

powers to persons or corporations or the maintenance of powers privileges or abuses sought to be stated.

In rural constituencies, the farmers are a majority of the voters. Since in most cases the number of Conservatives and Liberals among the farmers are about equal, it may be accepted as generally true that the farmers constitute a majority of each party as well. This means that if the farmers would become members of their local party associations en masse, they could elect the majority of delegates at the party conventions and thus be able to name both the policies and the candidates of both parties in each rural constituency. This is the course, then, we should pursue as farmers in matters political if we wish to become a potent factor in the government of our country and secure legislation in the interest of the producers instead of the exploiters. Many of our people wish to bring out independent farmers' candidates and this I used to think was the proper course, but I now recognize that the party spirit is so ingrained that the party heelers by an appeal to it can nearly always inspire distrust in the minds of many otherwise disposed to support an independent candidate and thus secure the election of one or other of the straight party nominees.

It can be shown that the independent candidate, his father or his grandfather once belonged to a certain party. That settles it. Those who originally were members of the other party can be induced to desert his banner on the ground that his independence is only a sham.

We must remember however that we must develop unanimity among ourselves as to what legislative remedies are required before we can elect a common representative of our views. A farmer can not have a representative in parliament unless he has himself formed judgments as to what he requires done. Our first step then is through our nonpolitical associations to thresh out the problems confronting us and as a class arrive at definite conclusions as to what we must do for the improvement of conditions.

A great aid in the organization of public opinion among farmers is an organ devoted to the discussion of economic and social questions from their point of view. This organ in embryo already exists in the "Grain Growers Guide." I would urge that our people make great efforts to have this paper generally subscribed for by farmers and also to secure its adoption as the official organ of all farmers' associations throughout the West.

We should discuss such questions as government ownership, direct legislation, taxation, issue of currency, which have an important bearing upon life and character not only of the individual but the nation. We should discuss them first as economic questions and without any reference to party expediency. Then when convinced of the economic soundness of a principle or a measure, let us introduce it simultaneously into the program of both political parties. Let us not content ourselves with muscular effort alone. Let us develop ourselves all round so that our hands, our heads and our hearts will all be active.

We have to create material wealth but we must also create mental, moral and spiritual wealth.

We must purify, expand and enrich the individual life, the community life and the national life.

Let us fight and win our rights that we may become more efficient champions of the rights of all; looking forward to an ideal commonwealth where the strife of competition will be replaced by the peace of co-operation and the lust for private gain by zeal for the common good.

I thank you.

WE MUST TRANSACT OUR OWN BUSINESS

(By J. H. CARSON.)

After five years of practical experience as a Manitoba farmer, during which time I have studied the economic conditions surrounding his business, and compared and contrasted these with those that prevailed in the United States, I am forced to one positive conclusion, and that is that the boasted independence of the Canadian farmer is slavery, and will continue to be so until we transact our own business.

I hold that after our work is over as producers, we are absolutely helpless in the equally important business of disposing of this produce. I look upon this condition as unique in the commercialism of this country.

The lumber industry, the meat packing plants, the implement manufacturers, the coal producers—all producers, excepting the grain producer, do not stop at the production. There follows the vastly more important labor of turning this produce into money, marketing it for the highest profit. It is branded and classified by the producer and a money value is fixed by him, and it is put on the market at that price to the consumer, take it or leave it. They are transacting their own business.

But it is not so with the producers of wheat—the greatest essential of the world's life and happiness. Words need not be wasted to show that the farmer does not brand his produce, does not grade it, does not weigh it, does not fix its value, has no share or part in these paramount items. It is a thing inconceivable to the unvictimized. The story would scarce be believed in other countries, would be ridiculed, would repel intending immigrants if known.

Furthermore the farmer suffers in his comparison with other producers in his inability to say when he will dispose of his produce, or where. A car of cured meat can be delivered in a few days, a car of wheat—time uncertain. Nor is a farmer's wheat an available asset to him while in store. He may owe \$2,000 on land and have \$5,000 worth of wheat in local elevators. For all the good that wheat is to him, while awaiting the possibilities of an inadequate railroad, his mortgage may be foreclosed and his land lost for a tithe of its value. He cannot go to the Bank and say "I want two thousand dollars, and I offer as security five thousand dollars worth of wheat in that elevator across the street". And meantime the storage charges are piling up on the wheat, and interest on the mortgage.

Then comes the wolf to fleece the lamb. He is all sympathy. "If only your wheat was on track I could give you 90 cents, but as it is in the elevator and there's no knowing when we can get cars, the best I can do is 80 cents. If he does sell he is a loser of \$400 on five thousand bushels, and if he does not sell his creditors will force him to the wall.

How can we transact our own business? Perhaps I should appeal to the oldest sons on the farm. I fear we old fellows are too deep in the rut to pull out. But one thing is easy to understand—we must adopt the same methods as other gigantic business enterprises.

Is it not a fact that in the great railroads, implement and other factories, meat curing houses, banks, etc., there are thousands of stock holders? Men and women that couldn't run a railroad or a bank, or a factory, nor even known when it is being run right, yet they throw in their money freely and clamor for more opportunities. In other words they have confidence in the few, and are really in the railroad or bank or other business without taking an active part in its operation.

Now, to transact our own business as grain producers we must maintain a hold upon our produce until it gets into the hands of the consumer. And to do that we must have our own storage facilities, our own transportation, and our own banking institution. If these