

THE FOOT AND MOUTH DISEASE EXCITEMENT.

We are happy to state the mention of this disease existing in this country is totally unfounded. The rumor arose from a case of cattle standing in a pool of mud for a number of days and freezing. The disease was merely a local affliction, and has existed in this country for years, in an endemic form in badly arranged stables. The reason that the mouth is in any way affected arises from some local cause likewise, such as eating improper food in some shape, such as straw poisoned with rust, &c. The climatic influence in Canada would prevent its spread even if it did exist.

Strathroy Grango Meeting.

ADDRESS BY THE EDITOR OF THIS JOURNAL.

The meeting was called to order by W. M. Bro. Ferguson, and the object of the meeting explained.

The first speaker called was the Secretary of the London Division Grange, W. L. Brown, who, after a few preliminary remarks, said he had been requested to give the origin of the Order and its progress, and the aims it intended to accomplish.

The speaker said this society was formed and expressly designed for the benefit of the agricultural class. As this was an age of secret societies of every description, this was one, and just enough so to make it efficient in its operations. There was nothing political or sectarian, no matter what you belonged to, the hand of fellowship was extended as a tiller of the soil. It embraced, at present, all classes and all creeds from the Atlantic to the Pacific. The society, at the present, numbered, in America, upwards of 2,000,000 of the agricultural population, which, as a compact whole, must exert a great influence on the future of this country. The speaker said, after this introduction, he would state three specific objects the society had in view—First, financially; second, socially and intellectually; and third, the power which is thus gained by association to the farming community. Financially, the system of sale and purchase hitherto pursued between manufacturers and farmers was one which, by its very nature, must incur a heavy drain on farmers' pockets. He referred to the number of men engaged in the sale of machinery, which formed a large part of their yearly expenses. In order to effect the sale of any of those articles, it was necessary to employ at least two more men than was actually necessary for its sale. The agency system and credit, of course was, the cause. This brought him to the middleman question, or the agent. The wages paid by manufacturers to make sales was very large—sometimes 25 per cent., or one-quarter of the whole. But probably this was not all. According to the system of credit which was pursued, a second man had to be employed to collect the note; this was another item in the expense. Then when a manufacturer or merchant does a large business on the credit system he is sure to accumulate some bad debts, and a little margin must be allowed for this. And when these numerous per cents were put together the farmer paid dear for his whistle. The Grango Society proposed to abolish agents and deal directly with manufacturers, and pay cash. If there was one movement above another that should be hailed with delight, not only by manufacturers and dealers, but every class in the community, it was the Grango. It was trying to remove a burden the country had groaned under for years—credit; and from the numerous large reductions made by dealers to the society, it was evident it was as much appreciated by them as by farmers. He had heard it objected to that farmers who had not the money would not be able to make a purchase, when they actually needed an implement, and under the credit system they could. Well, we will put it like this to such—If a farmer is good for the machine to a manufacturer, he is good for the same amount of money, and at about half the rate of interest charged on the credit system. Then manufacturers, in a great many cases, turned these same notes into cash by discounting them at the bank, and he thought the farmer might have done it in the first place, and paid the cash. The foregoing reference to agents had only been to those who did a legitimate business, and he might here say that the society was not unfriendly to them, but it did not need them. There was another class, however, which had been a source of depletion to farmers' pockets. He alluded to the various swindles perpetrated upon farmers every year. Hordes of agents for some new article or enterprise were periodically turned loose upon the farming community, and in some cases their operations was alarming. The farming community has always been laid out as a fertile field for this class of gentry. He considered farmers, on the whole, paid a rate much above their government and municipal taxes to support these swindles. After particularizing some of them, the speaker said he had often heard the remark since this movement commenced, "Well, what more do farmers want? They are all rich." He acknowledged some farmers had laid by money, but take the average farmer of a hundred acres, and what wealth has he accumulated, besides living and building a house and a barn. If he had increased at all in wealth it was because his property had grown in value, not that he had made it out of the soil. Look at the price of money and land at the present time, and then contrast with this what is made out of the soil; barely 4 per cent. can be made out of land investment, whilst 8, 9, 10 and 12 can be made out of farm mortgages; how long could this state of things go on? Farmers borrowing money at 8 and 10 per cent. and

4 out of the soil. Just think of this. This, too, has had the tendency to withdraw capital from the soil that should be applied to developing the resources of the country, and to bring agriculture to a higher state of perfection than at present.

