

The Year's Work Reviewed

Presidential Address of R. C. Henders, president of the Manitoba Grain Growers' Association,
Delivered at the Opening of the Annual Convention at Brandon, on January 8

In presenting this the tenth annual address of the President of the Manitoba Grain Growers' Association, it is with feelings of gratitude and pleasure that I undertake the task. Gratitude that in the order of divine Providence your directors have been permitted in the enjoyment of good health to take up and discharge the various duties devolving upon them in connection with the work of our Association. Pleasure because of the opportunity it affords, not only of reviewing the work of the past year but more particularly of taking our present soundings and offering some suggestions that may be helpful in carrying on the future work of our Association.

Our Stock-taking Time

The successful business man once a year makes a close inspection and accurate inventory of every department of his business. This inspection should supply the following useful information, namely: The capital invested in each department; the amount of business transferred; the amount of expense incurred; the amount of profit or loss and relative proportion of expense to such profit or loss. Having thus gone carefully through this whole year of business he is able to eliminate all sources of weakness, either by cutting out or change of method; to introduce new features wherever necessary and thus start on the business of the next year with every department so perfectly equipped that he may reasonably expect to secure the largest possible amount of success. This is our stock-taking time. It will be the duty of this convention to make careful inquiry into the various departments of our work in order to see what progress has been made, and also whether that progress has been commensurate with the amount of capital invested and labor expended in the carrying on of our work. Having taken a complete survey of our year's toil to find out what suggestion we have to make that will introduce more system and thoroughness during the year upon which we have now entered.

In many respects this has been a very important year in the history of our Association. It has been a testing time. Opportunities have come to our members to show whether the advocacy of our principles has been to them a mere lip service or whether these principles have been so incorporated into their very being that in order to be true to themselves they found themselves gladly, by every possible means, and in every possible way, standing up in the defence of these principles. It is encouraging to note that, while here and there one has yielded to the seductive influence of those who plot and plan for our downfall the great majority have proved themselves impervious to any such influence, and today we are able to carry on the fight with a stronger, more enthusiastic and intelligent following than we have ever had.

A Year of Stress and Strain.

Like all other moral and social reforms this great movement has had and we may expect it will have, to contribute its quota of men who are like the man referred to in the parable—a seed sown in stony ground which speedily sprang up and with no depth of soil, and when the sun became warm, soon withered away; men of no deep convictions, no fixed principles to govern their lives. But we have also made a contribution of men of another type, men who have dared to face contumely, the slander, the falsehood of those who, in the vain hope of destroying our cause, resorted to such obnoxious me-

thods; and yet I am not so sure but these rude awakenings have been the very best for us. Yonder oak would not be what it is, with its broad branches, its rugged strength, its deep-clinging roots, were it not for adverse circumstances of storm and tempest, through which it passed along the line of its development. So in our Association. Ours has not been a mere hotbed existence. We have been through the storm and tempest, subjected to the influence of many opposing forces, the tendency of all of which has been to make us men. And is it not men the country is calling for? Men in the truest, highest sense of the word. Men with a vision of the inequalities and injustices that are being dealt out to our fellows, as well as a clearly defined remedy for such injustice, the adjustment of these injustices and inequalities. In dealing with this feature of our work I wish to say that I am not so fearful of danger from those that are outside, and are open and avowed enemies as I am fearful of danger from inertia or disloyalty within. Against outside attacks we can forearm and the cause we advocate furnishes such security of entrenchment that we need not fear dislodgment by any enemy. But when men profess loyalty and under that misrepresentation take and hold office and then prostitute that office by playing into the hands of our enemies, these are the men we have to fear. I am told that in a few cases men have taken the office of secretary or president, and though the money was in the treasury to cover all necessary expenses of calling a meeting of their local branch, though frequently solicited by other members of the Association in their neighborhood, as well as by letters from the central office, have still refused to call such a meeting, offering some paltry excuse and by that means have hoped to destroy our loyal branch at that particular point. To all such I wish to say, be sufficiently true to yourself to play the part of a man. If you do not desire to act, decline the office, or, if you have already been appointed to office, and you do not wish to act, send in your resignation. I am pleased to say that the cases where such conduct was manifest were very few and I hope that this timely hint will be all that will be necessary to obviate any further difficulties in this direction.

Membership Has Increased

It is with pleasure that I make mention of the fact that we are able to report a larger paid-up membership this year than last and also that the general feeling in all our branches is one of hopefulness and confidence. We have a work to do and we are going to do it, seems to be the sentiment that dominates our Association.

