

DON'T FORGET YOUR BALLOT

The Guide Referendum, the ballot of which appeared in our last issue, has already met with a generous response. But we should like to urge on any of our readers who have as yet failed to mark their ballots, to send them in without delay. Several have clipped announcements of the referendum and have filled in their answers and mailed them to The Guide. The only vote which will count, however, is the official ballot published in the issue of Dec. 11. The Referendum is a simple thing in itself, and yet if our readers respond wholeheartedly, it should do a power of good for the farmers' cause. If the farmers of Western Canada, wincing under the burden of oppressive conditions, are waiting for help to come of itself, they are leaning on a wisp of hay. Reform has never come without work, and hard work at that. If one only stops to think a moment of the injustices weighing most heavily on the Canadian farmers, he will see why work, rather than mere wishes, will be necessary to right matters. What are the abuses which are robbing the people of their earnings? The protective tariff is one burden, which its beneficiaries are finding it harder every day to mask under any of the disguises adopted in the past. But Protection will not disappear of itself. Just because it is unjust to the mass of people by pillaging them for the enrichment of the protected manufacturers, the greed of those beneficiaries will lead them to fight to the last ditch against the cancelling of their privileges. The same motive of cupidity will cause the railways to battle for continued oppression by high freight rates. The bankers will not resign without a struggle the power now enjoyed to fleece the needy farmer ten or twelve per cent. The land speculator, permitted by our present system to grow rich while retarding the country's development by holding land out of use, will not see his easy money returned to the people without a desperate struggle. The dishonest and self-seeking politicians will not voluntarily outlaw themselves, and so may be counted on to line up to a man against Direct Legislation. No, reforms must arise from the people, not from the powers that be. By showing the country where they stand on the eight vital questions of The Guide Referendum, the organized farmers have it in their power to give a good strong pull for justice and common rights.

PROTECTION AND WAR

Protection goes hand in hand with war. A system of trade restrictions has more than once got its start as an expedient to pay off war debts. This was the case in the United States after the Civil War of 1861-65. The protective doctrine, moreover, fosters racial and national animosities. "Foreigner" is a word ever in the mouths of Protectionists. A tariff to hit the foreigner is ever their aim. The fact that protection inevitably hurts the home consumer rather than the foreigner or that it is really the fellow-citizen rather than the alien who pays the duty does not lessen the blame of protectionists in constantly arousing feelings of strife and envy to support the theories. Free Trade, on the contrary, implies, first of all, the common brotherhood of nations, instead of the sharp and bitter classifying of every one except those living in one's own country, as outsiders and foreigners. The prosperity of one's native land, according to protectionist dogma, is dependent upon getting the better of other nations and to just the extent that foreign countries can be made to buy our goods, and can be prevented from selling to us goods in return, to just that extent are we said to prosper. Free Trade means an open door to the world, international equality, a square deal for all. Protection is a muddled system of special privileges, both within the nation and in foreign trade rela-

tions. It calls for concessions, favors and bonuses from the cradle to the grave. A protected nation approaches a foreign market in the hope of getting some special favors which will give it an unfair advantage over its commercial rivals. This, in itself, is a confession of weakness. Free Trade Britain is always satisfied with impartial justice; "the open door," giving all other nations an equal chance with herself. Can any one who looks over the sordid history of commercial bickerings, sharp practice and trickery, doubt that if the fair and square free trade attitude prevailed among all the great powers, good will would be as general as it is now rare? Protection is also linked with war by the devotion of the same worshippers. Is it only a coincidence that the Jingo is almost invariably the high protectionist? No, it is not merely chance that throws these two classes together. The out-and-out protectionist spits blood and fire whenever he finds "foreign" goods coming into the country. From shutting out these foreigners by force of tariffs to shutting them out by force of arms is an easy step and the protectionist generally finds himself a Jingo. The tariff beneficiaries likewise have apparently entered into a working compact with the dogs of war. Let the people but begin to feel the burden of protection and start devising measures to lower the cost of living and the protected manufacturers and allied interests give the sleeping dogs of war a gentle kick and a knowing wink. Thereupon nothing can be heard, throughout the land but the baying, barking and yelping of the war dogs, and lo! we are in the midst of another war scare. The people are turned away from considering the evils of protection and the tariff barons go on robbing the consumers for another year or so, until another red herring war scare must be drawn across the trail. Both wars and war scares should be laid at the door of Protection more often than most of us realize.

