



NOTICE TO CORRESPONDENTS

This department of The Guide is maintained especially for the purpose of providing a discussion ground for the readers where they may freely exchange views and derive from each other the benefits of experience and helpful suggestions. Each correspondent should remember that there are hundreds who wish to discuss a problem or offer suggestions. We cannot publish all the immense number of letters received, and ask that each correspondent will keep his letter as short as possible. Every letter must be signed by the name of the writer, though not necessarily for publication. The views of our correspondents are not of necessity those of The Guide. The aim is to make this department of great value to readers, and no letters not of public interest will be published.

PROPORTIONAL REPRESENTATION

Editor, Guide:—In reviewing the late election and the system by which we have what is supposed to be a representative government at Ottawa, one almost feels ashamed to think of the puerile system, much less to talk or write anything about it. We boast of a representative parliament of Canada. In the first place, only one-half of the people over twenty-one years of age have a vote; our women are only considered nonentities in political economy. In the second place, only a percentage of the actual voters, vote. In the third place, about or nearly one-half of the actual voters, after they have voted, have either a representative or a vote in Parliament. And in the fourth place, not a member of Parliament is perfectly sure that he is the real choice of his people.

Considering the first question, we think it high time that in this progressive age we in Canada should wipe this puerile blot off of our elective system and enfranchise our women. We will not discuss the question further than to emphasize the fact that it is time that this relic of the barbarous ages was relegated to oblivion, and that all good citizens, men and women of Canada, should have a vote. In the second place, a certain percentage of voters do not vote. For some reason or other they make a menace of themselves to representative government, by pretending to have nothing to do with politics, at the same time taking advantage of all the good things either party succeeds in giving to the people by way of legislation. We look upon such actions as beneath an up-to-date enfranchised citizen and a discouragement to any representative. This class of voters should have an alternative, either exercise their franchise or pay a right good fine. In the third feature of our Parliaments lies the most absurd methods of electing members to represent us. Both Liberals and Conservatives have only about half their votes in the House of Commons. There are constituencies in which either one party or the other has never been directly represented at Ottawa and has no likelihood of ever being represented. Their votes are a dead loss to the country. This is simply not fair to voters—it is all wrong. No man or woman should lose the influence of their vote by having to leave it at home because a certain representative carried the constituency. District representation is not true representation and ought to be done away with and be superseded by proportional representation. By proportional representation, every candidate for election would have competitors of his own stripe of politics, every voter would have a direct representative of his own choice and every vote would figure in Parliament—none would be left at home. A voter under our present system of voting has but one of three choices in casting his vote. He must vote for a person of his own stripe of politics irrespective of choice, stay at home or vote in opposition to his political views or sentiments. This destroys to a nicety a voter's independence in his own party. It simply makes a political slave of him or drives him out of his society, wrong. We all more or less adhere to party and it may be many generations before partyism will be superseded by any other or better systems of running governments. What all parties want and need is a method or system by which they will have a free choice in the personnel of their own party and have their votes directly represented in the House, none to be left at home. Proportional representation

accomplishes this by allowing a voter to vote first, second, third, etc., choice of candidates over a large territory. And it also provides for the aggregate number of votes to be equally divided among the successful representatives so that every vote will be represented in Parliament. It also gives a voter a chance to choose a representative to his liking along professional or industrial lines. The present composition of the House of Commons along these lines is a laughing stock, simply ludicrous. If voters had had a free hand the personnel of our Parliament would have a very different showing today along industrial lines. Proportional representation is not new. It has been weighed and not found wanting. It is an up-to-date and honest system of electing representatives to any elective body. In the fourth place our representatives to Parliament do not really know that they are the choice of their constituents. They were tumbled out by a political machine and machine-voted to power. They actually had no competitors, only a fighter of the opposing force. They were out of harmony industrially, professionally, etc., and do not truly represent the people. In the consideration of the whole system of representative government as it exists today we conclude that it is only an apology for "the rule of the people." Our Parliament at Ottawa is elected by less than one-half the people over twenty-one years of age. It is elected by less than one-half the actual voters, and the party in power by about one-half the votes polled, so that Parliament represents about or nearly twenty-five per cent. of the people entitled to votes, and the party in office represents less than twelve and one-half per cent. of the people over twenty-one years of age. Put these facts with the absurd manner in which Parliament is put together and boast of representative government or "the rule of the people"—absolute nonsense. How long is this thing going to last? We are safe in predicting that it will go on until the voting element of our Canadian citizens becomes thoroughly acquainted with Direct Legislation's systems and methods of electing and making legislative bodies. "The rule of the people" must soon be the sovereign power in Canadian political economy. Direct Legislation is worming its way into the vital sentiments of the Canadian people and the Swiss system of government may any day assert its rights in Canada. Organized education and teaching along Direct Legislation lines is our hope of up-to-date legislation.

