

Manitoba Grain Growers

After Organization, What?

THE first question after a local association is organized is "What shall we do?" That is a good question to ask. It indicates the right point of view, namely, the recognition that the association exists for work. It has been organized to do something.

By way of answer it may be said that the local association's work will to some extent be determined by the conditions in the community, and that in any case, consultation and planning will be necessary. The wise board of directors will first plan its work and then proceed to work its plan. Little organized work will be possible during the harvest months. There will be time to think out carefully what is to be undertaken and to adapt the method and the machinery of the association to local needs. Then, as the busy fall season closes, the work should be begun purposefully and systematically. A few hints may be given as to lines of service which may be under consideration.

Perfect Your Plant

1.—Make your working plant as perfect as possible. If work is to be done the machinery should be in the best possible order. The local association should be made as strong as possible. It should have the sympathetic support of every element in the community as far as possible, and the co-operation of every available individual. Probably there are efficient workers outside of your board of directors. If so, enlist them. Secure their advice and their active help. Get the ideal that your association is a working machine and then get it to work.

Literary and Musical

2.—See to the supply of literary and musical material. The Guide should be in the hands of every worker, but it will not get there unless the directors make it their business to place it. Your board should be in touch with The Guide's Book Department, and on the alert generally for progressive publications. A branch that cannot secure half-a-dozen good books for the use of its members each year, needs to revise its program. The establishment of a local library might well be undertaken by many local associations. And music—now that the women are enrolling in large numbers the association can have rich and varied programs. Have a musical committee and make them work. Organize a local Glee Club, or a quartette and prepare a program which you will be proud to render when a neighboring branch invites you. Secure some good choruses for the whole association to sing. Make literature and music contribute from the beginning to your success. Offer the services of your volunteer quartette to the provincial executive for the Brandon Convention.

Interchange of Thought

3.—It must be insisted upon from the beginning and recognized as the normal condition that individual members shall work; that is, shall contribute to the success of the meetings by contributing of their thought. The educative process will be that of interchange of thought. Members will prepare papers or addresses, not too long and not at all abstract or profound, but practical and original. Our branches must hold the ideal of a membership each of which is able and willing to contribute of his own thought to discussions of public questions among his fellowmen. It is not a high or impracticable ideal. But it will take much patient and persistent work to realize it. As progress is made, there will be more advanced work, addresses, lectures, debates, but let no one despise the day of humble beginnings.

Co-operation for Success

4.—No association should work alone. In almost every locality there will be opportunities for collaboration with other bodies which hold similar progressive ideals. Joint programs occasionally or periodically with other community organizations may prove very helpful. And neighboring branches of the Grain

Conducted Officially for the Manitoba Grain Growers' Association by the Secretary

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Growers' Association will be found ready to co-operate with you, to contribute an occasional program, to listen to a program put on by your team of workers, to face your debaters with theirs, to line up for any joint effort you may propose. If your branch has never yet approached a neighboring branch with a proposal for joint work, then you and they have been missing some of the best experiences of the work. Go after that first thing this fall, and you'll never regret it.

But, above all, secure the full and hearty co-operation of the people, of your own community. Make them talk together and sing together, and occasionally, at least, eat together. Do not fail to enlist all the young talent available. Train it, encourage it, develop it, secure that it shall be devoted to the people's cause, through the people's association. Without it your local will necessarily soon die. With it, success is practically assured.

A Bunch of Suggestions

The local worker is constantly asking what may be done to interest the membership and to enlist the co-operation of the community generally. The following may be found practicable in some cases. Keep them on hand till the day you want to start something.

Exchange of Talent

If your association has had a good night, a program which delighted everybody, why not take that same program the following week over to your neighboring association and delight them too? If a neighboring association has had something particularly good, why not ask them to share it with your association in a co-operative way? If an A1 address was given at your district meeting why not go after the speaker till you secure that address to inspire your own community?

A Correspondence Idea

Some of the members of your association have friends who belong to a Farmers' Union in Alberta or in British Columbia, or to a Farmers' Club in Ontario or New Brunswick. Would it not be a good thing to secure from them an account of the work being done in the locals with which they are associated and to send them in return some account of the things your local has accomplished? Each locality will always have something to learn from other localities, and there are few local associations that have not some hints worth communicating to another.

Specific Investigation

Sometimes much study and research is necessary before much needed reforms can be suggested or inaugurated. It is not always possible for everyone to make those investigations. Why should not your branch appoint committees to report upon current conditions and problems? One committee might for instance study the terms and operations of the business tax. Another might examine the conduct of municipal business as to efficiency and economy.

Another might prepare material and information for the tax commission appointed, and soon to sit in this province. Another might figure out an estimate of what the tariff has cost the members of your local in the last five years. There is work to be done. It is up to the local branch and especially to the officers and directors to set their members to such tasks for the common good.

