

The Grain Growers' Guide

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The Voice of the West

The results of the election add lustre to the already many proud achievements that have been recorded to the credit of the Western provinces of Canada. Not since the buffalo roamed over these plains have the people been aroused to register such an emphatic verdict as they did on the seventeenth day of December. On that day the issue was entirely in the hands of the people living west of the Great Lakes. It was well known that Ontario would be almost solidly for the Union Government and that Quebec would be equally as solidly against. It was also well known that the Maritime Provinces would be pretty nearly evenly divided. It rested, therefore, absolutely with the people of the prairie provinces and British Columbia to say what would be the course which Canada would follow until the war was over. The great question was, "What would the West do?"

In spite of the fact that the Western provinces have surpassed all other parts of Canada in the percentage of men who have voluntarily enlisted in the army, there were those who were pleased to think that the West was ready to quit the war. Some who have always assumed a monopoly of loyalty feared that the people of the West would place economic advantage before their duty to the state. But the West replied in tones of thunder. From the icy lakes that separate us from the East to the sunny slopes of the Pacific Coast the people declared that the Union Government should carry on the war to the end, no matter how heavy the cost.

Out of 57 constituencies west of the Great Lakes, 54 supporters of the Union Government were elected and two or possibly all three of the remainder will be counted into the Union column by the soldier vote. More decidedly than Ontario and more decidedly than Quebec the West has spoken.

The voice of the West has always been strong on economic questions. Many people thought that the promise of free agricultural implements and tariff reduction and the referendum would loom so large in the minds of the Western farmers that it would draw them away from the path of duty. But splendidly have they acquitted themselves of any suspicion of seeking personal benefit. They have declined all that might have appealed to their own pocket books. They scorned the path of ease and profit and have chosen rather the path of duty, self sacrifice, honor and self respect. The issue was placed squarely before the Western people. There was no doubt in the minds of the electors. The Union Government was formed for one specific purpose and if returned to power was pledged to bring all the resources of the nation to the support of the Allies in the struggle for democracy and the safety of civilization.

By their verdict the Western people have placed upon the altar of the nation's necessity all the resources of this most resourceful country. By the voice of the West the Union Government has been given its marching orders to "carry on" and the West will look to the Union Government to see that its orders are carried out. When the people of the West have put their hands to the plow they do not turn back. They are neither cowardly, slothful nor greedy.

There were those who tried to frighten the Western people by the bogey of the Big Interests and there were those who talked about the betrayal by the leaders of the organized farmers. Both of these arguments together with misrepresentation of facts were used to confuse the minds of the Western electors. The horrors of conscription were painted at their blackest. But all to no avail.

The people brushed aside all the minor considerations, all the petty things and looked clearly at the one great issue and while looking at it gave their answer. That answer was so complete and so definite as to leave not the slightest shadow of doubt as to the stand the West takes in the great national crisis now facing this country.

No part of Canada has become so heartily sick and disgusted with the meanness and the pettiness of party politics as the Western provinces. The new Union Government is pledged to do away with the patronage evil, to eliminate the graft, scandal and inefficiency which invariably has accompanied government by party in Canada. This is the first opportunity the Western people have had to vote for a Union Government. They are tremendously in earnest this time. The old spirit of the party game which has so long disgraced Canadian politics was not in evidence at this election. The Union Government has been given a mandate not only on the question of the war, but on the question of honest, efficient and progressive government. The voice of the West has given the government ample power to fulfill all its pledges and the West will hold the Union Government to account and will watch its record as the record of no other government has ever been watched in the history of Canada. The West has given the government its undivided support. Where much has been given much will be required.

