

THE FARMERS' MOVEMENT The National Grange in the United States

In the United States as far back as the year 1867—thus making it coincide with the confederation of the Dominion of Canada—an organization known as "The Grange," or Order of the Patrons of Husbandry, was formed. It was a secret order designed to promote the social and economic well-being of the tillers of the soil. In seven years its membership was estimated at 800,000. While primarily concerned itself with educational objects, the movement soon became an "anti-middleman" co-operation movement. In many cases the co-operative enterprises were rashly venturesome and ill-advised and resulted in disaster. Another difficulty in its work was the frequent attempts of selfish and partizan elements which sometimes found their way into the order and sought to undermine its integrity and to wreck its prospects. Not the least of its achievements is that it has been able to maintain its principles in spite of all opposition and to labor for rural community betterment for a full half century.

The movement has concerned itself with practically every problem of rural life in the United States. The unification of the nation after the Civil War; the establishment of agricultural colleges and schools; the introduction of the initiative and referendum; the improvement of highways; the elimination of transportation abuses; the securing of woman's true place in the community; the deepening and extension of temperance sentiment; opposition to commercial and industrial monopoly; the establishment of free rural mail delivery; the inauguration of a parcels post system and postal savings banks; public ownership of telegraph and telephone services; rural credit facilities; the promotion of co-operative business and opposition to exorbitant commercial tariffs.

The National Grange of the United States on Saturday afternoon, November 18, 1916, formally celebrated the Golden Jubilee of the order (the first meeting preparatory to organization having been held on November 15, 1867, while December 4, 1867, was later fixed as the "birthday of the order"). Not only is the order still "going strong," but it has been the inspiration of wide-spread and effective protest against the "menace of privilege," which is today a cardinal factor in the public life of the nation.

The Grange in Canada

The Dominion Grange received its charter from the Dominion government about the year 1874, and for many years exerted a wide influence, especially in the province of Ontario. The order still exists, but since many of the members have entered the farmers' associations later organized it is no longer a strong body. It deserves credit for being largely instrumental in keeping alive the lamp of local co-operation and practical democracy in difficult times and in preparing the way for the organization of the United Farmers of Ontario and the farmers' associations of the prairie provinces. The following paragraphs from the constitution of the Dominion Grange indicate the general principles of the organization:—

1.—We heartily endorse the motto: "In essentials, Unity; in non-essentials, Liberty; in all things, Charity."

2.—We shall endeavor to advance our cause by laboring to accomplish the following objects:—

To develop a better and higher manhood and womanhood among ourselves.

To enhance the comforts and attractions of our homes and strengthen our attachments to our pursuits.

To foster mutual understandings and co-operation.

We propose meeting together, talking together, working together, and in general, acting together for our mutual protection and advancement, as occasion may require.

We shall avoid litigation as much as possible by arbitration in the Grange.

We shall earnestly endeavor to suppress personal, local, sectional and national prejudice, and unhealthy rivalry and all unselfish ambition.

We shall constantly strive to secure entire harmony, good-will, vital brotherhood among ourselves, and to make our order perpetual.

3.—For our business interests we desire to bring producers and consumers; farmers and manufacturers, into the most direct and friendly relation possible.

We wage no aggressive warfare against any other interest whatever. On the contrary, all our acts and all our efforts as far as business is concerned are not only for the benefit of the producer and consumer, but also for all other interests that lead to joining these two parties into speedy and economical contact.

We are opposed to such spirit and management of any corporation or enterprise as tend to oppress the people and rob them of their just profit.

We are not enemies to capital; but we oppose the tyranny of monopolies.

We long to see the antagonism between capital and labor removed by common consent and by enlightened statesmanship. We are opposed to excessive salaries, high rates of interest and exorbitant per cent. profit in trade.

4.—We shall advance the cause of education among ourselves and for our children, by all just means within our power. We especially advocate for our agricultural and industrial colleges and

RALLY WEEK FOR MANITOBA

Are you rallying next week? It may take a little effort, but it's well worth while. The first essential is a getting together of your executive. The following are among the questions they might discuss when they get together:—

What exactly is our present financial and numerical standing?

Are our provincial and district dues fully paid up?

How many paid up members have we?

Can we increase that number before November 30 so as to make our report for the year the best possible?

What can we do to make the winter program of the greatest possible benefit to our community?

What can we do to increase the number of our lady members and to give them a larger place in our work?

Shall we arrange for a speaker for some evening this fall from outside our community?

Shall we be able to increase the circulation of The Guide in this community before the end of the year?

Shall we make any effort to secure a wider range of reading for our people?

Can we establish a library?

Would a banquet or social night early in the season help to strengthen our work?

Can we do anything to secure fuller co-operation in our branch work from persons in the community not actually engaged in agriculture and yet really interested in community welfare and social progress?

Shall we procure enough copies of the official folder to supply some to each member and make him responsible for using them to help our cause?

public schools that practical agriculture, domestic science and all the arts which adorn the home be taught in the course of study.

