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The Brain Growers' Guide

Winnipeg, Wednesday, April 4, 1917

AGRICULTURAL COLLEGE

It is apparent that there is not a clear realization of the important principle involved in the trouble between the Minister of Agriculture and the Manitoba Agricultural College. The advisory board of the college, which is the governing body of the institution under the law, engaged a professor of animal husbandry two years ago. He has done excellent work. The president of the college, the board and the student body are all of one mind on the satisfactory character of the administration of his department. The advisory board is the only authority with power to engage or discharge any member of the teaching faculty. Yet, because of a personal prejudice against the professor, Honorable Valentine Winkler has cut his name off the salary roll. The minister, by his arbitrary action has defied, insulted and humiliated the advisory board and the president of the college. A few months ago another professor left the college because of the interference with his work on the part of the minister. Our information is that others are likely to accept positions in other institutions where their work, and the institution itself commands the respect and co-operation of the Department of Agriculture.

Most educational institutions in all English speaking countries are controlled and conducted by governing boards. This system of management was devised expressly to save such institutions from political mismanagement and interference, and the system has proven to be an admirable one. Mr. Winkler has deliberately overthrown the system and violated the spirit of the act under which the college was established. If his action is not repudiated by the government, and the advisory board permits it to pass unchallenged the Agricultural College will have lost the greater part of its usefulness to the province. Agricultural education and development in Manitoba are inseparably linked up with the Agricultural College. That institution, despite the graft and extravagance which characterized its construction, has an opportunity to become one of the best on the continent. It is impossible to measure the benefits which it can bring to agriculture in Manitoba. But this can only be accomplished under a democratic system of management in which political interference and personal prejudice is absolutely eliminated. The farmers of Manitoba have paid a high price for the Agricultural College and we do not believe they will willingly see it destroyed by an autocratic minister. It is unfortunate that there should be a weak link in a government otherwise so progressive. Premier Norris, as head of the government, will have the hearty support of the farmers of Manitoba in any move he may make for the safety and progress of the Agricultural College and the proper development of the Department of Agriculture.

PROGRESS OF THE REVOLUTION

It would be expecting the impossible to anticipate that the revolution in Russia could be accomplished without great differences of opinion between different sections of the people, as to the best path to pursue in the establishment of democratic government. Few revolutions in history have been consummated without internecine strife. Rioting, bloodshed and even civil war have characterized most revolutions, successful or otherwise. Such reports as come to hand, however, intimate that Russia is conducting the sanest revolution in history. Occasional news reports filter thru which would indicate that a counter revolution is being advocated by extremists who are dissatisfied with the actions of the moderates in

control, but apparently the danger of such a move is remote. The thorough nature of the revolution is well illustrated by the helplessness of the bureaucrats. The chief bulwark of autocratic or bureaucratic oppression is military power. Russia's military power is engaged in the defense of the Empire and its services therefore were not at the disposal of the reactionaries in combating the revolution. Besides, the democratic spirit seems to be permeating the Russian army. Under such circumstances it is not surprising to learn that the Grand Dukes have offered to give up the land held under authority from the Crown. Their chief concern seems to be to save their ducal heads. Representatives of the new government are acclaimed by both soldiery and civilians on their promise to have the basis of Russia's new institutions laid on that broad foundation, the will of the people.

One of the most gratifying and significant results that the revolution promises to accomplish is the emancipation of the Jews. The story of what the Jews of Russia have suffered constitutes one of the blackest chapters in her history. The Jewish problem is interwoven in all phases of the political, social and industrial life of Russia. The reconstruction of Russia, along democratic lines, demands the emancipation of the Jewish people. Democracy never persecutes. It stands for the free exercise of religion. The success of the revolution may largely be gauged by its effect on the status of the Jews in Russia. In Finland, the effect of a new and more beneficent regime is also being felt. Finland has fared badly under the reactionaries. Her liberties have for decades been made a political football by them. One of the first acts of the new government was to grant constitutional freedom to that distressed country. The Golden Rule works well in national affairs. Democracy has not been practiced in Russia, but there is now ample evidence that its principles have been well studied there. Lovers of progressive government everywhere are hoping that the new Slavic ship of state will safely weather the perilous initial stages of its voyage.