Revision of Constitution

If the Constitution is to be put into a satisfactory and reasonably permanent form at the next convention, it will be by the co-operation of the best practical workers and the clearest thinkers of the locals throughout the province. If every local at its next meeting would appoint a good committee to go carefully into the constitution, section by section and report early, it would in all probability help very considerably in securing the end desired.

A Run to Ontario

The United Farmers of Ontario have their headquarters on King Street, in Toronto. To the Manitoba secretary the old city bears a somewhat varied significance. Years ago to him, Toronto stood for Knox College, where they dispensed theology. Today old Knox is a haven for disabled soldiers and around the new Knox, air-men are thronging, while high overhead their wonderful planes may be seen circling among the summer clouds. Later, Toronto came to be associated in his mind with protectionism and the unceasing propaganda of the privileged interests—and there are a few protectionists still around the city. But to visit Toronto today is to head for the Central office of the United Farmers of the province.

Passing through a busy store on the north side of King Street, one finds the office on the third floor. It is moving time and the workers there are surrounded by carpenters and plasterers who are enlarging the premises. A few minutes' conversation with Mr. Morrison convinces one that the Ontario association is a body that is constantly enlarging the scope of its operations, and adapting itself to the widening demands of the passing months. In mere numbers the progress of the past five years puts in the shade the most rapid advance made west of the lakes and with a great and populous province of which only a small fraction yet is organized, they are looking forward to still more striking progress in the next five years.

The secretary of the Ontario United Farmers is chiefly distinguished by an amazing capacity for hard work. A practical man, knowing the province thoroughly and with an intimate acquaintance with the problems of the time, he is on the job day and night, and devotes himself unstintedly to the service of the cause. When the history of the progress attained up to the present time in Ontario comes to be recorded, much of it will be found to be due to the tireless energy and whole-souled faithfulness of J. J. Morrison.

The impression one gets of the

spirit of the organization is that of independent and progressive radicalism. The farmers of Ontario are looking keenly into the conditions of the time and watching critically the course of events and will be ready to take their part for equity in the reconstruction period. The spirit of democracy and of progress is abroad among the people, and the classes that stand for special privilege will not, have it all their own way when the testing time comes in the province of Ontario.

Publicity Questions

The question has been raised as to whether the association might not accomplish more by securing a greater degree of publicity both as regards the local association and the provincial organization. Does every grain grower wear the association button? Has your local a notice of its existence or of its meetings posted to keep the community aware of its existence? Have you tried a weekly card in your local paper? Would it be a good thing to have a Grain Growers' medallion on the windshield of every local member's motor car? What do you think of every local taking up the project of having a pennant or banner for use in connection with conventions or other public gatherings of Grain Growers?

Correspondence is solicited on the question: Should the Grain Growers' Association advertise more, and if so, how, when and why?

For Red Cross

Another contribution of \$20 has been received from the Women's Section of the Kemnay local Grain Growers' Association, for Red Cross work. Since the organization of this Women's Section in the spring of this year it has donated \$80 to this worthy cause.

Amusing Questions

It is more than interesting to find here and there in travelling about the country, an individual who meets one with the old questions and criticisms which were common in the earlier days of the Grain Growers' movement. Here, for instance, is a man who says: "It is utterly useless to think that farmers will stick together; they never have and they never will." He simply has failed to recognize that the history of the past 15 years has demonstrated beyond all peradventure that the rural population may be unified and can co-operate steadfastly and permanently. The success of the movement both as regards the association and as regards the business organization, establishes for all time the possibility of effective co-operation among farmers.

Another complacently trots out the query: "Isn't it true that the Grain Growers' Association is controlled by capitalists?" After a little preliminary "examination for discovery" as to what he is driving at, one elicits the idea that it is the Grain Growers' Grain Company that he is supposed to be referring to, and he is astonished to be informed that the company a year ago was reorganized in amalgamation with the Alberta Co-operative Elevator Company, in a form which puts it more than ever under the control, not of capital, but of the farmers of Western Canada.

A third comes along with a doubt as to whether the movement has ever really accomplished anything, and when confronted with some of the practical gains achieved, expresses the unqualified confidence that these advances would have come in any case even if there had been no organization. The improbability of privileged interests surrendering voluntarily and without pressure any of their advantages has never appealed to him, and he goes his way serenely indifferent to any responsibility for helping in the betterment of conditions.

These types are becoming rarer with every passing month, and the new type, the man who purposefully relates himself to the life and interest of his community and who loyally takes up his share of the toil, necessary for the attainment of progress, is rapidly coming to be regarded as the normal type of citizen for modern democracy.



Rapid Railway Construction in France. Broad Gauge Railway being constructed. Building an Embankment.