which appears to be growing between the industrial East and the agricultural West may be bridged by mutual efforts to understand the other's position, and that a spirit of compromise may prevail.

With regard to the tariff, Mr. Dunning pointed out the burden which Protection laid upon the farmers and not only urged the manufactures to remember this when making their suggestions to the Dominion Government, but also warned them that the Western farmers were overwhelmingly for Free Trade, and that with their increasing representation they would soon be in a position of much greater power in Parliament. Whether or not there is any connection between the two incidents we cannot say, but it is significant that in considering the report of the legislation committee the convention discussed the necessity of more manufacturers going into Parliament. The suggestion, we read in the daily press, was received with approval and the retiring president of the C.M.A., C. B. Gordon, of Montreal, was invited by the delegates to himself enter politics. Mr. Gordon, however, stated that he would be too busy keeping the wolf from the door for some years to allow of this, and other manufacturers also declined to become members of Parliament on the same ground.

The manufacturers, however, need not worry about their representation in Parlia-

ment, either in the Commons or the Senate. Without going into exact figures, it is safe to say that in proportion to their numbers, the manufacturers have at least ten times as many representatives in the two houses as the farmers, the only class that can rival the manufacturers in getting into public office being the lawyers. The manufacturers' best representatives in Parliament, however, are not members of their own calling, but the lawyers, and doctors, and, in many cases, the farmers who are their mouthpieces and who do their work much better than they can do it themselves. When a well-known manufacturer makes a speech in defence of the Protective Tariff he usually displays a very one-sided and prejudiced attitude of mind and does his own cause more harm than good, but when a misguided and misinformed, tho well-intentioned, farmer member orates on the beauties of the National Policy a great many people are influenced and misled.

POLITICIANS AND PUBLIC OPINION

Mark Twain, who on occasion knew how to make humor a vehicle for wisdom, tells a story in one of his books about being in Paris during one of the unsettled times when the political condition of France hung in the balance. He saw a man haranguing a great crowd on one of the public squares, and after the man had ended his speech and the crowd had broken up into groups eagerly discussing it, Mark Twain says that he had some conversation with the orator, who suddenly broke off, however, when he saw that the whole crowd he had been addressing had begun to march away in a solid body down one of the boulevards. "You will pardon me," he said to Mark Twain, preparing to run after the crowd, "but I must hasten, as I am their leader."

There is in this story a great underlying truth in regard to political leadership, as it is in many cases actually practised. A political leader, so called, most often does not lead his party at all; he carefully studies the direction in which it is moving, and then hastens across lots so as to put himself at the head of the procession. The real sources of progress are seldom the men who hold the positions of leaders of political parties; the real sources of progress are most often men who are denounced as agitators, who are actually in advance and who have real insight and do real thinking about existing conditions and the problems of how to better them, being prompted by sincere and earnest zeal for progress and betterment. It has ever been so thruout all history.

The men denounced as agitators are the leaven whose workings leaven the whole lump and produce such an effect upon the general mind that the nominal political leaders, who are keenly observant and astute in sensing such things, recognize that the time has come to take account of the change thus being wrought in men's minds. The political leaders, who are either stand-patters by nature, or, if they were originally progressive, have been transformed into stand-patters by their political careers, then take counsel with the powers whose interests are bound up in preserving the established state of affairs, and figure out how little in the way of progressive action will quiet down for the present the growing demand of the people for progress.

Such, speaking generally, is the regular course of politics and political leadership, so called. As a case in point, take the matter of the investigation by the Dominion Railway Commission into the question of the

injustice of the whole scale of western railway rates. That is a matter which neither political party can claim justly any credit whatever for bringing to the front. It was brought to the front by "agitators," and the talk about the injustice of western rates was duly and regularly denounced by the stand-pat politicians and organs in the East as being Western demagoguery. But the agitation persisted, and as it was an agitation founded in justice and the "agitators" had the manifest and unanswerable facts and figures on their side, the result was a growing volume of indignation in the West and a growing Western demand that the injustice be remedied. This working of the public mind of the West produced in time its result upon the politicians; and the outcome illustrates with striking aptness the truth of what is said above as to the established practice with politicians to see to it, when they are forced to take progressive action, that the actual measure of real progress shall be by no means a full measure.

In justice to the politicians it must be said that, as men who practice politics as a practical business, they pay just as much attention to public opinion as they find necessary. That they do not pay more is not their fault, but the fault of the public. In this connection the political developments in connection with the question of free wheat afford much matter for thought. The only remedy against disregard of public opinion by politicians is in the hands of the people themselves. It is a truism, of course, that a people get as good government as they deserve; but it is a truism which is the fundamental fact in regard to democracy.

SMALL MANUFACTURERS SACRIFICED

Despite the appeals of the independent nail manufacturers thruout Canada to leave wire rods (their raw material) on the free list, where it has been for many years, Finance Minister White turned them a deaf ear and at the special request of the Steel Company of Canada and the Dominion Iron and Steel Company, he placed a protective duty upon these articles. These two great steel corporations were organized chiefly for the benefit of a handful of American and Canadian promoters and stock jobbers, the idea of developing a home industry being a secondary consideration. For the past twenty years these steel industries have been protected by a high tariff upon their products and also have been given cash bounties from the public treasury to the extent of \$17,000,000, which was more than enough to pay the entire wage bill of their establishments. It is estimated that their bounties, together with tariff protection they have received, has enabled them to take from the people of Canada no less than \$40,000,000 and the most of it went to these two corporations. They have been allowed to water their stock without limit, and there has been little attempt to develop efficiency of management and low cost of production. In the face of this miserable system these two corporations have been prospering according to the evidence of Finance Minister White, yet he had deliberately placed a duty on wire rods to enable them to make greater profits upon their watered stock. In his budget speech Mr. White declared that the steel corporations had promised that they would not injure the nail manufacturers by charging them a higher price for their wire rods. It seems rather humorous to give the steel corporations tariff protection for the express purpose of enabling them to charge higher