As a result of the vote taken on December 9, the Hail Insurance Act will go into effect in Saskatchewan next year in about 90 municipalities. The scheme provides for a levy of four cents an acre on all farm lands within the participating municipalities, and compensation up to \$5 per acre will be paid in case of loss by hail. The act will be administered by a commission, two-thirds of the members of which will be appointed by a convention of the reeves of participating municipalities. A good feature of the act is the provision that vacant lands will be taxed for hail insurance at the same rate as land which is under crop, speculators being thus compelled to bear a portion of the loss caused by hail.

While the two great political parties are proclaiming the merits of their respective naval policies and singing Rule Britannia in the House of Commons, there is a danger that public attention will be diverted from other matters which more vitally affect the everyday life of the people. Pickpockets take advantage of great national demonstrations to ply their nefarious trade, and the tariff barons are attempting to secure an increase of duties while public interest is centred on the navy question. It's all right to wave the flag and shout "Hurrah!" but it is well to watch that you are not being robbed while doing so.

The Barons of Privilege in Toronto say that Canada is prosperous. Let them go to some of the dwellers in the poverty stricken homes of Toronto and ask if Canada is prosperous. The prosperity of a nation is the prosperity of the citizens. The present excessive prosperity of some of our citizens is founded upon the poverty of others.

Congratulations to Lethbridge, the most

progressively governed city in Canada. Lethbridge already raises all its revenues by the taxation of unimproved land values, and it has now adopted the commission form of government, with the Initiative, Referendum and Recall. Lethbridge will assuredly prosper.

When brother was fighting brother in the bloody civil war in the United States the protected interests took advantage of the public calamity to have the tariff doubled and trebled. If Canada is forced into the vortex of huge naval expenditures our protected interests will do the same thing. It is time for sober thought.

Germany has an airship capable of carrying a crew of eighteen men on a four-days' trip. On her trial voyage she dropped a third of a ton of explosives on a huge raft and destroyed it. By the time Canada's navy is built, Dreadnoughts will be an easy prey to military airships.

The cost of living continues to climb. A committee of the Toronto Board of Trade declares that tariffs, trusts, land monopoly and big armies and navies are among the causes. Hear, hear. That's the most sensible thing we have heard from Toronto for a long time.

A \$35,000,000 naval tax means an average of \$5 for every man, woman and child in Canada, and those who are poorest will pay the most proportionately. Surely the people who pay should be allowed a voice. A referendum is the only method of securing the voice of the people.

Replies to our referendum vote are not coming in as fast as they should. Many of our readers are neglecting to mark their ballots. No matter whether you favor or oppose the questions asked mark your ballot and send it along at once.

"In ten years or less the development of aircraft will make war unthinkable," says the Toronto Globe, and then holds up both hands for the policy of huge naval preparation.

We would be glad to hear from any farmers who are suffering from car shortage. It is only through publicity that our problems can be solved, and The Guide is devoted entirely to the problems of the country.

The vote of \$35,000,000 for a navy now means steadily increasing votes in the future. Canada will soon be rushed into the crushing race for naval armament that is now grinding millions in Europe into deeper poverty.

The present prospect of the settlement of the Balkan-Turkish war shows what may be done towards peace when the great powers lend their influence.

The great growth of Britain's trade is convincing proof that free trade does not mean any ruination of industries. The poverty in Britain is not due to free trade.

The manufacturers are at Ottawa lobbying for an increase in the woollen duties, which are now 35 per cent. They want bigger profits, even if poor people have to freeze.

Why not have a referendum on the navy? Those who have to pay the bill should say how the money is to be spent.

If you have not yet voted in The Guide referendum, do it now. The official ballot will be found only in The Guide of Dec. 11.

If an election is forced on the question of the navy what becomes of the tariff question?