In speaking of the intellectual and social advantages, the speaker said the farmers should be the aristocracy of Canada, as it was they who had made the country what it was at present. In England he prided himself on being a landowner. In this country farmers had been looked down upon; in fact, had looked down upon themselves. Every position in life had been thought respectable but this—and he believed one reason was that it did not pay; he was of opinion when it did it would be more respected. Young men had left the farm in hordes to become merchants and professional men, because they thought it was elevating them in the social scale and advancing their fortune, it might be said, on this account, these calling have been crowded, and the farm deprived of the talent and education which it should have. As soon as a young Canadian farmer obtained an education that fitted him for the ordinary duties of life, he commenced to think the farm was too limited a sphere to exercise his talents in. He never considered, as a successful farmer, he required a knowledge of nearly all the natural sciences. The social condition of farmers had been a great cause of driving a number to what they thought a more congenial atmosphere of social life. These young men had probably found nothing in a country home worth living for. Farmers, as a class, are isolated, and do not enjoy the social advantages which others have. The Grange, in its declaration of principles, states the social condition of the farming community is one of its main objects.

We propose meeting together, talking to gether, working together, buying together, selling together, and, in general, acting together for our mutual protection and advancement, as association may require.

This is what the Grango says, and he thought this feature alone should recommend it to every farmer in the country. After referring at length to this part of the subject, its intellectual and social advantages, he said the third was the power which, by association, they could exercise, as a body, to advance the agricultural interests and welfare of the country. All other classes knew the power they (the farmers) had, but the farmers appeared to be unconscious of this their own strength. According to their wealth and numbers, farmers should have a majority of their class in the Legislative halls, but they all know this was not the case. They, however, were responsible for this themselves, and he thought it arose from this that the farmers had no confidence in themselves. It was very natural that representatives of the people should use their influence and extend their sympathy to the class to which they belong, and if more farmers were elected we should find a greater interest manifested in the agricultural development of the country. As far as political parties were concerned, the Grangers did not interfere; they were neither Conservatives nor Reformers; their aim was to keep in reserve a power that they could fall back on at any time to further the principles which the Grangers advocate—the advancement of the agricultural interests of the country.

Why Farmers Must Co-Operate.

A CONTRAST BETWEEN MANUFACTURERS AND FARMERS.

The price of our agricultural products is regulated almost entirely by the English market. Our production is so much beyond what is necessary for home consumption, that the prices in our home markets are naturally adapted to the prices in our foreign markets, and always a little lower. The regulating influence of the foreign market upon the price of agricultural products in this country, is not such as to overcome the natural effects of an increase or falling off of the supply. If, through a partial failure of our crops we can furnish England with only half the amount of grain that we have usually sent her, and if her supply from other sources is not increased, the price of grain in England, and then in this country, rises. It, on the other hand, a favorable season enables us to sell to England more than the usual amount of grain, while her supply from other sources is undiminished, the price will fall. But we cannot in any other way influence this foreign influence. We cannot affect the foreign market by any change in the cost of production, so long as the amount produced remains the same. If we have ordinarily exported to England 50,000,000 bushels of wheat, while we continue to export that amount, and while she receives an unchanged quantity from other quarters, the price will not be increased, unless the demand should increase, no matter what additional expense we may be at to produce wheat. Often, from the scarcity of labor, or from a rise in the rates of freight, or from some other cause, the cost of production in this country is temporarily increased, while the relation of the demand for products to the supply of them remains unchanged. But we cannot, in such a case, effect a rise in prices proportionate to the additional cost of production. The reason of this is not far to seek. The American farmer has to compete chiefly with the European farmer, and the circumstances which make the growing and marketing of grain temporarily more expensive to the farmer are not likely to affect the latter. The grain which our farmers produce at an unusual cost, has to compete with that which the foreign farmers produce at their usual cost. The result is, not a rise in prices, but a diminution in the American farmer's profits.

