

# The United Farmers of Ontario Hold Great Convention

## Six Hundred Delegates, Representing 12,000 Organized Farmers, Discuss the Problems of the Day as They Affect the Farmer. Optimistic Spirit Characteristic of the Gathering of this, the Greatest "Farmers Parliament" Ever Held in Ontario—A Summary of Addresses and the Resolutions Passed

**T**HEIRB was no lack of enthusiasm at the fourth annual convention of the United Farmers of Ontario, held in Toronto on Wednesday and Thursday of last week. At times enthusiasm almost ran riot as speaker after speaker voiced the viewpoint of the farmer on the great problems of the day. Relevant in the meeting, too, was the feeling that the farmer is at last finding himself, is coming into a sense of his potential power, and this feeling contributed materially to the courageous spirit of the gathering. In the 500 or 600 delegates representing the 12,000 organized farmers of Ontario, it was felt that at last we are getting the nucleus of a real farmers' parliament that will some day be a power in the land. Cooperation and unity were the watchwords of the great gathering in the Labor Temple, and in one of the concluding sessions John Kennedy, Vice-President of the United Grain Growers, Limited, supplied a third watchword—and also an ideal—"Brotherhood." He gave as his ideal of the cooperative movement one that would work to the benefit of all the workers of Canada, whether their homes be in city or country, and intimated that the great farmers' movement should extend the right hand of fellowship to the great labor movement. And his words were applauded to the echo.

Democratic sentiment ruled the gatherings. "Equal rights to all special privileges to none," one of the numerous mottoes that decked the walls, correctly voiced the sentiment of the meeting. President Halbert, almost hardly able to stand from his recent illness, was an efficient chairman. His efforts were well seconded by the meeting. Evidently there is no dearth of leaders in rural Ontario. Although there were few set addresses, discussion was always full and good speakers and good ideas there were aplenty. "There is already a rural public opinion in Canada," said the Honorable McKenzie, Secretary of the Canadian Council of Agriculture, "and all that is needed is something to crystallize that opinion and give it strength." The meetings last week indicated the truth of Mr. McKenzie's statement, and left all with hope that through the farmers' movement rural opinion might soon be a power in shaping legislative action.

**The President's Address.**  
The president's address, published in full on page three of Farm and Dairy this week, gave the convention its real start. It was a call to action. In it Mr. Halbert described the lack of unity which kept farmers in the back seats of the business and political world while their industry was the fundamental basis and in their hands they held the power to rule the nation if they would. Particularly striking was his description of the absurd position occupied by the farmer as compared with the manufacturer. He asked how many manufacturers would produce on the grounds of patriotism with no guarantee of a market or of price, and their only assistance, bulletins and lectures at their own expense on how to produce surplus. But this address will well repay reading in full, so enough of it will be given here to justify the opening remark: "We have not risen to be big men," said he, "until we can agree to disagree and still stand shoulder to shoulder."

**The Secretary's Report.**  
Mr. Morrison's report was optimis-

tic. Last year he reported 200 organizations and 9,000 members. "Now we have 315 organizations, a gain of 115, and 12,000 members, a gain of 4,000," he reported. "We have topped 43 counties with this work, yet the fringe has scarcely been touched. There are approximately 253,000 farmers in Ontario, so that 1,90 only have been reached. This vast field of latent power lies waiting for the inspiration of organization to move it into life and power."

Mr. Morrison intimated his belief that rural women should organize and mentioned the U. F. of O. at Oakwood, in Victoria county, promoted by

women, as a good start. He welcomed the junior farmers' improvement association as a new ally in the great work and remarked: "It is encouraging to see them recognize the power of organization and co-operation so early in their career. To them we extend the glad hand of fellowship."

After outlining the work of the association for the year, the secretary emphasized the need of an official organ and deplored the fact that 10,000 farmers have to wage the battle in the interests of 260,000 farmers who are not organized. Of finances he said:

"Our finances are in an encouraging

condition, as the financial statement shows. There have been promissas paid and few clubs are in arrears. Secretaries that have complaints against the office write in for the explanation; they are satisfied. The office expects this of the secretaries. Confidence can be maintained in no other way."

### The Time of Meeting.

A resolution naming the third week of December as a permanent convention week occasioned considerable discussion. Mr. Porter, of Brant County, pointed out the advantage of an early meeting, in that it came at the commencement of the organization season, the delegates would go home fired with enthusiasm and the movement would grow apace. Last spring, with a convention in March, the good recalls that could have followed were largely nullified by the commencement of spring work. B. C. Tucker, of Hastings County, objected that the third week of December was too near the holidays and that both dairymen and feeders are still busy during that month. He favored a convention in the new year. The general opinion, however, was that farmers were always busy, they would have to take the time anyway, and they approved of the resolution.

