

The Brain Growers' Guide

Winnipeg, Wednesday, January 1st, 1913

PLEASE MARK YOUR BALLOT

Don't forget that the polls have not yet closed for The Guide Referendum. There are thousands of our readers who have not marked the ballot in our issue of December 11. We hope that every one of them will cut out the ballot on page 19 of that issue and send it to us at once. The polls will not close so long as the ballots are coming into our office at the rate they are now coming. There is plenty of time and we want all our readers to vote.

WHERE THE PEOPLE RULE

One by one the foes of self-government by the people, instead of by the politicians, are being routed. Whenever an awakened public conscience calls for reforms, the reactionaries, the stand-patters, those who are thriving because of the existing order of things, try to delay progress with the old catch phrase, "It won't work." That is what they have been saying about Direct Legislation. Indeed it is the only "argument" left. The history of Oregon for the past ten years shuts the mouths of all these unbelievers in the power or the capacity of the common people to govern themselves. The Guide is fortunate in being able to present its readers with the plain statement of actual results of Direct Legislation in this progressive State. The writer, Dr. W. G. Eggleston, is recognized throughout the United States as one of the ablest exponents of Direct Legislation and allied topics on the continent. Not only by pains-taking study and wide travel is he qualified to speak of the problems and difficulties of government as we know it to-day, but by dint of hard fighting as well, as he has long been in the thick of the battle for the common citizen against the holders of special political or economic privileges. When he tells that Direct Legislation has actually proven all that was expected from it, and that none of the predicted evils have followed its adoption, this testimony of an eye-witness should count for more than the panicky wails of those who pretend that the loss of their own unjust privileges involves the whole country going to the dogs. A ten years' trial of Direct Legislation in Oregon, while no one pretends it has solved every difficulty, has at least done this much. It has put people in the way of curing their own social disorders instead of waiting for some heaven-sent leader to do everything for them. Direct Legislation has broken the power of the bosses. The political machines are almost ready for the scrap-heap and partizan bitterness is tottering into its richly-deserved grave. Direct Legislation has enabled the people to kill many obnoxious measures which their mis-representatives were trying to force upon them. By Direct Legislation the people have gained rights which the Legislature did not want to give them, such as the right of recalling unfaithful public officials, the right of home rule for towns and cities, and only recently the right of women to vote on the same terms as men. Oregon has pointed the way. If the people there can make a success of real self-government, we have faith enough in Canadians to believe they are equally capable. Saskatchewan bids fair to lead Canada in this reform. How long before the Prairie Provinces stand shoulder to shoulder for the unfettered rule of the people?

The British preparations for the celebration of 100 years of peace with the United States are in the hands of a large committee, including Premier Asquith, Bonar Law, the Archbishop of Canterbury and many others

of foremost rank. One of the means proposed to commemorate the occasion is the placing of a bust of George Washington in Westminster Abbey. This is a plan worthy of a broadminded people. But if such a scheme were proposed in Canada it would be branded as "disloyal"—particularly if it would be to the financial benefit of any of our jingoes to start such a cry.

A SPLENDID SUGGESTION

It is a pleasure to find ourselves in hearty accord with the Winnipeg Telegram in its appeal to the Mayor of Winnipeg to appoint a capable commission to investigate the high cost of living in Winnipeg, and, if possible, to locate the causes and suggest a remedy. As the Telegram truly says, the cost of living, as well as rents, must come down. The solution of this problem in Winnipeg will also be a solution for every Western city and also to a very large extent for the rural West. Winnipeg depends upon the farming community of the West for its prosperity and, as The Telegram indicates, the proposed investigation will entail an investigation of agricultural conditions. We feel sure that the organized farmers will be very glad to assist any capable commission in every possible way to arrive at a correct solution of this difficult and vital problem. We trust that the Mayor of Winnipeg will see his way clear to adopt the suggestion of The Telegram.

