

The Brain Growers' Guide

Winnipeg, Wednesday, October 3, 1917

THANKSGIVING

Thanksgiving Day will be observed throughout Canada on October 8. Both relatively and positively there is much to be thankful for. The country has been spared from the ravages of contending armies. The sacrifices both in men and money have been great, but still comparatively less than those that the belligerent countries of Europe have been called upon to make. The flood of Prussian militarism continues to be pressed back, and the forces opposed to it have since the last day of national thanksgiving been greatly augmented. The year has witnessed the entry of the United States into the war, and the resources in men and industrial forces of 100,000,000 of people added to those of the Allies. The submarine peril which threatened to isolate Britain, though still causing heavy weekly losses, appears to be losing force. Although the task of defeating the Hun is proving great beyond the fears of the most pessimistic, the war resources of the world are proving equal to the task. At no thanksgiving time since the outbreak of hostilities has the faith of the democratic nations in their ability to curb the war aims of the Teutons been so firmly fixed as now. Those who would hold that Canada has no cause for thankfulness have only to compare what is with what might have been, to see that there is still reason why a day of national thanksgiving should be reverently and earnestly celebrated.

Those who believed at the beginning of the war that the testing of nations would result in a religious revival, have in a large measure been disappointed. Christian nations have shown that they still trust to heavy battalions rather than to the God of battles for victory. The war has not undermined the materialism of the age. Sir David Beattie, one of the great commanders which the war has discovered, has openly and repeatedly expressed the belief that the Empire cannot hope for victory and peace until it comes to its knees. Thanksgiving is a day for supplication as well as for thanksgiving. The prayer of Canada on this Thanksgiving Day should be for greater reliance on the spiritual and moral forces of the universe.

THE FUSION MOVEMENT

The sentimental wave of feeling in favor of "win-the-war" candidates for the House of Commons seems to be sweeping a lot of sober minded people off their feet. Undoubtedly there are a lot of honest and well-intentioned people who believe that "win-the-war" candidates supported by both the old political parties are desirable in Western Canada. At the same time the movement is being fostered by a considerable element of those who have selfish ends to serve. As we pointed out last week, a fusion candidate, or a candidate elected on a "win-the-war" platform only, can hardly serve the best interests of the people of Western Canada. The idea of sending representatives to the House of Commons pledged only to win the war is dangerous to the democratic development of the country. These "win-the-war" candidates are expected to be acceptable to both the Liberal and Conservative parties, as well as the independent thinkers in the electorate. This means that such candidates will be mere figure-heads in the House of Commons. They are not to present any views on questions outside of those immediately affecting the war. To send men down to Ottawa as members of the House of Commons on a "win-the-war" platform alone, is neither fair to such candidates nor to the people who elect them. This country does not want any more rubber stamp members in the

House of Commons. There are too many there already.

What we need from Western Canada are red blooded men or women as candidates, who know the West, and have its interests at heart. We want candidates who have ideas and opinions and policies on a great many questions aside from those actually connected with winning the war. The Western spirit is in favor of the prosecution of the war, and is quite as patriotic as the best that Toronto can produce. All the Eastern members in the House of Commons are not by any means devoting all their energies to winning the war. They are taking care that all the special privileges that are enjoyed by the big interests are maintained and strengthened. If at the next election the West sends down a lot of milk and water members who have no policy except "win-the-war," there will be a great deal of legislation put through that will be detrimental to the best interests of Western Canada. There is no doubt that sentimental appeal to loyalty and patriotism will encourage a lot of people in favor of the idea of "win-the-war" fusionist candidates. But if the organized farmers and people of the West generally are wise, they will select their best men and nominate them and elect them on an independent platform, without any obligations to either the Grit or Tory party.

Let us have a number of candidates elected on the farmers' platform who will really represent Western opinion in the House of Commons. Such men can join hands with the government in the prosecution of the war in every possible way, but at the same time they can see that the West gets a square deal in other legislation that will come before parliament. What the West needs in the next parliament is 35 or 40 strong independent Western members. It is not necessary that they go down to Ottawa with an immediate demand for the complete fulfillment of the farmers' platform while the war is in progress. But it should be remembered that these men will be elected for five years, while the war may be over in a year or two at the most. Then will come the big problems where we will need our very best men. Let us select them now and have them ready in the House of Commons backed up by a powerful Western public opinion, so that when the war is over they can prevent any further betrayal of the best interests of this country.

