



**REAL**

those are exactly the same as the affairs of the whole province. A system could be had ideal public. This we have not. A great fact that we keep in mind is that the average of the thing is in humanity low for it in our



ing its course corruption in known. TES. The workings of the press becomes the first place all other re-reform have the "vested" influence. Take representation is dead. The legisla-ple cannot. d no power sary reform. ers that re-the people, n originated among the lip states, ectual ever of society. the victims. rking class king people open door

to pure government. The power of a few legislators to take final action places them subject to great temptation and renders bribery possible. No corporation would spend half a million buying a privilege from the legislature when they knew the people had the power to veto it. To buy the people would be more than any privilege would be worth. A thousand dollars each, might tempt one hundred legislators, but \$1.00 each would not tempt 100,000 people. The referendum would therefore indefinitely dilute the power of bribery.

Direct legislation simplifies our elections and removes to a large extent the curse of party government. Today we vote for a man who represents a certain policy. That policy may contain a dozen or more articles, some of which we favor, some of which we object. We have no choice or discrimination. We must simply vote for the whole thing or nothing. But on direct legislation, we vote for the man as he stands on his own merit, as a man and as a legislator regardless of party or policy, and we vote for every measure of the policy separately. Direct legislation is national; party government irrational. It is most unreasonable for half the people always to agree on the same questions and the other half to disagree. Remove the brand from our politicians and fifty per cent. of our people would not know which way to vote. Let us cast aside such an antiquated form and vote for the best legislators and the best legislation however they may be combined or separated. Thus you elevate the intellectual status of the people. You set every man thinking and studying. You force him to act on reason, not prejudice. The legislation becomes a university to the people. The ignorant will be automatically disfranchised till they learn how to reason for themselves and our elections will be raised above the noisy rabble and excitement of party prejudice run wild.

#### ADOPTED IN OREGON

In Oregon, where nineteen measures were submitted to the people last election, all were supplied with the necessary pros and cons of each measure. They studied them out for themselves and settled each separately. Their system has provision for a thorough public consideration of every question and every man, but at the same time limits the printed matter circulated, by wise restrictions, and prohibits slander of any politician, and the circulating of anonymous or unsigned letters. Any one who wishes to make a charge against a candidate, must submit the charge to the candidate in the exact words in which it is to appear in print at least fifteen days before publication. Violation of this law is criminal political libel.

Experience has shown that the initiative and referendum have added stability and dignity to the whole government system. They have greatly increased public economy. They have removed the lobby and purified the legislature and the election. They have enabled some of our best men whose time is partly taken up with private business, to take part in legislation. To bring about a reform it is not necessary to cater to every vulgar party to become elected and then to sanction dozens of useless measures and stay in power long enough to get your party to take action on your proposed reform. You can introduce it at once through your own party, the people. Experience has also shown it more possible to get good legislators than to keep them. If they don't do what you want, you can veto the bad legislation and retain the good legislator. These two conditions are not impossible together but frequently occur.

#### PROOF AGAINST ATTACK

No greater tribute to direct legislation could come from anyone than has come from its avowed opponents. Their arguments are based either on a groundless prejudice or on a glaring ignorance of the fundamental principles of the system. They claim it will cause more elections, but initiative measures and referenda can be introduced only at regular elections except where a large majority of the people demand a special election. They tell us the people are unstable and changeable. Experience shows the people to be the most stable body under the sun. The actions taken in Oregon elections demonstrate this fact. Many

attack it on the ground of destroying our present system of legislation and rendering our legislature useless. But as I have shown the legislature still exists as the legislative body. It is simply made more amendable to the people's will.

Like all other great reforms, direct legislation cannot be established in a day. In Maine, it took five years from the time the bill was first introduced until the people obtained their rights. During that time, the united farmers and the State Federation of Labor fought a hard fight against the corporation, the boss and the lobby which had been practically ruling the land. But thanks to their determination and the power of right they have come out victorious with a weapon which for all time they can withstand every aggression of their sovereign rights. Already they are putting it to use, correcting long standing evils and establishing long felt wants. They have a prize today well worth the having but they have had to put forth an effort to get it. And so must we here in Canada; so must we here in Manitoba put forth an effort if we are going to secure our rights. Not simply one man here and there carrying the whole burden, but every man must do his part. The farmer has played his part in the case of Maine, and every other state where direct legislation has come into force, and so must he also take an active part in Canada and in Manitoba. I am glad to see the Grain Growers' Association taking up this question. The farmer is too content to let the other fellow make the laws and so it is that his rights are so often neglected.

Let us not rest upon the achievements of the past. As the generations past have given us the liberty and rights we now enjoy, so must we hand down a greater liberty to the generations to come, wrung if need be from the grasp of privileged wealth and corporate greed. My faith in the welfare of this land and of every land, is staked, not in the towering heads of wealth and intellect, however important they may be, but in

the mass of the common plain people, and I believe my faith is well founded. Give our people a chance to prove themselves. Give them an opportunity to express their will openly and effectively on questions of legislation. Give them an opportunity to purify our parliaments and establish equity and justice. Give them the initiative and referendum. Give them direct legislation.

#### Young Men on the Farm

Continued from page 8

physical labor, it is mental and it is performed, not in the open air, but amidst the dust and foul air of crowded factory, office or store; and it is rush all the time. There is, during working hours, no easing for a friendly chat. There is just one thing that city people generally possess, in the way of physical comforts, that is not generally enjoyed in the country: this is a supply of water under pressure with the sanitary conveniences going therewith. But there is not a farm home in the country in which such conveniences could not be installed and at less cost than is called for in a city home. The telephone, that other great convenience of modern life, is now within easier reach along the concession lines than it is in city streets.

The man with a good fifty acre farm, well stocked and clear of debt, is not only better off than the average man in the city; he is in a better position than the average of those above the level of ordinary laborers and including all the captains of industry of whom so much is heard. His living, and a good one, is sure; he calls no man master; his children are at all times under his own eye; his days are spent in the open air; he is not haunted by the fear of losing his job; and when old age comes to him it will not carry with it the feeling that he is no longer of use to his fellows. An old man in the city is an encumbrance; on the farm, with his accumulated store of experience, he is frequently the most useful member of the family.

Toronto Sun.

W.L.S.

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