

citizens, but there seems to be a feeling that the business and social interests of the farmers, like the business and social interests of other classes of the community, could be better served apart from politics.

AN AUTOCRATIC PROCEEDING.

Contrast to this the attitude of the political branch of the United Farmers of Ontario. Remember that the local clubs were for the most part organized for business and social purposes. At their inception there was no thought of political activity and no question asked as to the convictions of any man on public questions. Then read these statements by the President of the United Farmers of Ontario. The first is from an interview in a Toronto paper on July 22, 1919:—

“Members of the U.F.O. have no business attending in the capacity of delegates conventions of either political party. From the press reports it is clear that a number of U.F.O. members were at the South Bruce convention. Several of them addressed the convention and one or two acknowledged or declared themselves as good Liberals as ever. I am going to see that they are expelled, or, if their branches do not expel them, the branches will be put out of the organization.”

Then in a speech in Oxford County on July 25, 1919, he expressed the same sentiment in different words reported as follows:—

“I am going to talk plainly. I am going to hew to the line, let the chips fall where they may. We United Farmers have built up a platform of which we are proud and of which we have every reason to be proud. It is independent and has no Grits or Tories in it. We will never have a Grit or Tory on this platform even if we have to use our bare knuckles to keep him off.”

In other words, farmers are to be denied the social and business advantages of club membership unless they surrender their convictions on public questions. No more autocratic procedure has been witnessed in the public life of the Province. It is none the less autocratic because of being done in the name of independence and freedom.