

## IMPROVEMENT OF FRANCHISE ACT

Editor G. G. Guide:

Sir,—Mr. Fraser's letter in your last issue on this subject was a most peculiar production. Put in brief it was a plea for the disenfranchisement of the poor. Although I am not a lawyer, this proposal would, I think, entail an amendment to the Dominion Election Act before any such lists as proposed could be used for federal elections, consequently the statement that \$20,000.00 would be saved is incorrect. But this aside, it is certainly curious to say the least to find a man who is, I think, a Liberal in politics, pleading for reaction in the way Mr. Fraser does. In less happier days our fathers saw the interest of the poor neglected and came to the conclusion that the cause of this was that they were debarred from having any say in making the laws they had to obey, and at great cost of energy, money and time they planned and worked until they secured for all adult men the right of the franchise. The great argument they used was that every man who was a settled resident of the community should have a vote because he was a man. The basis of Mr. Fraser's proposal is, in plain words, pure snobishness, for Mr. Fraser would meet each voter at the poll, not with the sensible question, "Who are you?" but with this other question, "What have you got?" the whole being based upon the philosophy that a man is not a man unless he has property. I cannot believe that the people of the West where individual right is more fully recognized than elsewhere, will for a moment give heed to any such nonsense.

And what is the ground for asking us to reverse the car of progress and advance backward? It is that the poor are more susceptible to bribery than are those who are better to do. I am not at all willing to subscribe to this statement. If you could get together all the men who abuse their franchise I doubt if the poor would be

more largely represented than other classes; rather, I believe they would more than bear comparison with their more fortunate and wealthier fellow citizen.

While I think poverty is very undesirable, my experience has tended to the conviction that bribery finds its votaries generally among the avaricious, who are not all poor by any means.

Then again arises the question, "Is it wise to introduce so contentious a subject as this into our Grain Growers' Association? In organizing for the protection of our industrial interests we want to win all the sympathy and support we can, and I submit we shall make rather poor work by asking our people to thrash out a matter which, should it be decided as Mr. Fraser wishes, will alienate and antagonize the non-property workers of the West against us, a consummation the most undesirable.

The larger question of why the voters' lists in Manitoba are at present so much a matter of debate, I have no desire to write about, as that is not in any special sense a matter that concerns our interests as grain growers.

Yours,

Maymount, April.

GEO. LANGLEY.

## EFFORT

"The true doctrine to preach to this nation, as to the individuals comprising this nation, is not the life of ease but the life of effort," says President Roosevelt. "If it were in my power to promise the people of this land anything, I would not promise them pleasure. I would promise them that stern happiness which comes from the sense of having done in practical fashion a difficult work which was worth doing." That, when one comes to think of it, is the promise the Master made long ago to His followers—not rest, ease and pleasure, but the joy of the conqueror, "to him that overcometh."

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