

Farmers' Clubs.

Dominion Farmers' Council.

[The Dominion Farmers' Council meets in the city of London, Ont., on the third Thursday of every month, at 2 o'clock p. m. All communications should be addressed to the Secretary, W. A. MACDONALD, LONDON, ONT. This Council has now on hand pamphlets containing its Constitution and By-laws, with an account of its origin, objects, etc., also a form of Constitution and By-laws suitable for Farmers' Clubs, which will, on application to the Secretary, be distributed free to all parties having in contemplation the organization of clubs.]

The regular monthly meeting of the DOMINION FARMERS' COUNCIL was held on the 19th ult., Vice-President Anderson in the chair.

A resolution of condolence was passed expressing regret of the severe accident which had befallen President Leitch, and prevented him from attending the meetings of the Council; also of the illness of Mr. and Mrs. Weld, and Mr. John Wheaton.

COMMUNICATIONS.

Amongst the communications read was one from the Secretary of the Pittsburg Farmers' Club, stating that the Club had met with reverses, causing a great decrease of membership, owing partly to a lack of interest, but chiefly to the action which some of the members had taken in a recent election, but which was unjustly attributed to the Club.

Vice-President Anderson stated that party feelings were the ruination of farmers' organizations. When he first organized the Grange in this Province there was a fair chance of success, but he found that independence yielded to partyism when the elections came round.

A communication was read from the Secretary of the South Dawn Farmers' Club, giving a report of their doings for the past year. The membership increased from fifteen to thirty. They met every two weeks, with the exception of two months during the busy season. Two cows belonging to Vice-President Cook were tested by a committee with the object of getting them registered in the Council Herd-book, but owing to the continued drought the tests were postponed for another season. One of these milked 44 lbs. per day, the richness being 43 percent. of butter fat.

Several members of the Council congratulated Mr. Cook for his extraordinary cow, and stated that she would go much over the standard required for registration. She belongs to the common native stock of the country. An official test is also being made of a cow belonging to President Budd. The Club thought that the best way of disposing of the Council's funds was to expend them in some approved method of organizing more Clubs. They also suggested the advisability of having an annual convention of delegates from the various amalgamated Clubs.

NEW CLUBS.

Moved by John O'Brien, and seconded by John Kennedy, that the No. 1 West Zone Farmers' Club be amalgamated with this Council. Carried.

This Club was organized Nov. 23rd last, and comprises 22 members. President, Mr. Arch'd Bodkin; Secretary, Mr. W. G. Menhenick.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS.

The regular January meeting in each year being also the annual meeting of the Council, the election of officers for the coming year was proceeded with, and the following officers were

elected:—President, Henry Anderson; Vice-President, John O'Brien; Treasurer, John Kennedy; Secretary, W. A. Macdonald.

WINTER CARE OF MANURE.

The programme of the day being called, Mr. John O'Brien read the following paper, giving his experience of the winter care of manure:

"My method is to haul out the manure in the winter and pile it into large heaps on the field to be manured. I always keep the manure as much under cover as possible. When I have about fifteen or twenty loads I haul it out, putting 50 to 100 loads in one heap. I always mix the horse and other manures together, keeping the heap well squared up and flat on top to retain the rain falling on it. In cleaning out the stables I take out the urine with the manure, so that little or none of it is lost. I commence to turn the manure heap about the 15th of March, and it is in good condition to use by the last of April or before. In turning the heap of manure, turn the long manure in under. What manure I get after that I put gypsum on to save the ammonia, and use that manure for late manuring, such as turnips, fall wheat and top-dressing the meadows. I don't like the practice of spreading fresh manure on the land, as it creates weeds and thistles."

DISCUSSION.

