

need of funds. There must be more funds raised to carry on the fight. The people of the West are paying the whole bill and they must pay even more yet before they will get what they have a right to. If every man in the West who desires to have these conditions improved and to give to every man the wealth that he produces, would send a good contribution to the central office of his Association, he would be doing a great deal to further the cause. The unjust burden levied upon every family in the West, is several hundred dollars, and it cannot be lifted by the expenditure of only \$1.00 a year by a fraction of the population. Will the people of the West stand by and see their country bled as it is being bled today, or will they contribute further of their funds to demand a square deal? A great deal has been accomplished already for the benefit of the people, but there still remains much more. The huge loss of \$124,000,000 is evident. It is all due to unjust laws. To change the laws we must educate the people to the need of the change. To carry on this educational campaign money is needed. The associations are all handicapped by the need of money and The Guide also. Every farmer in this country who wants to secure a fair share of the just return for his labor should devote at least \$25 per year to the campaign funds of the farmers' organization. When the manufacturers and financiers decide to "educate" the people in favor of Special Privilege they meet together and in a few hours contribute half a million dollars if necessary to corrupt our politicians and hoodwink the people. Our own people must contribute to their own campaign in self-defence.

#### DIRECT LEGISLATION IN MANITOBA

One of the most important questions which will come before the Manitoba Legislature during the present session is that of Direct Legislation. Direct Legislation through the Initiative, Referendum and Recall, is a reform which, if adopted, will enable the people of Manitoba to exercise control over their representatives in the Legislature. It will give them an opportunity of expressing themselves directly upon particular measures and will enable them to pass upon the bills which are approved by the legislature and say whether or not they shall become law. It will also enable the electors of any constituency to require the resignation of their representative, if in the opinion of the majority he is unfaithful to the trust which has been reposed in him. This principle has been endorsed by the Manitoba Grain Growers' association, by the Winnipeg Trades and Labor Council, by the various temperance organizations of the Province, and by the Manitoba League for the Taxation of Land Values. These organizations, however, have not asked the legislature to pass a bill establishing Direct Legislation at the present time. They have simply asked that a vote of the people be taken as to whether or not they desire the establishment of Direct Legislation. To any one who believes in popular government, this must seem a very reasonable request. If the people want Direct Legislation, surely they should be allowed to have it. Inasmuch as the Liberal party of the Province has adopted Direct Legislation as one of the chief planks of its platform, the question will no doubt be an issue in the next Provincial elections, but it will not be the only issue. The telephone question, the boundary question, the elevator question, and several other important matters will also be involved, as well as the administrative record of the Government, and the personality of the candidates for the various constituencies. Under the present system of electing our representatives to office for a term of five years and then allowing them to do as they choose, it is impossible for the people to give a decision on any particular question which is at issue. At the next elections, if the present government declines to submit a referendum upon Direct Legis-

lation, there will be many electors in the Province in favor of retaining the present party in office, and also in favor of Direct Legislation. There will be others who will support the present government's attitude in accepting the boundary settlement, but who will think the government should be defeated because of its administration of the telephone system. No one unless he is party mad believes in the policy of either government or opposition in every particular. Yet without Direct Legislation, the elector must vote either for the whole government policy and the government candidate in his constituency or for the whole policy of the opposition and its candidate, and the result will be, as it always has been in the past, that the electorate will not be able to give a clear cut pronouncement on any of the issues which are before them. Direct Legislation is not a party question. Both political parties in this Province claim to represent progress, and the Conservative party, by adopting government ownership of elevators and telephones, though its administration of these utilities is open to criticism, has shown itself capable of adopting advanced principles. Now, by submitting the question of Direct Legislation to a vote of the people it has an opportunity of showing that it is not afraid to allow the people to control their own government. Both the political parties in Alberta have approved the principle of Direct Legislation. In Saskatchewan, Direct Legislation has supporters on both sides of the House; but neither party as yet has adopted it as part of its platform. In Manitoba the Liberal party has pronounced in favor of the reform, and now the Government is being asked to submit the question to the people directly by means of a Referendum. If they are willing that the people should rule they will not hesitate to adopt this course. It is impossible to forecast from the previous actions of the Government, what its policy will be on this question. Shortly after its return to power in 1900, the present administration took a Referendum of the Province on the temperance question. The charters of the Manitoba cities, the Education Act, and the Municipal Act, which are all part of the law of Manitoba, contain provisions requiring a vote of the people to be taken before any large expenditure of money is made by the school board or the council of the municipality, town or city. A year ago Premier Roblin advised a delegation in favor of Direct Legislation, which waited upon him, to educate the people, promising that if there was a demand for Direct Legislation on the part of the majority of the people it should be established. From this it might be inferred that the government was prepared to take a Referendum on the question. On the other hand, however, the Government a few days ago defeated a resolution in favor of a Referendum on the question of banishing the bar which was supported by petition signed by 20,000 people, and Hon. C. H. Campbell and Hon. G. R. Coldwell have both stated that they are opposed to Direct Legislation. Premier Roblin has not yet spoken this session on Direct Legislation, having been absent from the city when the delegation received by Hon. C. H. Campbell and Hon. G. R. Coldwell presented their case. On the Premier, as head of the Government, the final decision no doubt rests.