5.—We emphatically and sincerely assert the oft repeated truth taught in our organic law, that the Grange is not a party organization. No Grange if true to its obligations can call political meetings, conventions, nor nominate candidates nor even discuss their merits in its meetings, nor permit any discussion upon questions on which we stand divided by party lines.

Yet the principles we teach underlie all true politics, all true statesmanship, and if properly carried out will tend to purify the whole political atmosphere of our country. For we seek the greatest good to the greatest number. But we must always bear in mind that no one, by becoming a patron, gives up that inalienable right and duty which belongs to every citizen to take a proper interest in the politics of his country.

It is the duty of every member to do all in his power legitimately to influence for good the action of any political party to which he belongs.

It is his duty to do all he can to put down bribery, corruption and trickery, and see that none but competent, faithful and honest men, who will unflinchingly stand by the public interests, are nominated for all positions of trust, and to have carried out the principles which should always characterize every patron. That "The office should seek the man and not the man the office."

THE PATRONS OF INDUSTRY

(See Manitoba page of next week's Guide.)

Manitoba

This Section of The Guide is conducted officially for the Manitoba Grain Growers' Association by R. C. Henders, President, 404 Chambers of Commerce, Winnipeg, to whom all communications for this page should be sent.

Grain Growers in Saskatchewan and Manitoba

A Territorial Grain Growers' Association was organized in 1901, following meetings held in Indian Head and Moosomin. In 1902 twenty-one branch associations reported and the movement has grown till at the present time the Saskatchewan Grain Growers' Association is a vast organization numbering over twenty-seven thousand members and exercising powerful influence upon the social, economic and public life of the province.

The Manitoba Grain Growers' Association dates from the year 1903, when a meeting was called in Brandon which drew up a constitution and organized the provincial body. The following year 49 local branches were represented. The association at the present time has about 300 local branches grouped in 12 districts corresponding generally with the federal electoral constituencies. Further details of its history and work are available in

Objectives and Prospects

The aim of the farmers' movement is the freeing of rural life from conditions (partially of internal defect and partially of inequitable relationship) which seriously obstruct its efficiency; and the development and enrichment of the life of the tillers of the soil that the country community may most completely fulfil its function in the life of the nation. The best life possible for the group in order to the fullest service for the life of the nation and the race—that is the basal conception.

At the foundation of its economy lies recognition of the principle that man is something other and more than a money getting and money spending animal; he is a being with a spiritual as well as a physical nature and for his fullest self-realization the whole nature must have suitable environment and sustenance; he is a social being coming to his own only when living in fellowship and co-operation with his fellowmen. And so the best life for man is that in which all his faculties and especially those of his higher moral and social nature have opportunity for full development and exercise and in which his relationships with his fellowmen are characterized by justice and practical recognition of the brotherhood and interdependence of individuals, communities and nations.

Bettered Internal Conditions

The movement seeks, then, that rural life shall be made comfortable. The people must have comfortable houses, clothes and general conditions for their bodies. They must have good food and reasonable labor and sufficient sleep, recreation and rest. They must have comfortable conditions for the mind. A chance to read, think, discuss, express, influence. They must be educated, not only that "the body may be the ready servant of the mind, doing with ease and pleasure all the work that as a mechanism it is capable of," but in order that his intellect may be a "clear, cold logic-engine with all its parts of equal strength and in smooth working order, ready like a steam engine to be turned to any kind of work—to weave the gossamers as well as to forge the anchors of the mind." The farmer must—to follow out Huxley's great definition—"be one who, no stunted ascetic, is full of life and fire, but whose passions have been trained to come to heel by a vigorous will, the servant of a tender conscience, who has learned to love all beauty, whether of nature or of art, and to hate all villainy, and to respect others as himself." For such development the isolation and the individualism and the social and intellectual poverty and the educational crudities, the commercial anachronisms must be banished and modes of life adopted which shall more effectively meet the needs of the time.

Better External Relationships

The movement seeks that steps be taken to overcome the class and group antagonisms that so tremendously weigh upon our life; antagonism between town and country, between manufacturer and consumer, between government and people, between religion and religion, between nation and nation. The interests of all men are interdependent. The things in which men agree are infinitely more important than the things in which they differ. Co-operation is incomparably better than competition. If the "greatest good to the greatest number" and "government of the people by the people for the people" were really the principles in control of our public life, the prevailing injustices between group and group would be exposed and condemned and abolished. That must be done. The interests of no group, however "influential," must be permitted to over-ride the interests of "the great plain people." By investigation, by conference, by publicity, by co-operation, by governmental action, men must be led to live for the community—not for the individual; for the nation, not for the group; for the whole of life, and not for any segregated part. Voluntarily, with full consent and hearty purpose, if that may be, but with due measure of compulsion where that is necessary, each must be brought to respect the rights of others in order that there may be the all round square deal for which the heart of mankind yearns.

The Morning Cometh

And even under the shadow of a world war it is possible to conclude that there is

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