ANOTHER GIFT TO SPECULATORS

This life is full of surprises, but we must confess that the biggest surprise that has been sprung upon us for a considerable time was the announcement made in the House of Commons on Wednesday, Dec. 18, by Hon. Dr. Roche, Minister of the Interior, that he had decided to recommend Parliament to further extend the time for the location of South African Scrip for at least six months and possibly for a year. If an act is passed in accordance with the announcement of Hon. Dr. Roche, this will be the third extension of time to be granted, each extension being equivalent to the gift of many thousands of dollars to speculators at the expense of the farmers. The grant that was made to the veterans in 1908, was the right to 320 acres of land under settlement conditions, subject to the selection of the land being made by Dec. 31, 1910. It will be readily understood that an extension of the time in which the scrip might be located would increase its value, and each extension has, as a matter of fact, been followed by an increase in the price of scrip. The volunteers who were awarded the scrip in recognition of their services in the South African War, have not, however, received these increases in value, practically all of them having either taken up land or sold their rights before any extension of time was announced. The first extension was made in March, 1910, when Hon. Frank Oliver was Minister of the Interior. The bill was vigorously opposed by Conservative members, those who spoke in condemnation of the extension including Dr. Roche, now Minister of the Interior, C. J. Doherty, now Minister of Justice, Arthur Meighen and Glen Campbell.

The objections of these gentlemen were made on the ground that speculators, and not the veterans, would benefit, practically all the scrip not already located, being at that time in the hands of the speculators. Mr. Campbell, in the House of Commons, on April 5, 1910, said, "I think it is a shame to enable these men to enrich themselves at the

expense of the volunteers and of this country by changing the law in this way." Mr. Meighen, on April 26, 1910, said, "The very extension is an increment of the value that is now a possession of the people of Canada, and if this Act passes, that will go to the speculator. Why should the speculator get that for nothing? The principle is bad and cannot be defended." Dr. Roche also made a strong speech in opposition to the bill, which will be found in full on page 18 of this issue. In spite of this opposition, however, the extension was granted. As a result the price of scrip, which had been sold by veterans for from \$200 to \$500, went up in the hands of the speculators to \$1,200. Then when the extended time for location neared its end in December, 1911, the price fell to around \$800. On January 1, 1912, the unlocated scrip was just as worthless as confederate notes. But in March, 1912, Hon. Robert Rogers, after being waited upon, as he said by numerous deputations, secured the passage of a bill granting another extension till December 31, 1912. Did Hon. Dr. Roche, Arthur Meighen, Hon. C. J. Doherty and the other objectors, object again? Alas, they were silent. Hon. Frank Oliver protested for a while and then he gave up and the only member of the House who objected to the last was F. B. Carvell, from New Brunswick. And now Hon. Dr. Roche announces that still another extension is to be granted. The contentions which Dr. Roche made in 1910 are doubly strong to-day, and it is to be hoped that he will not be allowed to get the extension through the House without giving very good explanations for his change of front.

It is probable that the bill, like that passed a year ago, will contain a clause providing that substitutes appointed prior to January 1 shall not be entitled to any extension of time, and Dr. Roche may claim that only warrants still in the hands of volunteers, and not those which have been bought by speculators, will be affected. This clause, however, has not had that effect for the simple reason that warrants are sold in blank. Speculators have been dealing in scrip during the past year, and many of them made large profits as the result of the last extension, and the same thing, no doubt, will happen again. It is estimated that the small bunch of speculators who hold the South African scrip still unlocated will make approximately \$84,000 out of the extension. On the assumption that scrip had to be located by Dec. 31, 1912, as the law now states, buyers were offering \$700 each for the warrants, up to the time when Dr. Roche announced the further extension. There were then about 120 warrants on the market, which made their total value \$84,000. With another year, or even six months in which to locate, the warrants will no doubt double in value. A "pull" with the government is often worth a lot of money.

We notice in Industrial Canada that J. R. K. Bristol, Dominion appraiser and member of the Board of Customs, has been appointed manager of the tariff department of the Canadian Manufacturers' association, in succession to R. W. Breadner, who has gone back into the employ of the government. There seems to be unrestricted reciprocity in men between the government and the Manufacturers' association. We would suggest that the Customs Department be handed over to the Manufacturers' Association. They would, no doubt, be willing to operate the department free of charge, and thus save considerable expense, while the results would be about the same as now.