

The Brain Growers' Guide

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CANADA'S FIRST WOMEN VOTERS

The women of Saskatchewan, last to acquire the franchise, are to be the first to use it. When the Saskatchewan government takes a referendum on the abolition of the liquor dispensaries, on December 11, a new element will have entered into the government of that province. It remains to be seen whether women will use this privilege in great numbers or whether they will regard it as negligently as men have been inclined to do in the past. Much will depend upon the fervor with which the advocates of this reform take up the task of informing the women of the importance of having their names put on the voters' lists. There exists at present much confusion in the minds of these new citizens concerning the qualifications necessary for the municipal and the provincial franchise and the fact that the referendum is to be taken at the time of the municipal elections will add not a little to the complication. Nearly every week-letters come to The Guide asking whether the new law means that all women can vote or whether only property holding women have this right. The law for women in respect to this is now exactly the same as for men. Only those who have property in their own name can vote in municipal elections, but any woman, twenty-one years of age, who is a British subject and who has resided in the province of Saskatchewan for one year, may register as a voter and vote on the temperance referendum and at all provincial elections hereafter. As the time is so short it is fortunate that the first question confronting the new voters is one on which they will not require any education. While it has never been claimed by the advocates of woman suffrage that women would vote as a unit on any particular problem, it has always been felt that they were more nearly unanimous on the temperance question than on any other issue with which they may be confronted. It will be a source of deep disappointment, then, if the women fail to turn out in force to express their opinion upon a matter which so vitally concerns their homes and the future of their children. Apart from its influence on the province the vote on the referendum will be interesting as affording Canadian men, for the first time, an opportunity to observe for themselves the effect upon their women-folk of exercising the franchise. The momentous question of what will become of the baby while the mother is out voting will have to be settled in many homes, and if the anti-suffragists are to be believed many Saskatchewan men face the dire possibility of a sudden rupture of their domestic felicity on December 11.

APPLES AND THE TARIFF

A representative of the Winnipeg Free Press investigated the apple market in Winnipeg and in the course of the investigation interviewed a wholesale fruit buyer in the city who made the following statement, published in the Free Press, September 2:—

"I was negotiating for 25 carloads of Washington apples," this gentleman said, "when I was informed that I could get apples for the same price in British Columbia. I wired to ascertain if this were true and found that the price was just exactly the same as I would have to pay for the Washington apples, plus the duty. I bought in Washington. So you see that the consumer has to pay 50 cents a barrel and 17 cents a box extra for customs concession to British Columbia growers that was claimed would give them protection in the prairie markets against the competition of the United States growers. The duty was increased at the last session of parliament from 40 cents to 90 cents a barrel, and from 13 to 30 cents a box. The sum of \$5,000 was collected on a recent shipment of Washington apples which consumers had to pay, and the B.C. growers are making no pretence of fixing their prices to shut out American imports. They

will this season take advantage of the crop shortage in the east to exact every cent the duty will allow them, and the American stuff will come in just the same. The consumer is the goat."

It will be remembered that when the British Columbia apple growers went down to Ottawa last season and got an extra 50 cents per barrel duty on apples they said it was merely for protection against the American apple and not to enable them to charge a higher price, but here is proof positive that the British Columbia apple growers have added the extra 50 cents on to the price of their fruit. It merely illustrates that the protectionist is the same kind of a human being no matter whether he is a farmer and grows apples for a living or makes war munitions and wears a title. The protectionist wants the tariff just for one thing and that is to allow him to get a higher price for his product than the laws of supply and demand will entitle him to. It will mean, therefore, that those who buy British Columbia apples this year will get in return for their money some apples and the balance tariff. It is doubtful if the amount of tariff included with the apples will give them any better flavor for pies or make their tonic qualities any more apparent.