J. E. FRITH.

Saskatchewan.

REPLY TO MR. LANGLEY

Editor, Guide:—Kindly allow me a little space to reply to Mr. Langley. While I admit that I am not out to ventilate any grievance but our own, and while I consider that one has as much as he can do to uphold his own side of the question, nevertheless his assertion that I refuse to look at anything but the wants of this district, is more far-fetched than accurate. He has been at considerable pains to spread information regarding the vast amount of work the executive have got through, and while such is undoubtedly the case, in all probability, had some of the directorate kept out of the organization and applied themselves to other and more important work, Mr. Langley would not have had the same occasion to dilate upon the strenuous time he has just survived and there would have been in all likelihood, a considerable increase in the business

accomplished. Again, being up to the eyes in work, one would have thought they would appreciate the efforts to lighten the load, instead of which they turned them down with a promptness and a finality sufficient to dampen the ardor of the most enthusiastic.

I have maintained that there has been some discrimination in regard to election at this point, and Mr. Langley gives as his reason the isolated nature of the proposal. How long would such a point remain isolated? How long need it be isolated if a little organizing energy were judiciously expended along this line? To ask is to answer. Were this company restricted to ten or a dozen houses per year, by financial causes, there might be a little reason in Mr. Langley's contention. As it is, lack of inclination is the only perceptible one.

Your correspondent states that there were six men engaged in organizing, and while I bow to his superior knowledge I would like to suggest that he give them a gentle hint to hump themselves a little or, judging by past progress, with 120 points to cover, this branch of the work will not be overtaken at an early date, more likely in the dim and distant future.

The executive, according to Mr. Langley, are anxious to run this institution on business lines—a perfectly laudable ambition—but where the business sense of establishing elevators at points where there are a number of competitors already on the ground is very hard to see. Nothing suits the existing companies better than to get in at points where there is little or no competition, as we know to our cost, but Mr. Langley and his colleagues are prepared to jump in where it is hottest, and where there is nothing like the same necessity as there is at other points. Such a business policy would hardly be creditable to the proprietor of a peanut stand.

Your correspondent cites the fact that Tisdale has already an elevator, but he loses sight of the facts, that 21 of his points have from one up to five, and that this is a street wheat point, where competition is a vital necessity. He also takes great credit for the establishing of initial elevators at 24 points. There is no one likely to cavil at such an arrangement although some of them are track wheat points, where private companies did not deem it profitable to build. But I hold that the matter of attending to points that are already fairly well provided for, to the exclusion of places not so fortunate in that regard, is not in accord with the spirit of the act, nor with the fundamental principles of business.

WM. RATCLIFFE, JR.

Sylvania, Sask.

ALBERTA BY-ELECTIONS AND DIRECT LEGISLATION

Editor, Guide:—During the last campaign I listened to a speech by the Hon. A. L. Sifton, Premier of this Province. It was a well delivered regulation political campaign speech and moved along smoothly until I suddenly felt the speaker changing his entire attitude. In a moment the man superceded the politician; with all the pathos springing from conviction he made a statement, and it seemed to me that he was swayed by several emotions while so doing.