It follows, then, that the American farmer has little or no control over the price of his products, and that he cannot increase the price to cover a temporary increase in the cost of production. It also follows that usually his only means of increasing the profits of his business

is by lessening the expense of it. In this respect he affords a striking contrast to the manufacturer. The latter sells his products, for the most part, at home. The home market absorbs most of his commodities. He avoids foreign competition by not having to go abroad with his goods, and he is largely protected by the fostering care, to call it by no harsher term, of the government. He does not have to go where foreign competition is, and foreign competition is not permitted to come where he is. Home competition is always more surmountable than foreign. The circumstances which aid or impede our manufacturer, or dealer, or producer of any kind, are likely to similarly affect other dealers or producers of the same kind throughout the country. And when all are similarly affected, all will act from the same impulse, and will probably act alike. Thus when one manufacturer of agricultural implements has a temporary difficulty in supplying himself with labor, and finds his expenses increased on that account, other manufacturers of agricultural implements experience the same thing. And all will have the same desire to increase the price of their goods sufficiently to keep the profits of their business what they were before. Since they do not have to compete with any one who has not suffered the same increase in the cost of production, they will have no difficulty in effecting the desired increase in price. The only competition to which manufacturers have to submit, is a competition among themselves. And they are all similarly situated and surrounded by much the same influences, and they have, therefore, comparatively little advantage, even temporary, over one another.

It appears, then, that American manufacturers form a striking contrast to American farmers, in that, being almost entirely freed from foreign competition, they have pretty complete control over the prices of their commodities. But the manufacturer's advantage does not consist alone in his ability to raise prices sufficiently to cover a temporary increase of expense. He is also able to secure profits uniformly higher than the farmer's. The American farmer has to compete with those whose lands are as productive as his, whose labor is much cheaper than his, and who resides much nearer the markets than he. His profits are, therefore, much less than theirs, while the very fact of our manufacturers having the control over prices that they have, makes his cost of living much greater than theirs. The result of this is, that while manufacturing has been productive of great wealth with us, farming has been comparatively unprofitable. Many of our manufacturers have accumulated large fortunes in a few years. But our most fortunate farmers, after life-long, arduous labor, have only succeeded in securing a moderate competency.

Since the farmer's profits are so small, it is very necessary that he should do something to increase them. He must arrive, by some means, at greater accumulations. The economy of living, which he has now to observe, prevents him from securing that culture and refinement, and that prominence in public affairs, which his important position demands he should have. But since the prices of his products are so far without his control, that he cannot hope to increase his profits by increasing his prices, it is clear that he can accomplish this purpose only by cutting down his expenses. He must, so far as possible, get rid of all those influences which in no way aid his production, and yet add to the cost of it. He must cut down the expenses of transporting and of handling, and secure for himself as much of the foreign market price as possible. The Grangers of the Pacific Slope, and those of the South, discovered the true remedy when they organized their ocean transportation companies. It is only through some such co-operative movement that farmers can obtain the means of securing for themselves anything like the whole of the market price. They must, by some such means, do away with those costly luxuries—carriers and handlers.

Industry and Labor.

In reply to a recent congratulatory address from the Western Bar, Chief Justice Harrison thus referred to his own career. He said:—"His present position had not been reached without industry; the books which he had compiled had cost him much labor; and, whatever may have been the case in former years, he could safely say that now there was no Royal road to the Bench. At one time patronage might have ensured promotion, but now the force of public opinion was so strong that no one could reach the Bench on account of his politics. It was not whether a man had supported this party or that which ensured judicial preferment, but whether or not he was best fitted for the position. So long as that rule prevailed, he was satisfied there would be perfect security for the administration of justice. Industry was necessary for the attainment of any preferment, and little genius and much industry were more likely to ensure success than much genius and little industry. Every road had its milestones of labor, and earnest work, above all things, was needed. He trusted that the words coming from him, as the result of his experience, would induce some to greater exertion than before, and he had often felt that if his career from the Bar to the Bench should induce one young man to work harder than he would have done otherwise, his life would not have been spent in vain.

Farmers' Clubs.

