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Alberta

This Section of The Guide is conducted officially for the United Farmers of Alberta by Edward J. Fream, Secretary, Calgary, Alberta.

District Directors:	
Victoria—P. R. Austin, Ranfurly; Edmonton—George Bevington, Spruce Grove; Strathcona—J. R. Pointer, Strathmore; Red Deer—E. Carwell, Penhold; Calgary—H. Sorenson, Strathmore; Macleod—G. W. Buchanan, Cowley; Medicine Hat, W. S. Henry, Bow Island.	

Official Circular No. 7, 1912

Gentlemen:—The last circular issued from this office has caused considerable comment, and something which has been reported since then shows more than ever the necessity of watchfulness upon the part of the farmers. The latest episode deals with the signing of appraiser's statements in the settlement of hail insurance claims, and from the particulars furnished it appears that the insured was away from home and when the appraiser visited the farm he called upon the next neighbor and when through with his work, he (the appraiser) asked the neighbor to sign the statement "just as a matter of form." He did so and now, when too late, finds that as a result of his signature the man suffering the loss stands to lose over \$600, being the difference between the amount stated by the appraiser and himself, or else start an expensive lawsuit. As usual the neighbor signed without realizing what he was attaching his signature to and the result is that on completion of the papers he finds that his signature was attached to a paper acknowledging as authorized agent of the assured, that the settlement offered was a fair one and was satisfactory. There is no need to dwell on details, but just think of this when considering that machinery contract.

Location of Unions

We have now obtained copies of the latest maps of Alberta and in order to enable us to locate the exact position of each of the Unions will each Secretary be kind enough to send in the location (section, township, range, etc.) of each meeting place, together with the name, if any, of such place? We would like to have this information at as early a date as possible as it is our intention to arrange for a number of organization tours and it is necessary for us to have the information asked for before we can do so.

Membership Dues

On going over our books for the half year ending June 30, 1912, we find that the response to our reminders has been fairly satisfactory, but there are yet a number of unions that we know to be very active which have not made any returns to date. As the membership dues are the only means we have of ascertaining the degree of life and strength in the various unions, and as it is also used by outsiders as the means for estimating our membership it is necessary to keep this matter right to the front. Everything points to this being a good year for Alberta farmers and with your help this is going to be the greatest year in the history of the U.F.A. We hope during the next winter to bring the U.F.A. more prominently before the farmers of this province, but whatever the scheme, we will need to be sure of our support before carrying it into effect. We would like to arrange for some good organization tours, planning them on an extensive scale requiring the whole hearted support of all the unions involved. Would the secretaries having funds on hand take the opportunity of remitting the amount due to the Central office at once and thus in a tangible manner inform us of the support we may expect?

Grain Growers' Guide

The special offer of our official organ, The Grain Growers' Guide, has now been effective for several weeks and we are informed that the response from Alberta has been good. During the last two years the circulation in this province has increased by approximately 5000. The total circulation today is nearly 25,000. Strengthen yourselves and at the same time strengthen your union by taking advantage of the offer of The Guide every week for the balance of the year 1912, for twenty-five cents.

Taxation of Lands

At the request of Stettler Union the following resolution is submitted for your

consideration, and if you are in favor of same the members of Stettler Union request that you will forward same to the Government at Edmonton so that all possible pressure may be brought to bear upon the Government to secure an amendment at the next session of the Legislature:

"Whereas many of the incorporated towns of Alberta have included in their limits many bona fide farms; and whereas, owing to the rapid development of the said towns the taxes therein are excessively high; and whereas the said farms, though included in the city limits receive no benefit from the taxes paid by them more than does the surrounding country in general, the water service, electric light, fire protection, police protection, side walks, etc., not being extended to them and they desiring no such extension; and whereas it is impossible for the said farmers to pay said taxes out of the income derived from said farms.

"Now, therefore, the U.F.A. resolves that all land included in the limits of any municipality which has never been subdivided for town lots, and which is being continuously farmed to the extent of at least one half of the tillable land thereof and the value of which is not materially greater than that of similar land one mile outside the limits of said municipality shall be so assessed that the total taxes payable thereon shall not amount to more than fifty cents per acre per year or more than 1½ per cent. on the value of the land without improvements, whichever of them shall be the greater."

Machinery Notes

At the request of Sunprairie Union the following resolution is submitted for your consideration:

"Whereas farmers have no voice in the drawing of machinery and implement notes; and whereas implement manufacturers crowd the farmers as soon as said notes become due, and extortionate rates of interest are charged after maturity till paid; and whereas many farmers are unable to get their grain threshed and marketed before the ports are closed in the early winter, thus being compelled to sell their grain at very low prices.

"Therefore be it resolved by the members of this union that we bring this matter to the notice of our member of the Legislature, also to the Premier of Alberta, and that we ask them to introduce measures to have all machinery and implement notes come due on May first in year following purchase.