WESTERN CANADA WINS

At the International Soil Products Exposition at Peoria, Illinois, last week the name of Western Canada was again blazoned in bold relief before the world. In open competition the men of these prairies showed that they could grow the best wheat, the best oats, the best rye and the best potatoes in the world, and that they are incomparably superior in their production of small grains and vegetables. There was no accident about it. It was the result of years of planning, of arduous labor, of infinite capacity for taking pains, and in many cases of the most scientific application of patiently accumulated knowledge. Never before have so many prizes come to Canada, never before have they been divided among such a large number of men and never before were they won on such a wide variety of products. These winnings demonstrate conclusively the favorableness of our climate, the quality of our soil and the versatile genius of our agriculturists. Every Canadian who participated in this show deserves the heartiest congratulations from his fellow citizens of Canada. The little squad that cleaned up at Peoria did more to advertise to the world and especially to our

southern neighbors, that our prairies are a good place to grow the finest things that soil can produce than has ever been accomplished before.

Again the sweepstakes for the best half bushel of wheat came to Canada, this time to Manitoba. Samuel Larcombe of Birtle showed a half bushel of Marquis that was as near perfection as it is possible to imagine. This is not the first winning Mr. Larcombe has done, though it is his first appearance at the International. This makes the fifth time the championship for the best hard spring wheat has been won by a Western Canadian. In 1912, Henry Holmes of Raymond, Alberta, pocketed the prize with Marquis. At the 1914, 1915 and 1916 expositions, Seager Wheeler brought home the purple to Saskatchewan, the latter year with Kitchener wheat, and now Samuel Larcombe has put Manitoba on a par with her sisters. But Mr. Larcombe did more, he won third for the best collection of products under an enormous handicap and it was done largely on quality. One of the most phenomenal things of all was the sweepstakes for potatoes captured by Seager Wheeler. Mr. Wheeler also won first on two varieties of potatoes and the largest number of prizes of any individual at the fair. That the world's best potatoes should also be produced in Northern Saskatchewan is a wonderful tribute to that province. These and his many other winnings established Seager Wheeler to be one of the world's greatest geniuses on seed selection and cultural methods. It makes Rosthern a Mecca for scientists.

To M. P. Mountain, Solgirth, we owe the credit of making Manitoba the producer of the sweepstakes oats and to John Strachan, Beulah, the credit for producing the sweepstakes rye. Both are championships of paramount importance, as also were the remarkable winnings of H. C. Whellams of East Kildonan on vegetables. Mr. Whellams is one of the most extensive market gardeners around Winnipeg. There are many other names that should have special mention. Among these are A. Cooper, Trebank, Manitoba, and W. J. Carrothers, Methven, Manitoba who stood next to Mr. Larcombe on wheat; J. A. Fields, Regina, Saskatchewan, for best dry farm wheat, and E. Guest, Indian Head for his vegetables. Exhibitors from Manitoba secured in all three sweepstakes, eleven firsts, six seconds and six thirds. Saskatchewan men won two sweepstakes, fourteen firsts, ten seconds and nine thirds. These unprecedented winnings combined with splendid provincial and other exhibits such as that of the Saskatchewan Grain Growers' Association will bring this great exposition nearer home to us than ever before, and should encourage stronger competition next year from Western Canada than we have ever yet seen.

BRITISH ELECTORAL REFORM

Britain is on the verge of great electoral reform. The Representation of the People Bill has recently been disposed of by the House of Commons and has now gone to the House of Lords. It is the most sweeping electoral reform Great Britain has seen since the Reform Bill of 1832, and it will go far toward placing in the hands of the people an instrument by which they can effect great changes.

It provides that:—

Men of 21 years and over are to have a vote on the basis of six months residence or occupation of business premises.

An elector may have two votes and no more—one for residence in a constituency, and one for business premises.

There is to be one member of parliament for every 70,000 of population.

Any woman 30 years old, already entitled to