RAILWAY INVESTIGATION REPORT

A special Railway Investigation Commission appointed last fall to make a detailed investigation of the Canadian railway problem has about concluded its report. The conclusion seems to be, according to an unofficial statement, that Canada must either continue its system of subsidies, guarantees and loans to two of these roads, or nationalize them. It is said that two commissioners (more than might have been expected) favor the nationalization and consolidation of the Canadian Northern Railway and the Grand Trunk Pacific with the roads already owned by the government and that one favors the retention of these roads under corporation control. The Grand Trunk Pacific is shown to be in a fearfully neglected condition which would require the expenditure of at least \$50,000,000 to put it on an equally efficient running basis with the Canadian Pacific Railway. It is also shown that, in spite of the assurances of Canadian Northern interests, at the time they were granted their last subsidy, that no more financial aid would be required, another \$50,000,000 is necessary to put that road on a running basis. No suggestion that the government should take over the Canadian Pacific railway has been offered so far as is known. It will be noticed that the amounts required to put each of the crippled roads in running condition is approximately equal to the profits from the Canadian Pacific railway alone last year (\$49,000,000). In view of the success of public ownership of railways in

countries where such railways have been built from business needs, and not from political motives, and given a fair trial, is there any good reason why the government should not take over these three roads? The people must pay the deficits or profits in any case. They must guarantee the bonds and make good the losses. The whole prosperity of the roads depends on the people in Canada, and on no one else. Why then should not the people own these roads and apply the profits of one to wipe out the deficits of the others, instead of permitting themselves to be further exploited for two promoters' roads? There would then be some opportunity to equalize freight rates in this country and to wipe out one of the greatest causes of political corruption. The government of Canada it is said intends to take action on the report of this commission before the present adjourned session of parliament closes. It is up to the people of Canada and especially the West, which has been, and is being, plundered more than any other section to insist that no half-way measures are adopted. The talk of enormous cost and lack of managing ability is not an insurmountable difficulty. The present or equally capable men are available to run our railroads, the people have to pay for them in any case, and to the people are due the returns. This enormous question cannot be kept in the background any longer and some definite action is due very shortly. It ought to be decided on the interest of all the people; not in the interests of a few railway magnates who have already put too much in their pockets that properly belongs to the Canadian public.

RAISING PATRIOTIC REVENUES

The Saskatchewan legislature at its last session put into effect a measure designed to secure greater equality in personal war sacrifices. In order to assist patriotic funds for war relief purposes, it enacted one year ago the "Patriotic Revenues Act" the main provision of which empowered the government to levy one mill per dollar on the total value of all the rateable property in the various municipalities. By the latest amendment this rate is raised to one and one-half mills and a poll tax of two dollars on non-property owners is also to be levied. The idea is not to abolish voluntary subscriptions, but to discourage widespread campaigns of that nature and raise the money by taxation. This is a step worthy of emulation by other governments and particularly the federal. Many individuals at the present time are making little or no sacrifice and are furnishing the excuse that the money for patriotic purposes should be raised by taxation. Such is an excellent plea, but it is not always employed unselfishly. It may not be possible to equalize sacrifice in war-time, but some greater attempt to that end should be made than is now being done. Manitoba adopted this policy a year ago.

TURNING THE POLITICAL WHEEL

It is announced that the new government in British Columbia will cancel the appointment of Sir Richard McBride as agent-general of the province in Great Britain. It will be remembered that under the old government in British Columbia a quarrel arose within the party. It was settled by McBride retiring from the premiership and being succeeded by Bowser. McBride then went to England as agent-general for the province at a salary stated to be \$15,000 per year, or more than double his salary as premier. The former agent-general in Britain was retired on a pension of \$6,000 in order to find a place for McBride. Thus is the game of politics played