



ALBERTA SECTION

This Section of The Guide is conducted officially for the United Farmers of Alberta by Edward J. Fromm, Secretary, Innisfail, Alta.

Bulls Running at Large

ONE of the subjects which received considerable discussion last year, also at the annual convention of the U. F. A., was the matter of bulls running at large, more especially scrub bulls. This subject was revived at the annual meeting of the Pure Bred Cattle Breeders' Association held in Calgary, and a very strong protest was registered on this subject. The complaint mentioned there was that scrub bulls, or beef bulls of another breed, break into a pasture and get pure bred yearlings into calf, thereby causing not only the loss of getting an inferior calf, but the usefulness of heifers are impaired, because in order to maintain the size and quality of a beef herd it is imperative that the females should not be bred until they are at least two years of age.

It is evident that the farmers and ranchers are practically unanimous in their opposition to having bulls running at large. Officials of the government have always been ready to give the information that it is an easy matter to secure an order granting them what they ask for and that in a great many instances the parties complaining already live in districts where bulls are prohibited from running at large, and all that is necessary is to see that the law is enforced.

But what is the law? In substance it means that every man must turn jailer and poundkeeper, for in the districts where the bulls are prohibited from running at large any person may take up a bull and can collect \$5.00 from the owner for doing so, he may also collect a fee for each and every day he has kept the animal waiting the owner's arrival to claim him. How many farmers are going to do this to their next door neighbors? The majority at least will look at the matter from the standpoint that if he enforces these conditions he has made an enemy for life, and it is not a very nice job to be living next door to someone who has it in for you. Most men see no reason why they should make policemen of themselves.

Some say this duty should fall upon the shoulders of the R. N. W. M. P.; others think it would be a good job for the brand readers, but all are unanimous that the work should be done by somebody other than themselves.

The minister of agriculture was questioned on the subject in Calgary and he told the meeting that the law authorizing the appointment of brand readers had so far worked well. This was due to two facts, that is, it is right in theory and the department has been able to secure competent men to act as brand readers. But he reminded his hearers that the majority of these readers were stockmen like themselves, that in a great many cases it required a good deal of persuasion to induce them to act as brand readers, and he felt sure that if the duty of taking up bulls was imposed upon them many of the best men would resign, and that would result in having to accept an indifferent brand reader in order to secure a man willing to take up entire animals, and he thought some other means should be devised.

A suggestion was made at the meeting that this objection might be overcome by granting the brand readers power to appoint a deputy for taking up bulls.

Mr. Stevens, the live stock commissioner, stated he had never experienced that fear of his neighbors that some of the breeders seemed to have of theirs. He said that one of the surest ways of getting a neighbor's ill will is to lead him to believe that you are afraid of it. But he added what seemed to him to be the strongest argument in favor of having this work done by an official whose duty it would be to do it, would be the moral effect of the two methods. He stated that when one farmer took up another's bull it merely cleared that vicinity, which as a rule would not mean more than half a township, but if a public officer were to take one up the news would travel fast and every bull within

a radius of ten miles would immediately be looked after and taken off the prairie.

At the close of the discussion the minister of agriculture thanked the breeders for the privilege of being present at the meeting, and stated that several ideas had been brought out that he had not previously thought of and several good suggestions had been made which, he thought, would aid him in solving the difficulties that at first appeared to stand in the way.

OKOTOKS COMES INTO LINE

A temporary organization of the U. F. A. was formed at Okotoks on April 27, with Harold Bannister, president, and Mr. P. P. Woodbridge, secretary-treasurer. There was a fair attendance of farmers, and Mr. Bannister, in introducing Mr. W. J. Tregillus, vice-president of the association, said:

"The organization of this branch of the United Farmers of Alberta is one of the most important things for the farmers around here that has come up for a long time. The farmers must have better facilities for marketing their grain, and the time is coming when they will. The companies, especially the elevator companies, are treading on our necks and we must unite to get our rights."

Mr. Bannister read a letter from a friend in Vancouver, B. C., who has been trying to market some of his oats, in which the writer said some of his oats were worth 35 cents a bushel there now and he thought they would go higher. The writer said he had been informed by a man connected with the Vancouver Milling Company that the Alberta Pacific

and said: "We farmers want to realize our possibilities. We are the producers. Civilization follows the plow. We should realize that we are the most important factor in the commercial world. We estimate ourselves too low and others take us at our valuation. History shows that much cannot be accomplished when men do not organize, and yet farmers have always stood alone. However, I am glad to say that things are changing in this respect. We may become the best scientific farmers in the world, but we will fall down if we don't take care of the business end of our profession. We should be guided by California. There the farmers and fruit growers improved their methods of growing so much that they overstocked the market. It was one of those that are the forerunners of better things. Because of that lesson the Californians formed the most highly organized system of disposing of produce in the world. They not only found markets, but created them. We must do the same. The growers get too little; the consumers pay too much.

