

Alberta

This Section of The Guide is conducted officially for the United Farmers of Alberta by
P. P. Woodbridge, Secretary, Calgary, Alberta

ORGANIZING IN PRE-EMPTION AREA (By R. M. Fee)

Travelling by stage from Bassano to Hutton, I was met on my arrival on the afternoon of February 27, by E. W. Ward, secretary of Sunny Alberta Union No. 394, at whose home I had the pleasure of meeting, at an informal dinner the same evening, the officers and directors of the Union. This local is not so dormant as its lack of correspondence with the Central Office would seem to indicate. Very few reports and no remittance for dues had been sent in for the past fifteen months, although thirty members had been reported shortly after organization. We were therefore surprised to find a membership of about sixty; that a picnic had been held under the auspices of the Union on May 24, 1913, at which there had been over 700 people in attendance, and other social affairs have been well patronized. Also that arrangements have been completed with one of the Bassano banks for temporary loans, whereby the Union is enabled to effect co-operative buying. At their Saturday afternoon meeting ninety-two were in attendance, and showed a lively interest in the principles and accomplishments of the U.F.A.

At Pandora schoolhouse, on March 2, the members of the Pandora Union engaged in an animated discussion of various questions of the day, the several phases of co-operation and the organization of other locals in the territory surrounding them. Altho somewhat hampered in co-operative buying by its distance from any railway, the Union feels assured that, with the admission of the ladies to its ranks, the general as well as the social success of the Union will be even more pronounced than ever.

Creole Belle and Kitchener Revived

Owing to an unfortunate occurrence about a year ago, the activities of Creole Belle Union have been suspended for some time, but the old members pluckily decided to reorganize this spring, and altho numerically not yet very strong, the members give evidence of a splendid loyalty to their Union and a genuine concern for its welfare, which promises well for its future. At the conclusion of the business session, on the evening of March 5, a dance was enjoyed by the seventy persons present, and the writer had the pleasure of meeting the members of the local socially.

At the Kitchener school, the next afternoon, about twenty-five farmers turned out. This Union has also been recently reorganized, and is attempting the purchase of a carload of seed oats for its members. Both officers and members are making every effort to increase the membership and effectiveness of their local. We were delayed in our arrival the same evening at Cravath Corners, where a dance was in progress, but the interest of those present was shown when the dance was suspended and the closest attention paid to the discussion of U.F.A. work. Owing to lack of returns from farming operations in this community, it was deemed advisable not to attempt reorganization at the present time, but a number expressed their intention of joining Kitchener.

One of the most noticeable features in connection with U.F.A. work along the line from Hutton to Cravath is the favorable attention given the work of the locals by the Brooks and Bassano papers, whose reports of the various activities of the Unions are always thoroughly and ably written.

The crossing of the Red Deer River was safely effected, and on the afternoon of March 7, a crowd of sixty-five farmers greeted us at Rainy Hills school. Several new members and Guide subscribers were secured by the secretary and local agent for the

Guide. The Union has produced co-operative marketing of their produce as well as purchasing of supplies, and its members are both progressive and practical, as the condition of their fields showed to a close observer. The Union hesitated before accepting the offer of its bachelor president to entertain the writer, but events proved that Mr. Smiley is as able an entertainer as he is an executive officer.

Cheaper Money Needed

River Bend members, whom we met on the evening of the 9th, are especially desirous of securing a co-operative elevator at Jenner, the nearest townsite on the Swift Current-Bassano branch of the C.P.R. They also propose to organize a district association. C. A. Thomas, of Bluegrass Union, was also present at their meeting, and presented for their consideration a resolution urging on the Provincial Board of Directors the necessity for securing a governmental system of loans to the farmers of the Province. This resolution was amended and endorsed by the members of River Bend.

On March 10, Mr. Turner, of River Bend, drove the writer to the meeting at Peerless, and there secured the support of the Peerless Union in the proposed formation of the co-operative elevator at Jenner. The members of the Union showed great interest in increasing the effectiveness of their Union by the addition of new members, eight of whom were secured before the close of the meeting.

Spring work was beginning in the Phoenix district on the 11th, but there was a fair turnout of farmers who, after working in the fields all day, waited to the meeting in the evening. The members of the Union are strong in their determination to continue their present line of work, realizing that the efforts of the United Farmers are being directed toward the improvement of the condition of the farmers of the Province.

