

Manitoba Grain Growers' Convention

The ninth annual convention of the Manitoba Grain Growers' Association opened in the City Hall, Brandon, at 10 o'clock on Wednesday, Jan. 24, when Mayor Fleming for the fourth time welcomed the delegates in the name of the city. His worship expressed his regret at the defeat of the reciprocity pact, which he said was the best thing that could have been passed for the benefit of the farmers of Western Canada. He urged the members of the association to keep up the fight, however, and said that they had the power to get anything they wanted if they were sufficiently determined.

President R. C. Henders, in thanking Mayor Fleming for his welcome, said he was sorry that the citizens of Brandon in addition to giving the farmers the freedom of the city, had not also helped to give them the freedom of the Minneapolis market. On the motion of T. W. Knowles, Emerson, a hearty vote of thanks was passed to Mayor Fleming, and the president then gave his annual address, which is given in full elsewhere. On the motion of Roderick McKenzie, Alfred Garnett, of Carman, was appointed secretary of the convention.

Reports Presented

The annual report of the directors was presented by Vice-President J. S. Wood, of Oakville. Discussion and criticism were invited by the president, and a question was asked as to whether the executive had declined the offer of the representatives of the Winnipeg Grain Exchange with regard to the establishment of a sample market. Mr. Wood said it was true that the Grain Exchange representatives had offered to agree to a sample market prior to the election when they thought reciprocity would be carried, but they demanded as a condition that they be allowed to mix wheat bought on the sample market without restriction and then ship out under the same kind of grade certificate as if it was unmixed grain. This would have placed grain which had been mixed, and would only just get a certain grade, on an equal footing with grain which had not been mixed and which averaged midway between that grade and the one above. The proposition of the executive of the Grain Growers' Association was that the word "sample" should appear upon certificates covering grain which had been bought on sample and mixed. The representatives of the Grain Exchange refused this and consequently there was a disagreement. The applause of the delegates showed that the action of the executive had the approval of the convention. The report was unanimously adopted.

The reports of the secretary, and of the auditors, were read and adopted without discussion.

Coal-Freight and Combines

F. K. Spence, of Medora, presented the report of the committee appointed at the last convention to consider the question of coal freight rates. The committee was of opinion that freight rates on coal were too high, the rate of 19 cents a cwt. from Fort William to Medora on coal, and 15 cents on wheat, being given as an instance. They recommended that an effort be made to have the rates reduced. Mr. Spence said farmers could buy Souris coal by the car load, but if they bought from a mine which belonged to the Coal Dealers' Association they would have to pay 50 cents a ton commission to the local agents. There were firms which did not belong to the association and which would deal with the farmers direct without requiring them to pay commission, and some of these advertised in The Guide. A delegate suggested that farmers buy only from firms advertising in The Guide. Another suggestion was that the railway companies be approached with a view to giving farmers some inducement to get in their coal supply in June and July so as to leave transportation facilities available for the grain trade in the fall and winter. The president said the freight rates on coal would come before the railway commission when it held the general inquiry into Western freight rates and the executive of the association

would then give attention to the matter. The report was adopted.

Co-operative Marketing Endorsed

Peter Wright, of Myrtle, read the report of the directors re co-operative marketing of cattle and farm produce, given elsewhere. The discussion of the report was left over until the following day when it had been arranged for Stephen Benson, of Neepawa, to address the convention on the subject. Mr. Benson, however, was not present when this part of the program was reached and the report was unanimously adopted after brief discussion.

Later a resolution introduced by the Neepawa branch was moved by T. H. Drayson, seconded by T. Patterson, of Springfield, as follows: "Resolved, that we instruct our executive to approach the officers of the Grain Growers' Grain Co. with a view to extending the principle of co-operation into other lines of business."

D. D. McArthur, of Lauder, said it was of no use passing this resolution unless those who supported it were prepared to give the scheme financial support. The Grain Growers' Grain Co. was prepared to go into co-operative marketing in other lines beside grain if sufficient additional capital was subscribed, but it could not do so otherwise.

A delegate from Salem said the members of the association at that point were prepared to take additional stock for this purpose. The motion was carried unanimously.

Constitutional Amendments

The discussion of proposed amendments to the constitution occupied the convention on Wednesday afternoon. Frank Simpson, of Shoal Lake, as chairman of a committee appointed for the purpose at the last convention, had given notice of a number of proposed amendments, and moved their adoption. There was some discussion on a clause making it impossible for government officials to hold office in the central association. Temporary appointees to commissions, postmasters, at a salary of less than \$100.00 a year; justices of the peace, returning officers, were exempted from the operation of this clause, which was carried by a large majority, though a few members were of the opinion that there would be no harm in allowing government officials as officers of the association.

A warm debate took place as to the qualification for membership in the association. The amendment proposed by Mr. Simpson sought to debar owners and operators of elevators (other than farmers and government elevators), members of Grain Dealers' Associations, and of the Grain Exchange, grain dealers and their employees from the association. Objection was taken to this because it would exclude from the association farmers who operated elevators for three or four months each fall, and it was stated that many employees of elevator companies were good friends of the association.

R. McKenzie said there were strong objections to allowing grain buyers to become members of the association. They had to take their orders from the owners of the elevators or they did not remain employees long, and their interests were very different from those of the grain growers.

R. J. Avison said in organization work he had found that associations whose officers were not farmers were usually inactive and in a poor condition. A number of delegates expressed the opinion that anyone who was willing to pay a dollar should be allowed to join.

The question was eventually settled by the adoption of an amendment, moved by T. W. Knowles, Emerson, giving each local association power to decide who should be admitted to its membership.

Another clause bearing on this question was unanimously adopted as follows: "All elected or appointed officers of the association shall be chosen from members who are not in arrears in their dues and are bona-fide farmers. A bona-fide farmer shall be taken to mean one who derives his principal sustenance from the farm."

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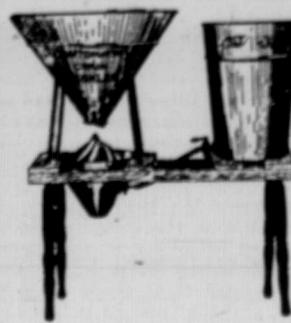
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headquarters to keep pace with their rapidly growing Western business. In addition to this building, the firm have also purchased three acres of ground in Winnipeg's industrial centre, where they will erect a large warehouse in which they will store oil tractors and other heavy machinery.