#### THE LETTER WRITING HABIT

There is no better habit that a man or woman can acquire, than that of writing letters, if it is properly controlled. One of the advantages is in being able to put your thoughts and ideas before the public through the columns of the leading journals of the country. In this way public opinion is moulded to a greater extent than is generally imagined. However, there is another excellent use to which the letter writing habit can be put. It can be used to wonderful effect in placing the ideas of the general public before the public men of this country. For instance, our governments

are engaged in making laws for the benefit of the people of this country. It is then of the utmost importance that our government should know what the people want. There is no better way for this to be ascertained than by writing letters. If each one of our readers would make it a point to set forth his views in a letter to his own representative in the provincial legislature, and also in the House of Commons, as well as to the cabinet minister directly interested in each of the governments, he would be surprised at the results. Members of legislatures and of the House of Commons cannot see all of the journals that are published, and if they could do so, they would not have time to read them. But when a personal letter from a constituent is received, it is given careful attention, and usually answered.

The farmers of the three Prairie Provinces are deeply interested in a number of the most vital problems. If carefully prepared letters upon these subjects were sent out from time to time, to the legislators, it would bring them to see the real needs of the country more clearly than they do at the present time. For instance, take the tariff upon agricultural implements. It is a burning question in the three Prairie Provinces where such a tremendous amount of money is expended each year in the purchase of implements. The tariff is a very heavy tax upon the farmer in this respect, and should be completely removed. The only body which has the power to abolish the tariff upon agricultural implements is the Parliament at Ottawa. If every farmer in the West who believes that there should be free trade in agricultural implements would set this forth with the strongest arguments, and mail it to his member, and also to the Right Honorable R. L. Borden, it would convince the government that such action was decidedly necessary. There is no party politics in such a matter. It is something far above anything so small as that. We merely cite the case of the tariff on implements as one of a dozen equally important matters. In regard to a number of questions that are now agitating the public mind in the West, the Dominion government has promised hearty support, but in other cases, the government has not promised support. It is therefore of the utmost interest, that all pressure be brought to bear to have these matters adjusted satisfactorily. We believe that if all the farmers in the West acquired the letter writing habit, they could turn it to wonderfully good effect in the way of influencing legislation for the benefit of the public. Farmers have not the money to spend, to send delegations to the legislatures and Parliaments of the country and to conduct lobbies for their own benefit as do the big railway corporations and manufacturers and other Special Privilege classes. But nevertheless every farmer has a vote and it is the votes of the people that finally decide all public questions. For this reason every letter sent by a farmer to his member or to a minister in the government receives careful attention. We trust that the people of the West will devote more time than ever to writing letters and will send them where they will do the most good.

A representative of the Russian Agricultural Department has been sent to Canada to develop a greater agricultural implement trade between Canada and that country. Recently, owing to disagreements between Russia and the United States, an unofficial boycott has been put upon American machinery. Russia wants \$50,000,000 worth of implements annually over and above her home production, and hopes to get the bulk of this from Canada henceforth. Dispatches in British papers state that Canadian implement manufacturers are delighted at the prospect. No doubt! Their export business is done on a free trade basis and the Canadian consumer pays not only full value for what he buys, but the tariff tax as well and a bounty upon the foreign business. Most any one could work up a profitable foreign business on this basis. Just as long as the farmers of Canada like it they will have it.