

League for Saskatchewan

Strong Executive take hold of new Direct Legislation Organization
Manitoba's experience cited by Mr. Dixon

Direct Legislation has now assumed provincial status in Saskatchewan and with the formation of a strong League in Regina last Thursday night to carry on the fight for genuine popular government, the prospects for Saskatchewan taking a front rank in this great modern movement are distinctly encouraging.

A compelling speech by F. J. Dixon, the official organizer, created a goodly degree of enthusiasm among the interested friends who had gathered in the City Hall. In due time they elected the following officers of the Direct Legislation League of Saskatchewan:

The League's Officers

- President, Wm. Trant, Magistrate of Regina.
- 1st. Vice-President, J. K. McGinnis, Regina.
- 2nd. Vice-President, J. E. Frith, Moosemin.
- Secretary, Chas. A. Brothers, Moose Jaw.
- Treasurer, Dr. W. H. Wardell, Moose Jaw.
- Executive: C. O. Holstein, Wauchope; F. W. Ferguson, Sedley; Chas. A. Dunning, Regina; Dr. C. A. Cowan, Regina; J. E. Campbell, Carnduff; J. E. Paynter, Tantallon; John Evans, Nutana; Dr. G. E. Gieser, Moose Jaw and Rev. B. J. Bott, Craik.

Mr. Dixon's speech drew largely from Manitoba's and Winnipeg's recent history, and the points he cited were so fresh in public mind that they carried conviction.

Last session, he said, three separate and representative organizations asked for it in some form or other, but all alike were turned down by the Government, and this, he said, was drawing the attention of the grain growers, the temperance organizations and those interested in the Union of Municipalities to this as the best remedy for the political evils from which that province suffers.

The Telephone Deal

The telephone deal was cited as an example; before the representatives of the Bell system could make an agreement with the Government the matter had to be submitted in all its details to the directors in Montreal, and had the shareholders been dissatisfied it would have been submitted to them, but on the Manitoba side the bargain was made by a few members of the executive. This matter, he claimed, should have been submitted to the people of Manitoba as the shareholders of Manitoba.

"We are told," said the speaker, "that government should be a matter for experts, and with that I agree, but I claim that we should have the right to say what the expert shall deal with and also the right to consider and either accept or reject his suggestions without rejecting him. It had been urged that the people would make mistakes, against which was urged the fact that governments now make costly mistakes for which the people must pay, while with the proposed system the people, if they made mistakes, would have the machinery to right them with." Referring to Switzerland, he showed how that the minority had introduced the public ownership of railways, and that by an appeal to the people their reform carried without bringing them into power.

Growth in Winnipeg

When the movement started in Winnipeg about twelve months ago it was with twelve members, while at a banquet given in Winnipeg on Wednesday evening there were 225 and hundreds of members scattered over the province, and Mr. Dixon predicted an equally rapid spread in Saskatchewan. Alberta, he reminded them, was at present working out a system of this kind to meet the needs of that province, and he predicted that Saskatchewan would not be far behind.

Balance of Power

Mr. Robert L. Scott, who accompanied Mr. Dixon, also spoke and dealt chiefly with the difficulty of overcoming the nuisance of a small group in any community which by voting solid was able to influence legislators out of all pro-

portion to their voting strength, which was known as the balance of power. This, he said, was responsible for the lack of a compulsory education act in Manitoba, and also stood in the way of many other sweeping reforms. Had Manitoba had a system of this kind the grain growers would not have had to accept Roblin's elevator bill, and the temperance people by bringing forward a sane measure of reform along this line would be able to accomplish something.

With one exception, he said, the city council of Winnipeg were in favor of

buying the Mackenzie and Mann street railway franchise, but the opposition on the part of the citizens was so strong that the council realized that the necessary bylaw would be snowed under, and so the city was saved from purchasing a lot of watered stock. By leaving all matters which the people wished to decide entirely in their own hands, the speaker urged that the politician would be saved the temptation of being crooked, for the government would be compelled to submit everything which might be in the nature of a gift to some corporation or interest to the people without having it confounded with any other issue, and at each time of voting the arguments, pro and con, would be placed in the hands of every voter in the form of a pamphlet, giving the arguments of each side.

Strictly Non-Partisan

In the line of organization he ad-

vocated seeking the alliance of the temperance people, the grain growers and the labor unions, as he explained that these organizations were all in line. The constitution was very simple, providing for one organization for the whole province, and permits the executive to add to its numbers.

The question of political party does not weigh at all with the League. By the constitution adopted all persons in sympathy with the object of the League are eligible for membership.

Mr. Trant, the newly elected President, told of his having tired of the party system for many years, and in support of this assertion he reminded Mr. McGinnis of the letter he wrote to the Standard fifteen years ago advocating a system similar to Direct Legislation.

It was also stated that men interested in the cause in Moose Jaw had raised \$1,100 already, while Joseph Fels, an

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Robert Moir, Sedley, Sask., writes under date of April 18, as follows: "The Sheaf Loader which I purchased from you this spring is now in full operation, and I am pleased with its work. I have given it a very severe test in both flax and grain stooks which have stood out all winter, and the Loader has handled both to my entire satisfaction. Last year I had twelve bundle wagons. This year five, or six at the outside, will do the work, also doing away with all the field pitchers. The loader does a better and cleaner job than field pitchers and will save one bushel per acre of grain. My outfit is a forty-four sixty-four Nichols & Shepard with a forty horse power Reeves engine. I am satisfied that your Loader will more than pay for itself in one season, and I would not, under any conditions, thresh again without it."

MUCH PLEASED WITH IT

J. H. Frances, Indian Head, Sask., writes under date of April 15 as follows: "We have your Stook Loader, purchased this spring. Are very much pleased with it and consider it a great success."

GAVE ENTIRE SATISFACTION

John Boyd, Indian Head, Sask., writes under date of April 24 as follows: "I have one of your Sheaf Loaders this spring and have tried it out in stooks that have stood all winter, also in flax. It has given me entire satisfaction, and I am satisfied that the Loader is a great success. It does its work very satisfactory."

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