In answer to several questions, Mr. O'Brien stated that he had a 24x28 shed for holding the manure before it is hauled out. He preferred large heaps to small ones. He had personal experience in knowing that a straw mulch produced thistles, which grow from the seed as well as from the roots. He once spread some half-rotten straw in a furrow and plowed it under, the result being that hundreds of young thistle plants sprung up in that furrow. When putting the manure into heaps, he did not tramp it, which gave it a good chance to ferment. He used about half a bushel of gypsum for twenty-five loads of manure, sprinkling it on the top of the heap. The heap fermented evenly except at the outside, but when turning the manure he pitched the strawy portion into the centre.

W. A. Macdonald stated that the best practice was to put the gypsum in the stable gutters, but if it was applied to the heap in the field, it should be put on in layers, and not all on the top. It required about three percent of gypsum to save all the ammonia, or three pounds for every 100 pounds of manure, but one-third of this amount would do good service. A good rule to go by was to use one pound per day for each grown animal, although double this quantity had been profitably used. The gypsum had a high manurial value in itself, in addition to its value for saving the ammonia of the manure heap, and it also had the beneficial effect of retarding fermentation when it proceeded too vigorously. The quantity used by Mr. O'Brien could be multiplied by 25 with beneficial and profitable effects. When box-stalls were used, the manure might be left under the stock for several weeks, instead of being temporarily put into a shed according to Mr. O'Brien's practice.

Other members gave their experience in handling their manure in winter, but all praised Mr. O'Brien's system, although some did not follow it because it was too much trouble, especially the turning of the manure heap.

NEW SCHEME FOR PROMOTING OUR AGRICULTURAL INTERESTS.

Under the head of unfinished business, the discussion at the December meeting was continued, viz., How can the Council's funds be best utilized for promoting our agricultural interests? President Anderson led the discussion, and proceeded as follows: I have given considerable thought to all the schemes which have been proposed, and have come to the conclusion that we need a more vigorous policy, and our funds should be employed in agitating and carrying out our principles. We should consider all the grievances under which our farmers are laboring, manufacture them into planks for our platform, and then calculate how far our funds will go towards defraying the expenses of our civil war. Our only chance for success is to rebel against the gigantic monopolies and other insidious influences which are constantly oppressing us, and the first weapon we should handle is the ballot. Ours is not any one branch of agriculture; the special branches have their champions and their boomers who are doing mischief to our agricultural interests as a whole, and it is our part to counteract these ruinous tendencies. We can only gain strength by gaining the sympathy and co-operation of our amalgamated clubs. My proposal therefore is this: That we invite each of the amalgamated clubs to appoint a delegate to meet a committee of our Council in this city, each delegate being armed by one or more resolutions passed by his club to be presented to the delegation, and that our platform be composed of the resolutions passed by the various amalgamated clubs in conjunction with resolutions determined upon by this Council.

The following resolution was then moved by John O'Brien and seconded by John Kennedy: "That an invitation be extended to each amalgamated club to appoint a delegate to meet a committee appointed by this Council, which shall form a delegation for the discussion of questions pertaining to the interests of Canadian farmers, and for the purpose of erecting a platform for the more effectual furtherance of our objects; that the railway fares of such delegates be paid out of the special funds of this Council, and that no further expenditures be made by gifts to amalgamated clubs until we ascertain how many clubs have expressed by resolution their intention to accept this invitation."

After some discussion the resolution was carried.

In discussing the clause relating to the railway fares of the delegates, some members thought that the Council should pay all the expenses, while others thought it would be better to ask the clubs to defray all the expenses of their delegates, the latter contending that unless the clubs were willing to pay the expenses, they would have very little enthusiasm in the cause of our farmers. Those who favored and carried the resolution contended that a medium course was desirable, and by paying the railway fares, instead of the other expenses, the burden would fall equally on all the clubs. It was not considered desirable to hamper the clubs in any way in preparing instructions to their delegates; they might either prepare resolutions for them or prepare a paper to be read and discussed before the delegation. It is intended that the platform will be ratified by the clubs which send delegates before it takes effect, and the date of the meeting of the delegates, should it be found desirable to hold such a convention, is to be left for future consideration.

At the next meeting of the Council, President Anderson will read a paper on "Farmers and Railroads."