PROTECTION AND BRITISH TRADE

The present time seems to afford splendid opportunities for Protectionists. Arguments that in normal times would never stand the test of reason for an instant are now being advanced with greater acceptance, largely because the bright ray of clear reason is partially obscured by the dark screen of personal and national hate. What is the proper trade policy to pursue after the war? Protectionists claim that the only salvation for the Empire is by means of the protective tariff system. It is to be a graded one, the highest to be applied to enemy nations, neutral countries come second in the scale and the lowest is to apply to the allies in the war. Back of all the suggestions is the purpose that Germany must be prevented from ever again disrupting the peace of the world in an endeavor to attain her ambition of world domination. But will the imposition of a prohibitive tariff accomplish this end? Will not this step rather play into Germany's hands who has always recognized that one of the chief sources of Britain's strength lies in her merchant marine, the continued operation of which is made possible thru her control of the seas? Great Britain has been able to withstand the financial and economic strain to which it has been put, financing its allies as well as bearing the burden of its own enormous war expenditures, almost entirely on account of its maritime superiority. Germany, recognizing this, has done and continues to do everything within her power to cripple Britain's carrying trade. What will be the effect of a tariff on the merchant marine? The United States affords a striking example of the injury that will result from any such policy. In the day of the sailing vessel and the sailing ship, just before the advent of the iron steamship, vessels flying the stars and stripes were to be found in every port and along every known trade route in the world, in fact they seriously threatened the maritime supremacy of Britain. Today the merchant marine of the United States is, comparatively speaking, non-existent. The reason for this great change is that as soon as American manufacturers began to feel the benefit to themselves of the tariff rates imposed with the object of building up industry that had been so seriously upset by the Civil war, they demanded further protection of home industries from foreign competition. This resulted

in the adoption of high customs tariffs, not only curtailing trade but also increasing the cost of shipbuilding and from that time the American merchant marine rapidly declined. Protection killed the American mercantile marine and if allowed it will just as surely kill the British. Should this at any time take place there will have been accomplished by the people themselves something which the combined navies of the Empire's enemies have been striving to do by every means in their power for the past two years.

INCREASING THE HUMUS IN SOILS

One of the most serious problems now confronting farmers in many parts of Western Canada is the decreasing amount of humus in the soil. In areas like the Red River Valley the humus has its greatest value in loosening up the gumbo and rendering it less likely to bake, but in the areas farther West the need of something to bind the soil together and prevent worse drifting from year to year is urgently needed. Particularly true is this in Central and Southern Saskatchewan and Southern Alberta. In many places there, soil drifting has become a positive menace, particularly in the spring. The trouble was not so apparent last year or this year, but with the heavy crop we took off in 1915 and the reaping of another average crop this year the trouble will be more aggravated than ever with the return of dry years.

There is enough nitrogen in practically all of our soils. Tho the soils of our semi-arid regions are not so rich in humus, such humus as they do contain is much richer in nitrogen than that of humid parts. What we need is a binding element. The older countries use stable manure, and green crops, particularly clovers, are used extensively. We will not have for many years enough livestock in Western Canada to turn but a very small part of the immense quantities of straw into manure. In fact too many farmers now move their stable instead of their manure pile when the latter gets too big or the closest slough gets filled up. Clovers are still in the experimental stage and those which would add the most humus have proven successful in only a few places so far. Peas and vetches, while valuable as leguminous crops are very expensive. Alfalfa is usually too valuable and is not particularly adapted for this purpose since it is a permanent crop. Winter rye promises to be one of the most useful crops for green manuring work. Then we have going to waste every year millions of tons of straw which goes up in smoke or is left to rot where it leaves the threshing machine. Properly applied either as a top dressing or worked into the summerfallow at the right season it would not only add greatly to the humus content of the soil enabling it to retain much more moisture and rendering it more friable, but it would go far to solving the soil drifting problem.

A HAPPY MEETING

On the fourth day of October the shareholders of the Canadian Pacific Railway will meet at the head office of the company at Montreal at 12 o'clock noon to hear the annual report and to elect directors. They no doubt will be very much pleased to hear that the company has a profit of forty-nine million dollars on the year's operations, being the best year in the company's history. In passing it might be noted that the profit made by the C.P.R. in the past year is more than double the combined loss sustained by the C.N.R. and G.T.P. When a railway company in Canada meets a loss it is made up out of the public treasury, but when it makes a profit it goes