Grain Growers' Grain Co., "Our Company"

In passing I feel it to be my duty to call attention to the work that is being done by our Grain Growers' Grain Company. The close and harmonious relation existing between that board of directors and our own makes it a pleasant task to refer to their work. That they have been able to build up such an enormous business under the circumstances in which they have been placed indicates that they are filling a longfelt want in the handling of the grain of this Western country. Through their agency, directly and indirectly, conditions in the marketing of the crop of this country have been greatly improved. I bespeak for them a continuation of our confidence. They are our company, and if we have any suggestions to offer or questions to ask, I would suggest that you take them up directly with the officers of the company. It will be a pleasure for them, I am sure, to give all possible information and provide such needed remedies as will inspire the greatest confidence between all concerned. I expect the president, Mr. Crerar, will be here and will be able to give you much instruction and information as to the working of the company in its methods of operation as you may desire.

Commends The Guide's Fearlessness

A passing reference to our official organ falls very naturally within the scope of this opening address and will be looked for by the members of this convention. The Grain Growers' Guide has become a recognized authority in dealing with all such economic questions as affect the interests of the great plain people of our country. Outspoken in its denunciation of wrong, fearless in its advocacy of right, an educator in the highest and truest sense of the principles of true democracy, we are glad to note its ever-increasing list of subscribers, its ever-widening circle of friends and we bespeak for it a place in the home of every grain grower in this province. Our bill of rights as presented to Parliament at Ottawa sets forth very clearly the position we have taken on government ownership of public utilities and tariff reform, and we still contend that until the principles are put into action through proper legislation there will not be developed that confidence between all classes which is so essential to the building up of national stability and greatness. We therefore desire to place ourselves on record as not having swerved one iota from the position then taken.

Effective Railway Control Needed

We believe that our transportation facilities should be under such control as would, while it afforded reasonable divi-

dends on all capital invested as well as proper security for such capital, would also secure to the people of this country reasonable passenger and express rates. We therefore express the hope that the Board of Railway Commissioners will at their present sitting see the reasonableness of the demands made on them by the people of the West for a reduction of the above rates, such as will place them on a par with the rates now in operation in the East.

The Hudson Bay Railway

We note with pleasure the progress that is being made by the Government in the construction of the Hudson Bay Railway and hope that every possible endeavor will be made to have all terminal and storage facilities ready as soon as the road is completed. May we expect to see that road hauling the crop of this year 1913 owned by the government and operated (as already promised) by an independent commission? It is very gratifying to note as published by the press a few days ago, that the Government has reserved all land to the extent of one half mile wide on each side of the railroad in order that town sites may not be exploited by speculators. If it is the intention of the Government to retain this land and only sell to those who intend to put it into actual use, either by living on it, conducting a business on it, or using it for all legitimate purposes in connection with such business, we can see the very great and lasting good which must result from this reservation.

Must Have Wider Markets

We are well convinced that had our trade relations with the market to the South of us been opened up along the lines marked out in our farmers' bill of rights, it would have resulted in the placing of millions of dollars in the pockets of our farmers this year, millions which could have been used to good advantage in meeting obligations which at this moment are pressing very heavily upon us and under which not a few are being driven out of business. We record our most emphatic determination to press this issue still further. Nothing less than an open market to the South of us will satisfy.

The Evils of Protection

There was a time when I took the ground that a tariff to help infant industries might be beneficial, and that a tariff for revenue purposes seemed to have some commendable features about it. The experiences through which we have passed in the development of this country during the past 25 years have demonstrated beyond all doubt the utter fallacy of all such teaching. The present attitude of the interests now down at Ottawa, on their knees before Parliament, interests now becoming hoary with age, interests not only paying dividends but fabulous dividends, not only on capital, but also on watered stock in some instances many times greater than the actual capital, such scenes as these convince me that an interest once an infant, is determined always to be an infant. And as far as tariff for revenue purposes is concerned, it is now very clear to me that such tax is only a base subterfuge, covering up an improper method of raising revenue. Who knows what he is paying under a tariff tax or who gets it? A certain writer has wisely said that the tariff is a device for getting the most feathers with the least squawking. I am against any protection whatever, and am, therefore, altogether against the tariff. Revenue is necessary, and to raise it, I am in favor of direct taxation.

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Typical Street Scene in Trichinopoly, showing Types of Hindu Indians