

The Brain Growers' Guide

Winnipeg, Wednesday, December 7th, 1910

PEACE ON EARTH

Two thousand years ago the shepherds rejoiced to hear the angel choir singing "Peace on Earth Good Will to Men," and year by year since that time has the glad message been heralded throughout the universe. The birth of Christ has today a significance to a larger portion of humanity than at any time in history. The Christmas season brings with it festivities associated with the anniversary of earth's most joyous event. That Christmas this year is celebrated on the anniversary of the day on which Christ was enthroned on high, gives it a double significance. Steadily as time advances the two-thousand-year-old story is being told over and over again and men and women are making sacrifices that the day soon may come when "Thy will be done on Earth as it is in Heaven" shall be nearer a reality. The greatest need in the world today is that the teachings of Jesus Christ be more closely followed. Though His chart for mankind was laid down so many years ago it has stood the test of time and still points mankind towards the right with the same truth as of old. Though oppression still holds sway to a greater or less extent, the world as a whole is growing better. Mankind is beginning to see and to understand more clearly the infinite wisdom of the words spoken by the Man of Sorrow. In this busy world where man is too deeply concerned in material things it is well that Christmas comes every year to recall the Divine command to love our neighbors as ourselves. Nothing more can be done to make this old earth approach the Heavenly ideal than to spread abroad the truths promulgated centuries ago by the Christ whose birth we are shortly to celebrate.

THE BRITISH ELECTIONS

Within two weeks the people of Great Britain will have decided—at least for a time—whether their laws are to be made by their own elected representatives or by the hereditary nobility who represent no person but themselves. For centuries the British people have been fighting against special privilege and anachronisms that have outlived the era of the Dark Ages. At the time of the last election, a year ago, the issues were so confused that it was difficult for the people to ascertain upon what principle they were voting. This time, however, there is the more clear-cut question of the supremacy of the House of Lords. It is very questionable if a single chamber is the best thing in any country, but certainly a second chamber with power to balk the will of the people is not only not desirable but absolutely dangerous. The power held today by the Lords was not derived from the people, but is a relic of the feudal days. Their power is not a fraction of what it was once. Education of the common people spells the doom of the special privilege. No persons will contend that all the acts of the British government are right nor that the Unionist policy is all bad. But there is no doubt but that the power of the Lords will be curbed. No matter which way the present election may go it is but a matter of a very few years till the House of Lords is trimmed and culled into a useful body and its present autocratic powers completely taken away. The tariff question seems also to be taking a more or less prominent part in the campaign, but the tariff reform party have at last decided to submit it to a Referendum in case they are returned to power.

A referendum upon this question would be the proper method of settling the matter, but it may be carried out in such a manner as to give the people no fair opportunity of expressing their views. The Liberal party are showing a weakness in judgment when they declare against the Referendum. It is the only means by which the voice of the people can be definitely ascertained. It is a most unlooked for thing that the people of Great Britain should throw aside the blessings they enjoy under free trade for the sake of the Protectionist curse such as we have in Canada. The great trouble with the tariff in all countries is that the common people do not understand it. Every farmer and consumer in Canada is opposed to paying twenty-five per cent. more for his commodities for the sake of enriching a few manufacturers. But when a man thinks he is reasoning on the tariff he is very liable to be led astray by the very plausible arguments put forth by the beneficiaries of protection. The result of the British elections will be looked for with most intense interest over the whole civilized world. Britain is making history fast, and once aroused she can give all nations an example in definite and decided action.

DIRECT LEGISLATION IN OREGON

The result of the recent elections in Oregon show a decided triumph for Direct Legislation or the Initiative and Referendum. The people in their voting used discrimination, and out of thirty-two bills on which they were asked to vote, they rejected more than half. They rejected the bill providing for the constitutional convention which was a shrewd scheme of the special privileged class intended to abolish Direct Legislation. Wherever there was a doubt as to the value of certain legislation the people invariably voted against it. They also provided for the new method of taxation which the legislature had refused to enact, and henceforth the corporations will have to pay more for their privileges and franchises than they have in the past. One of the most valuable features of the Initiative and Referendum is that the people are compelled to study the laws of the country. Of course not every voter is qualified to interpret the laws, but that is the same in every country and always will be. It applies to the members of our Provincial Legislatures also. The opponents of Direct Legislation lay much stress upon the fact that the people are not sufficiently intelligent to vote. If these opponents would catechise the members of our provincial legislatures upon the laws of our country they would find just as large a proportion of ignorance as among the great mass of the common people. If Direct Legislation did nothing but assist in the education of the people, it would justify all the efforts that are being made in Western Canada to make it a part of the provincial Statutes.

WHERE ARE THE MEN WHO PAY?

The time is now drawing very near when the farmers of Canada will march to Ottawa and demand of their representatives that the reign of special privilege be brought to an end, and that the day of the square deal shall come to pass. Prospects are that when the special train pulls out of Winnipeg on the night of December 12 there will be more than four hundred Western farmers aboard. The farmers of the West know what they want and they need have no hesitation in

making their demands clear cut when presenting them before Parliament at Ottawa. The fear that they will not get all they ask should not deter them in the least from making a demand for complete justice. There is no question of party politics in the demands of the farmers for the reduction of the tariff. Both parties at Ottawa officially stand for a high tariff that enables the manufacturer to put his hands into the pockets of the farmers at all times. The Canadian Manufacturers' Association is an immensely powerful organization, and it has great influence at Ottawa. It has absolutely no politics in its dealings, and takes good care that both parties at Ottawa obey its dictates. It is a most shameful sight to see a body of twenty-six hundred men, engaged in manufacturing, controlling our national legislature. This is a strong statement to make, but the proof of its truth lies in the result. The tariff is arranged specially for the benefit of the manufacturers and it is never changed except upon consultation with the manufacturers. The great body of the consumers in Canada have never been asked what they think about the tariff. All they are supposed to do is to pay the price and keep—the stream of cash flowing into the pockets of the manufacturers. The Protective tariff is a system of "legalized robbery" and is only kept in existence through the agency of our members in the House of Commons at Ottawa. Both the political parties get together and the result of their negotiations is that the manufacturers get just what they want. Does not this prove to the farmers of Western Canada that our members do not represent the people when they get to Ottawa? Are they not too often representing the manufacturers and other special privilege classes? Of course every one of these members at Ottawa would most indignantly resent the imputation that they are not honest men and impelled by the highest motives of patriotism. We think that the question of a member's honesty should be decided by his actions and not by his words. The member of Parliament who refuses to protect the interests of his constituency is not worthy to hold his seat. As it is, the farmers are helpless. They have elected their representatives and have no control over them during the four or five years they are in office. There will be a general election in the course of another year or two. The farmers in the West should watch the actions of their representatives and see that none of them are re-elected unless they have given the farmers a square deal at Ottawa. If the farmers will organize and stand together they can control the situation in Western Canada. Of course there is no doubt but that the farmers will remain affiliated with one or other of the so-called political parties. We have not yet risen to the place where we can stand off and view both parties in an independent light. Too frequently because our fathers belonged to one party we support the party that now has that name. As a matter of fact in Canada we have only one party and two names. However, so long as the two names are there to fool the people it would be well to make provision for the farmers in every constituency to take charge of the party conventions and nominate the man in whom they have confidence. If this is done by both parties then it matters not which man is elected as long as he is one who has intelligence and honesty of purpose and stands up and fights for the rights of the men who elected him. If the farmers who go to Ottawa keep all these things in view and will be firm, sooner or