

These Are the Men Who Back the Big League

The political conditions in the State of North Dakota is well known history. Practically every farmer in the state is more or less familiar with the causes that led up to the organizing of the Nonpartisan League. It is fresh in the memory of all, how the farmers of the state fought for consideration at the hands of the last legislature. It is also fresh in the memory of practically all how that practically every request, even every demand of the farmers were contemptuously turned down.

Those farmers thought that they had a right to request some protective remedial legislation—felt indeed that they had a right to demand such

legislation. They realized that they bear the principal burden of the state's taxation; that they produce the majority of the state's wealth and that they are at the same time the victims of legislation which gives to certain interests special privileges, which enables the beneficiaries thereof to cop off the bulk and the best part of what the farmers produce. They realized that the source of such privileges was the law-making body. It was to that body that they went for redress. It was farmer votes that elected the men comprising that body.

Then came the disillusionment. Then the scales fell from their eyes,

and they saw as never before. They saw that they had absolutely no standing in that court; saw that organizations whose interests were diametrically opposed to theirs held the winning hand, dealt out marked cards and played with loaded dice. It was then that the Nonpartisan League was conceived. A little later it was born.

On this page will be found pictures of a few of the farmers who helped to bring this organization into the world—helped to nurse it through its early infancy. These are the men, who in abiding faith, stood by the struggling organization in its dark hours, who stood by it at the

time when it had no standing—when its enemies gave it the contemptuous guffaw and even those, who were destined to become its friends and supporters, looked upon it with grave doubt and suspicion. These are the men who risked their all with the new organization; who dug up the means herewithal to finance it and enable it to speed onward in its marvelous journey.

These men are not bad men. They are not criminals nor renegades. They are not "suckers" and fools as has been charged. They are not grafters, as the gang press has imputed—even openly charged. They are among the real pioneers of the state. They



Chas. Morrison, Deering, was born in Missouri 46 years ago. He homesteaded in N. Dak. in 1890 and has always been a farmer.



A. F. Thomas, Deering, was born in Indiana 34 years ago and came to N. Dak. in 1896, filed on homestead in 1904 and has always been a farmer.



H. E. Linbo, Deering, was born in Norway 38 years ago, came to N. Dak. and homesteaded in 1901. Has farmed all his life.



L. A. Trudell, Deering, was born in Grand Rapids, Wis., 58 years ago and filed on N. Dak. homestead in 1903 and has farmed all his life.

are among the early homesteaders. They are among the class who braved the difficulties of the new country, who tamed its wildness, who waved the magic wand of toil over its broad prairies and made them fit for habitation. These men form a part of the real backbone and sinew of this great state. Without them and their sacrifice and toil of them and their wives and their children, North Dakota would as yet be a barren waste and civilization would be as yet unknown here. Without them the pulsing highway of commerce would not have been; the thriving city would as yet be unknown and the great Northwest

would have as yet been unheralded. These men have made this country—made its commerce, made its railroads and its mills; made its schools, churches and universities. They constitute its overwhelming majority. And yet, they have been an unknown quantity in the state's legislative bodies. Their legislative rights have been ignored or openly spurned by its legislative bodies. Their political voices have been stifled and choked. Their praises have been sung by the siren voice of the politician prior to elections and the sprad-eagle orator upon public occasions. Then after elections they have been made to feel that their places were on

their farms, producing more wealth, while mortgages piled up and taxes mounted higher and higher. It was the full realization of all this that fired the farmers of North Dakota with the spirit of revolt. It was that realization that convinced them that no relief could be expected from those who so generously offered to "help" and "advise" the farmers. It was these things that forced upon the farmers the realization that their only hope for relief depended upon going after it themselves. They found it was a man's job and learned the folly of setting politicians at all. These men, the men whose pictures appear on this page, the men who are

responsible for the existence of the Nonpartisan League are not "smooth agents" and "get-rich-quick blue sky promoters" as you may have been led to believe. They are farmers—hard working tillers of the soil. They are men who have learned in the bitter school of experience the problems that the producers of wealth are up against. They are men who grew up with the country—who have lived in claim shacks and sod shanties—men who have borne the burden of developing a new and barren country. These men learned, by observation and study, that there is power in organization. They observed the evidences in the effectiveness of the polit-



Theo. Johnston, Deering, was born in Canada 48 years ago. He came with his parents to Missouri while a small boy. Homesteaded in N. Dak. in 1901 and has farmed all his life.



W. A. McDonald, Deering, N. Dak., was born in Dodge County, Minn., 42 years ago, came to N. Dak. in 1899 and filed on a homestead. He has farmed all his life.



E. F. Barnes, Upham, N. Dak., was born in Iowa, 63 years ago and came to N. Dak. in 1901, where he filed on his homestead. He has farmed all his life.



W. J. Fast, Deering, was born in Stark county, Ill., 55 years ago and came to N. Dak. in 1902 and filed on a homestead north of Deering. Was always farmed.

cal machines, which have been used to wreck and smash all their hopes for political relief and redress in this state. They saw the efficiency of political organization by closely watching the various interests which have held in their grasp the various branches of this state government. They concluded it was a poor rule that would not work both ways, that if a minority element in the state could organize and by virtue of such organization dominate the political

powers of the state, then there was only one reason why the majority element of the state could not organize and control the political powers of the state—and that reason was that they would not. And they decided to sweep away that one reason. They decided that they would. And so, in McHenry county, state of North Dakota, the Nonpartisan League was born. There it was nourished and cared for. Quickly and with determined faith and zeal other counties followed. The

zeal, honesty, enthusiasm, and determination of these sturdy farmers won the confidence of their fellow farmers wherever they went. Very quickly the little infant became a giant. Rapidly and quietly it sped from township to township and from county to county. Today their efforts and sacrifices have been rewarded beyond their most sanguine hopes and expectations. Today the farmers of this state feel victory within their grasp. Today the political powers of

this state are quaking and trembling. And these farmers are not bent on inflicting unjust injury upon any one. They are not bent upon securing more than is their just deserts. They are only after justice. Justice they are determined to have—justice they will have. If those who have profited be- mitted, shall suffer because these pretatted, shall suffer because these farmers seek to secure to themselves justice, that is none of their affair. (Continued on page five.)