### U. F. O. Finances.

"The financial statement, presented by Wm. McCaig, Geoph, and which was read and approved at the Farm and Dairy of Dec. 13, showing a balance on hand of \$3,022.95, was adopted without comment. "The dues never came in as they have this fall," remarked Secretary Morrison.

But Mr. McCaig did not allow consideration of finances to be passed over with a mere approval of the auditors' report. He urged that the capitation tax be increased to one dollar instead of the present 50 cents.

"We have not adequate funds with which to protect ourselves at Ottawa," was Mr. McCaig's significant explanation of his suggestion. Mr. Morrison explained the uses of the tax. With it delegates' fares to the convention are paid, and legislation is carried. During the past year Colonel Fraser was sent to Ottawa to work for free interchange between the Bell and independent telephone companies; a proposed increase in freight rates which would have involved an extra charge on the country of \$40,000,000 annually, was effectively opposed; but opposition to the settling of grain prices failed. "We didn't have enough in our organization to impress the Commission sufficiently," explained Mr. Morrison. All of these purposes are paid for by the capitation tax. Toronto were all convinced that the capitation tax should be increased but there was a general fear that did the convention take action it might be hard to reconvene the next back home who had not heard the need explained, to the increase. Any danger of a serious difference of opinion, however, was removed. The delegates at Toronto constituted could not be changed without notice. A resolution was passed unanimously, however, favoring such an increase for next year.

### Quebec Sends Greetings.

At this point Mr. Morrison read a telegram which was hailed as another indication of the unity in feeling of Canadian farmers. It was from the co-operation farmers' organization of Quebec, and read as follows: "Unexpected urgent convention details re-

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## The Resolutions Approved by the United Farmers of Ontario

### The Farmers' Platform Reaffirmed.

**T**HAT whereas the organized farmers of Canada, as the vote cast on the recent Dominion election clearly reveals, consented for the time being not to press for national reforms in which they heartily believed in order that they might not do anything to hinder the election of a national Government which would be able to unite and guide the people of Canada in this time of world-wide crisis.

Be it resolved, that we, the United Farmers of Ontario, in convention assembled, desire to reaffirm our entire and hearty belief in and support of the various planks of the Farmers' National Platform as adopted at our convention last year, and by the organized farmers of Canada as a whole.

In this connection, we would express our conviction that in view of the world shortage of food products and the imperative necessity that exists for increased production, our National Government would promote the best interests of the people of Canada by immediately removing the duty on agricultural machinery and other implements and articles of production including clover and other seeds and such things as the farmers require to enable them to more easily increase the production of the food products, which the nation's needs imperatively demand.

Be it resolved that the directors of the United Farmers of Ontario be requested, and they are hereby requested, to give the widest possible publicity to the National and other reforms advocated by this organization, and to this end, they arrange to have a deputation wait on the National Government and consult with them in connection therewith.

### SAVE GRAIN USED BY BREWERS.

**W**HETHERAS according to the statistics of the Inland Revenue Department over 26,000,000 lbs. of barley are being used yearly in Canada in the manufacture of beer and...

Whereas it has been proved that good flour can be milled with from 10 to 25 per cent. of barley incorporated, and, whereas there is an urgent national need that all food stuffs be available for the feeding of ourselves and our Allies. Therefore, be it resolved that we the United Farmers of Ontario place ourselves on record as favoring the absolute prohibition of the further use of any grains for the manufacture of alcoholic beverages in Canada for the duration of the war.

### OFFICIAL ORGAN ENDORSED.

**T**HAT whereas no efficient method exists to keep every member of the U. F. O. in touch with the work of the organization, or the needs of the organization, or to express rural public opinion; and, whereas we believe that these objects could be accomplished by the publication of an official organ,

Therefore, be it resolved, that this convention urges action to secure this publication and that the president and secretary of the U. F. O. and the president of the U. F. Cooperative Co. appoint a committee of two to act with them in investigating the best methods of securing a suitable publication and that the committee be empowered to take further action if deemed advisable.

**T**HIS convention approves of more adequate provision for further prosecution of the work of organization of the U. F. O. by the formation of new clubs.

**R**ESOLVED, that, as the use of artificial fertilizers are becoming more necessary in Ontario, we would empower our directors to take up with the Railway Commissions and the Minister of Agriculture, the advisability of having fertilizers in bulk, classified under the same freight classification as crushed rock.

### LET GOVERNMENTS RECOGNIZE THE U. F. O.

**T**HAT whereas, owing to present scarcity of food and to the threatened dire distress, if we fail to meet the world, and that it is absolutely necessary that we, as well as our Governments, recognize these facts, therefore, we would respectfully call the attention of our Governments to the apathetic our organization could render both in the institution of a propaganda best to increase production through our U. F. O. officers and

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