Prominently, it appeared to me, he spoke as one who had earnestly striven to attain a purpose but failed; failed on account of a condition of affairs which had only just forced itself upon him as obtaining beyond question of a doubt and being absolutely irremediable. These were his words:—"There is no measure nor policy the government can devise that will meet with the sanction of the opposition."

There is hardly a reader who has not laughed at the obtuseness of Pat, who upon landing answered the question concerning his political affiliations by stating "I'm agin the government."

How do you like it, you intelligent voters for party politics, that your leader as a Conservative has assumed Pat's political faith until September 21, and that since that day the members of the former government cannot attain to a higher political ambition than Pat's? No regard for public business, no desire to set Canada in the front rank, but simply by opposing and impeding the government to produce an opportunity to obtain the fats of office for the Party. To rule and exercise authority is the aim of the party in power, to oppose at any cost that of the other side. The peoples' voice is not sought and not considered. It is high time that Can-

adians and party politics came to a parting of the ways.

We are told in the Bible that for the great ones to exercise authority is wrong, "but it shall not be so among you, but whosoever will be chief among you let him be your servant." The old Book also states that a house, no matter of what description, divided against itself cannot stand. Could not these words be taken to mean the great value of Direct Legislation with the Right of Recall? Wherever Direct Legislation has been introduced it has been an unqualified success, and the latest news shows that another great State, California, has also adopted the great principle by a large majority, even going so far as to adopt the recall of the judges.

By-elections for the provincial house are upon us, and would it not be in order for some man to arise at each political meeting and ask the chairman to be allowed to make a motion, and then propose that it is the sense of the house that the candidate declare lucidly his standing upon this most vital matter, and pledge himself to introduce, or aid in introducing, a direct legislation measure during the next session of the legislature, and that the meeting, irrespective of party affiliations, will vote for the candidate who is most emphatic in favor of this action? Meanwhile we can most emphatically push a Direct Legislation organization for the next general election.

Yours for the uplift of Canada.

DANIEL F. BOISSEVAIN.
Strathmore, Alta.

CAPITAL AND UNEARNED INCREMENT

Editor, Guide:—In yours of Oct. 4 is a letter on the above subject, from John R. Symons in which he says that "I am not well acquainted with Prof. Huxley's writings, and whether land is called wealth or not is immaterial, so long as it is used as such."

Allow me to say in reply that it is the first time I ever heard that Prof. Huxley was an authority on political economy, the science of wealth distribution. The names of Adam Smith, John Stuart Mill, Jeremy Bentham and David Ricardo are often referred to as authorities on economics, but the name of Huxley, never. But I have beside me Huxley's chapter on "Natural Rights and Political Rights" in which he argues that all have not an equal interest in the earth, that people have no rights by nature, by virtue of their being human, and that any rights that are ours, we are indebted to the governments for them. So when any person takes this position in opposition to the teachings of Christianity and the highest instincts of human nature it is useless to argue with him.

Henry George in advocating the Unearned Increment of land for revenue was really championing the natural rights of mankind. Huxley argued that mankind have no natural rights.

Again, land is not "wealth" and cannot be termed such. We must use different terms to mean different things. Grain is wealth produced by labor from the soil, but the grain is not soil and we misunderstand each other unless we use words that always mean the same thing. If we aim to secure a just distribution of wealth then we should first have a clear idea of what wealth is, the very thing we are discussing. But just there is where many well meaning people fall down—they speak of wealth but do not realize what it is. That the distribution is monstrously unjust, a foul blot on our civilization, a disgrace to humanity is evident from the following from Mr. Symon's letter—"95% of the farms around Battleford are under mortgage and 85% of all the farms in Saskatchewan are mortgaged." This condition is prevalent all over Canada. I can readily understand how the homes of the lazy and slothful should be under mortgage but is it not a national disgrace that the homes of the diligent and sober should be owned by mortgage corporations? This is the condition that reformers protest against. But before we can improve this condition, we must know the cause and the remedy. And to this end let us bend every intelligent and honest effort. The first step is to aim to use words to express exactly what we mean.

W. D. LAMB.

Plumas, Man.

WORRY IS A disease. Work the only remedy. Do something for some one else. Forget self.