"The farmers are robbed daily. I heard an example at a fair held up north last fall. A farmer showed a sample of wheat he had sold for No. 3 to the provincial seed inspector, who said it was good No. 1. A number of others told the farmer the same thing. So he lost \$900 on a crop of 10,000 bushels. We should encourage the building of the pork packing plant, and trade with British Columbia. A meeting of buyers and growers is to be held in Vancouver soon to discuss this improvement of trade with Alberta and the necessary adjustment of freight rates.

"There is no reason why the farmers should not get a fair return of their labor

UNITED FARMERS OF ALBERTA

PRESIDENT:

JAMES BOWER - - - RED DEER

VICE-PRESIDENT:

W. J. TREGILLUS - - - CALGARY

SECRETARY-TREASURER:

E. J. FREEMAN - - - INNISFAIR

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Mr. Hoadley also addressed the meeting and said: "I think the question of elevators should be dealt with by the government. The government was created to protect you, and if it does not, it is not carrying out its purpose. What Manitoba and Saskatchewan farmers have carried out through organization should be sufficient illustration of what you can do. And there are other important matters to be considered besides grain. Rome's achievements were due to her perfect organization. We should remember that, and still there is no use of getting together unless we stay together. I am in parliament as a representative of a constituency, 90 per cent. of which are farmers, as I have already explained on the floor of the house. My duty as I see it is to do all I can to help the tillers of the soil. Owing to the present mix up, I have had little opportunity to do so, however, up to the present time."

GOOD STORE BUILT

The regular monthly meeting of Blackfoot Union took place at Jarrett's store, Blackfoot, on April 7th, and was well attended. We were glad to see the old faces back again after the winter's absence.

Two new members were enrolled and three shareholders secured for the local scale. Wednesday, April 13th, was set aside for putting down gopher poison, on motion of Messrs. Gordon and Tingley.

It was decided to make an effort to secure a carload of twine from the Brantford Farmers' Co-operative Company, and to this end two local unions have been written to, and all are asked to communicate if they are interested.

Mr. Jarrett's enterprise in establishing such an up-to-date store at Blackfoot is deserving of mention, and he should be complimented on his energy. The U. F. A. can claim some credit in offering encouragement to such enterprise by bringing the farmers together and trying to infuse into them the spirit of organization.

The next meeting will be held on Thursday, May 12, at Jarrett's.

JAS. STONE, Sec.

A DIVERSITY OF OPINION

On April 9 the Cook Union held a meeting at Battle River and discussed hail insurance and the pork packing plant.

In regard to the former, the members were unanimously of the opinion that Plan No. 7 was the most suitable, but it was resolved that the question should be left to the executive to arrange a plan which would enable the association to come to some definite decision.

There was some diversity of opinion as to the pork packing plant, and it was decided that the question should be held in abeyance until the union had been visited by the live stock commissioner, by whom, it was hoped, the scheme would be thoroughly explained.

Nine new subscribers were secured for THE GUIDE and the meeting then adjourned until the first Saturday in May.

J. N. FRANKLIN, Sec.

TOO MANY IRONS IN FIRE

The regular meeting of Great Bend Union was held on April 8, about 20 being in attendance, including visitors. The regular routine of business was proceeding with and one member reported having cows for sale. Mr. Amos Wilton was appointed on the market committee.

THEN AND NOW



Residence of James Laird, Mountain House, Alta in 1903



Present home of James Laird, Mountain House, Alta.

Elevator Company was trying to corner the grain in Alberta, and to that end is selling grain at cost in Vancouver in order to freeze out the smaller companies. "This company is selling six cents a bushel lower than it should," reads the letter, "with the purpose of crushing competition. It made 50 to 60 per cent. on its capital last year. The quicker you people in Alberta get after it the better."

"My friend got the information from a man who is supposed to know," explained Mr. Bannister, "and if it is a fact, it is nothing less than highway robbery."

Mr. Tregillus was then called upon

and capital and the farmers help each other by organizing. In Strathmore they had a live organization of 70 men, which meets regularly for social, as well as educational purposes. Attending these meetings is better for a farmer than a business college.

In response to question Mr. Tregillus told how the U. F. A. had helped a farmer who had been sold an inferior threshing machine, and how the organization had taken up the matter of claims for prairie fire losses against the railways. He also dwelt on the importance of the question of provincial elevators and pork packing plant.