"Resolved that we also enquire into the views of our candidates for the coming Provincial Election in regard to this matter and require their confidence and support in securing above measure."

Flour Mill

At the last annual convention the following resolution was adopted:

"That the U.F.A. consider the practicability of building and operating a flour mill of suitable capacity for dealing with the milling trade of Alberta, such scheme to be financed by members of the U.F.A. under much the same conditions as The Grain Growers' Grain company."

Instructions were also given to submit the resolutions bearing on this subject which had been submitted to the resolution committee to the members by means of the circular letter. These instructions should have been carried out some time ago, but unfortunately in taking the supplies from the convention at Edmonton back to this office they were mislaid and for that reason could not be sent out. However, housecleaning time came around in due course and the resolutions were discovered. They are as follows:

Submitted by Tofield-Kingman Union.

"Whereas in consideration of the fact that undue profits are made by the milling combine of Western Canada in the manufacture of flour; in Alberta flour is sold on the basis of the Winnipeg price and wheat is bought on the same basis, that is to say, a farmer who grows wheat in Alberta could have his wheat shipped to

Winnipeg, made into flour and shipped back again after almost 2000 miles of transportation charges and other incidental expenses are added and his flour would cost him no more than flour manufactured in Alberta; and

"Whereas such a state of affairs works a serious injustice to the people of Alberta inasmuch as it takes millions of dollars each year from those who can ill afford to pay it, and which finds its way into the pockets of the milling combine to the personal aggrandizement of the few and the exploitation of the many.

"Therefore be it resolved that the U.F.A. seriously consider the practicability of building and operating a flour mill of suitable size in the interest of the farmers of Alberta.

"When we consider that the membership roll of the U.F.A. amounts to something like 12,000 farmers there seems to be very little difficulty in the way of such an undertaking and should this scheme meet with the approval of the convention a stock company should at once be formed, shares to be sold at a minimum price say of five dollars per share and each shareholder to hold a limited number of shares.

"And further it is resolved that each shareholder of this stock company must be a member of the U.F.A. and that when the flour mill is built and in operation that flour be supplied to the shareholders at cost and if, after the shareholders are supplied with flour, there is still a surplus on hand it shall be sold to outside buyers at market price.

"We believe such a scheme properly carried out would be a great incentive to farmers to join our Association and would it be too optimistic in us to predict that not many years would elapse before every farmer in Alberta, or at least the greater majority of them would be enrolled under the banner of the U.F.A.? In summing up we believe such a scheme if carried out as laid down in this resolution would be a potent factor in building up the Association and would benefit the people as a whole and redound to the glory of the nation."

The above information is supplied you according to instructions and we await your further pleasure therein.

Dry Farming Congress

You will have received a communication

from Mr. John T. Burns, of Lethbridge, Executive Secretary of the International Dry Farming Congress, relating to the annual exposition which will be held in Lethbridge during the month of October. This is a matter of vast importance to the farmers of Alberta and our Association should be well to the front on that occasion. We would respectfully solicit your co-operation in making the Alberta Congress the most successful in the history of the organization.

Alberta Federation of Labor

At the request of the secretary of the Federation we are enclosing herewith for your information copy of the report of the first annual convention and of the proposed constitution of the Alberta Federation of Labor.—Your obedient servant,

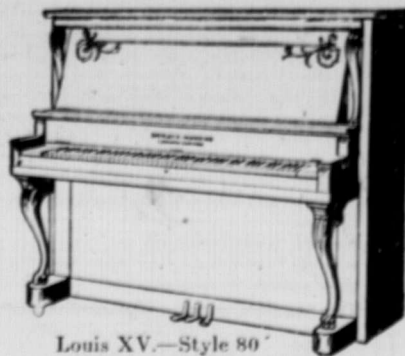
EDWARD J. FREAM, Sec'y.

Creole Belle Union held a meeting on July 27, when the resolutions passed by Chauvin and Sundial Unions came up for discussion and the members of this union fully endorse the motion of the aforementioned unions. Having received copies of the call to the Dry Farming Congress at Lethbridge this subject was considered and it is highly probable that this union will send an exhibit. If we do Messrs. Seegar Wilson and Glass will have to go some if they want to win prizes this year for although our crops are not quite as good as last year they are still good enough to compete with the world. When Circular No. 6 was read the general opinion was that any person who signed a contract like the one made public was a born fool, yet the painful fact was elicited that very few of our farmers read the printed parts of the machinery contracts, also that the implement agents help matters along with such statements as "Oh, the printed parts are only a matter of form." When will the average farmer pluck up courage enough to stand for his rights instead of allowing the wholesale robbers and destroyers of happiness to bleed him for all they can? When the farmer reads a contract through before putting his name to it, and if he cannot understand it takes it to some man who can, then the farmers will not be so keen to buy on time.

Nateby, Alta. N. W. DANN, Sec'y.

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