Conrad Wilson, an esteemed contributor to our own pages, writes to the *Christian Union*:—"In view of the conceded usefulness of Farmers' Clubs and of their growing importance, it has occurred to me to submit for their consideration a suggestion that will perhaps be deemed worthy of attention. There are various and important considerations tending to show that many advantages would possibly result if the Clubs of the whole country were connected together under a general organization. One ob-

vious effect of such a movement, of course, would be that the countless local associations now scattered through the country, unnumbered and unknown, would be brought into fraternal union and concert of action that would largely increase their efficiency and the value of their influence on progressive husbandry. It would also tend to the moral and social, as well as social, improvement of the present isolated societies, and would make each Club an object of greater interest to farmers and to the public, thereby increasing their membership and their sphere of usefulness. There would be no reasonable ground for suspicion of political motives, as the State and National organizations would simply reflect the sentiments and purposes of the Clubs from which they spring. The honorable rivalry at present existing between the Granges and Clubs would still remain the same as now, for the new movement would not need to introduce any new aims or elements of discord, and would make no essential change in the present character of the Clubs. It would simply enable them, by concerted action, to work out and more effectively promote the progress of husbandry and the prosperity of the country."

We believe the above "hits the nail on the head" in proposing to make the scattered Farmers' Clubs more efficient and useful. Some connecting links, to give coherence and effectiveness to farmers' organizations, would utilize for the farmers' benefit a great deal of power now wasted. It is this union of numerous local Granges in State and National organizations that has given the Order of Patrons of Husbandry its unprecedented success. To this we would also add one other feature, i. e., the presence of wives and daughters in Grango meetings. Probably the greatest advantage of the ritual consists in the fact that it necessitates the presence of women at Grango meetings. This advantage, together with that of a general organization through the country, can just as well be secured by Farmers' Clubs, and in many localities where strong prejudices exist against secret organizations, the open Clubs will probably have the preference. Each will have some advantage commending it to different habits of thought. With two classes of successful organizations, one open and the other secret, and each working for the farmer's welfare, the objects of both will be pushed forward to speedy accomplishment. We heartily thank Mr. Wilson for the timely and practical suggestion he has made, and will do all in our power to further its adoption.—*Rural New Yorker*.

The Farmer's Permanency.

Emerson, in his admirable essay on Farming, says that a farmer "represents continuous hard labor, year in, year out, and small gains. His entertainments, his liberties and his spending must be on a farmer's scale, and not on a merchant's. But if thus pinched on one side, he has compensatory advantages. He is permanent; clings to his land as the rocks do. His compensatory advantage of permanency is, however, we fear, growing less considerable." What Mr. Emerson says further on of his own town, namely, that farms remain in the same families for seven and eight generations, may be pretty generally true throughout New England. But in Ohio, and, we believe, in most of the middle and western States, the case is far otherwise. In this part of the country, not only do farms not remain in the same families for many generations, but, as a rule, they do not so remain for even one. Besides the farmers who are continually moving and changing, the migratory class there are the farmers who live on the same farms from childhood, or early manhood, to old age, and who then, their children having left them, find their duties too burdensome and, therefore, sell out and remove to the towns.

His instability in the ownership of lands is chiefly owing to the tendency on the part of farmers' sons to desert the country for the cities. The extent of this tendency, and the rapid increase of it in recent years is alarming. The cities and towns are all overcrowded with young men, while the farms are sadly in want of them. Agriculture requires, more than almost any other calling, the vigor and energy of youth, and yet it is more recently supplied with these than any other calling. The cases are far from uninfrequent where some worthy, thrifty farmer dies, leaving a family of strong, healthy, intelligent boys, and rich, extensive lands, and the sons, being settled in some city, divide the land and sell it out to strangers. Such cases, we say, are not uninfrequent, and the effect of them is becoming daily more apparent. For, with all due respect to the farming population, it must be said that our farmers are not now, as a class, so intelligent, industrious and careful as they once were. We say this is true of them only as a class. We have many just as good farmers now as we ever had. But still this tendency of young men to leave the farms is throwing much of our finest land into the possession of men who are poor citizens and poor farmers.

This subject was recently discussed by Mr. W. C. Flagg, and he accounted for the tendency of which we have here spoken, on the ground of the comparative unprofitableness of farming. No doubt the small returns from agriculture have had some influence in this direction. But it seems to us that there have been other and stronger influences. We do not believe there would ever have been a dearth of young farmers if the old farmers had held their calling in higher esteem. The sons have been too much educated and encouraged in the belief that farming is a low calling, and that some sort of a disgrace attaches to its followers. We most sincerely trust that the Grange will succeed in eradicated this error, for until it is eradicated the young men of the country are not likely to have much enthusiasm for the calling of their fathers, and our farms will not very generally pass from father to son and from son to grandson.