Women Enthusiastic in Cause

At Bluegrass there was a splendid attendance, including a number of ladies, and as a result of the efforts of Secretary C. A. Thomas, seconded by a loyal membership, a most enthusiastic meeting was held. All the ladies present, and every man but one who had not previously joined the U.F.A., became members before leaving the building, the total number enrolled being seventeen. On the following evening Mr. Thomas and myself kept the U.F.A. to the fore by speaking to a crowd of dancers in the neighborhood of the defunct Tide Lake Union. A number of its former members applied to Mr. Thomas for membership in the Bluegrass Union, while others from this locality will join Phoenix.

On the 14th, we visited Rainy Valley Union, where a splendid program was rendered, showing the existence of considerable local talent along musical and literary lines. Lunch was served by the lady members, of whom a large number were present. The progressiveness of this Union was shown when it was determined to standardize the quality of potatoes grown by the members of the Union. The attention of the Union was directed to the fact that B.C. potato growers are obtaining for their produce a premium on the Calgary market over Alberta grown potatoes. The farmers north of Carlstadt resent this situation, and believe that by giving proper attention to the production of potatoes, a grade can be grown in Eastern Alberta that will give the farmers of this Province command of their own market.

We were given a most cordial welcome by the Carlstadt Union, and were most agreeably surprised at the number in attendance, in spite of the rough weather. The program rendered included able discussions of interesting

subjects, and enjoyable musical and other numbers. On the 18th we had the pleasure of meeting the members of Maple Leaf Union No. 504, in their own U.F.A. hall near Box Springs, northeast of Redcliff. Aside from the enthusiastic interest shown in the U.F.A. at this point and everywhere along the line of our trip, one of the most noticeable facts was the general interest in and desire to know more about the Alberta Farmers' Co-operative Elevator Company Limited. Fully 75 per cent. of all the questions asked were concerning the elevator company or the Elevator Act.

The need for financial relief was also apparent in most of the districts visited. Cheaper money, cheaper pre-emptions, and a bumper crop this fall.

Chicken Supper and Entertainment

The following report has been received from Harry Hawthorne, secretary of the Victor Local Union No. 344:

"A chicken supper, entertainment and dance was given by this Local on Tuesday evening, March 10, and I believe a good time was enjoyed by everyone. A fee of fifty cents was charged to gents only, and the proceeds amounted to \$22.30. We expect to be of some use to ourselves yet. Our president acted as chairman and altho he says it was the first time he ever filled such a position he is certainly to be congratulated. We enjoyed an address by W. L. Bickell, an instrumental on the piano by Mrs. Crossweller, solos by Miss Wilson; reading, Mrs. Sibbald; songs, Mr. Crossweller; recitation, Ross Eehlin; speech, Sydney Smyth; tooth exhibition, Louie Anderson; solo, Miss Wilson; speech, C. D. Holm; and a solo by Mrs. Robt. Holte. We would have liked very much to have had present the author of the poem, 'The Edwell Local Union.'"

C. A. Thomas, secretary of the Bluegrass Local Union No. 336, reports as follows: "We had a meeting at Bluegrass, yesterday, March 12, at which Mr. Fee spoke on different subjects. I presented the resolution on cheaper loans, and it was adopted unanimously. We took in seventeen new members, a large number of which were ladies. Eight new members joined our Union since the convention, before this last meeting, and I hope to report a still further increase of membership, as a number have given me their promise. If we only had more money in this district this would be one of the best and largest Unions in the Province, as we could then buy thru our Union, which would be a great inducement to the farmers in the district."

Government Take Over C.N.R.

E. Emery, secretary of the Lake Demay Local Union No. 290, reports as follows: The Lake Demay Local No. 290, held a very interesting meeting on February 24. A large crowd was in attendance, and great interest in the work was shown. The following resolution was passed: "Resolved that we, the members of the Lake Demay Local Union No. 290, unanimously urge the Government, instead of handing out a free gift to Mackenzie and Mann each year, to take over and operate the Canadian Northern Railroad. Further resolved, that copies of this resolution be forwarded the general secretary, with the request that he forward it to all other Unions for endorsement."

Beddington Union No. 551 Going Ahead

At a meeting of our Union on the 10th instant, it was proposed and carried unanimously that our Union endorse the resolution of Berrywater Union 198, protesting against the granting of \$25,000,000 by the Parliament at Ottawa to the Canadian Northern Railway. At our last meeting we had an address from Mr. Carlyle, of Calgary, on the feeding and handling of dairy cattle to get the best results, also an address from Mr. Douglas, provincial inspector of milk, from Calgary, on the regulations required by the law, and how to handle milk properly. We now have fifty-two paid up members, and find co-operation in purchasing our necessities very satisfactory, having purchased two carloads during the last four months. Wishing the U.F.A. every success.

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