Farmers in Parliament

Western Canada has now a larger representation in the House of Commons than ever before, there being 43 members from the prairie provinces against 27 in the last parliament. More significant than that, however, is that the organized farmers are for the first time represented in parliament. Hon. T. A. Crerar, president of the United Grain Growers Limited and minister of agriculture, received in the constituency of Marquette a majority of 6,500 votes which is the largest majority given to any candidate in Western Canada in a rural constituency. R. C. Henders, president of the Manitoba Grain Growers' Association, was elected in the constituency of Macdonald with a majority of nearly 3,000 votes, in a rural constituency with a very large proportion of French electors. J. A. Maharg, president of the Saskatchewan Grain Growers' Association, was elected without opposition in the constituency of Maple Creek. John P. Reid, for many years a director and executive member of the Saskatchewan Grain Growers' Association, was elected in the constituency of Mackenzie in spite of the fact that his opponent had the endorsement both of the Unionist party and of the opposition party. Mr. Reid is an out and out supporter of the Union Government. Andrew Knox, director of the Saskatchewan Grain Growers' Association, was elected in Prince Albert. Robert Cruise, nominated by the Grain Growers in 1911, was this time elected by acclamation in Dauphin.

Every representative of the organized farmers who stood for election as a supporter of the Union Government received a handsome majority. There will thus be six representatives of the organized farmers in the House of Commons and who will be able to put the views of the organized farmers in an intelligent manner before parliament. In addition to these members, however, there are a number of others who have been elected in the prairie provinces who are bona fide supporters of all the great principles for which the organized farmers stand and the democratic spirit of the prairie provinces will be represented in the new parliament with very considerable strength. The spirit of the West is decidedly progressive

and whether or not all the candidates are in support of all the principles of the farmers' platform, the overwhelming support which the West has given the Union Government is an assurance that the West will receive better recognition in the new parliament than it has ever received in the past.

During the course of the election campaign The Grain Growers' Guide received letters charging that The Guide had sold out to the Tory party or that it had betrayed the interests of the farmers and the working classes or somewhat similar accusation. But The Grain Growers' Guide in the course of its existence has received so many accusations of different kinds that it has learned to weigh them at their true worth and to follow the path of duty, certain in the knowledge that it will be commended in its course by the rank and file of the great organization with which it is affiliated and for which it has worked unceasingly for the past nine years. In supporting the Union Government, neither The Grain Growers' Guide or any representative of the organized farmers sacrificed any principle whatever.

Every representative of the organized farmers who goes down to Ottawa will be as strongly in support of the democratic principles for which the organized farmers have stood as will any democrat in Western Canada and The Grain Growers' Guide will support those principles to the end. The fundamental principles of democracy are permanent and will remain long after the war has closed. There are crises which arise in every nation which demand for a time at least the cessation of internal hostilities. That crisis has arisen in Canada today. How long it may last no one can say, but while the enemy is thundering at the gate it is absolutely certain that the rank and the file of the organized farmers of the West will not divide forces and weaken the nation by internal strife. It is equally certain, however, that they will stand to their guns in support of the principles of democracy as firmly as ever and will watch the interests of the people both individually and through their representatives in parliament more keenly than ever in the past. And when the great crises is settled as it must be sometime in the future the farmers will have their organization ready and their representatives in parliament to speak for them. They will have a much larger representation than ever before to demand full and complete justice to the people of the West. The very fact that the organized farmers have supported so strongly the Union Government puts them in an immeasurably stronger position to demand and to secure the justice that is their due when the war is over.

Help for the Sufferers

The war has brought upon mankind misery and suffering of such magnitude that the human mind cannot possibly appreciate it. Not only has the suffering come to the soldier on the battlefield, but to innocent women and children in the war zone and practically throughout the civilized world. Broken and wounded in the daily battles, the soldiers who are fighting for us lack many of the comforts of life. Women and children driven from Belgium by the German invaders are starving. Children in Poland have died by the thousands due to privation and exposure following the ravages of the armies. We in Canada have no conception whatever of the dreadful suffering which millions are now undergoing because of the war.

But there are organizations specially equipped to take care of the suffering in Europe; they lack only the means. The civilized world