

Head. From that time onward the Grain Growers have been an increasing power in the West."

#### First Annual Convention

Following the organization meeting of the Territorial Grain Growers' Association in the town hall of Indian Head in December, 1901, a regular convention was called to assemble at the same place on February 1, 1902. This was the first grain growers' convention to be held in Western Canada. The chair was occupied by the first president, W. R. Motherwell, who made a short address, showing that the farmers were standing under a glorious guarantee which had led to their organization. The secretary-treasurer was John Miller of Indian Head, and his report was most glowing, and although the organization was only a few weeks old, fair agricultural societies had affiliated and 12 branches had been formed, with a total membership of about 500. The following committees were appointed, introducing names which have become very familiar to the people of Western Canada during the past 17 years.

**Creditors:** Messrs. Ballou, Osler and Fitzgerald. **Resolutions:** Messrs. Snow, Deyman, Plim, Livingston, Brown, Dorrell, Ellis and Geo. Brown. **Constitution and By-Laws:** Messrs. Lang, Snow and Spring Rice. The credential committee reported the attendance of the following duly accredited delegates: **Delegates:** Messrs. Ballou, Stevens, Livingston, and McKinnon. **Moose Jaw:** H. Dorrell, Indian Head: Geo. Lang, Weyburn: D. McParlane, Whiskey: M. Snow, W. Garmon, and J. Nix, Moosehead: H. J. Plim, Greenfield: Wright and Fitzgerald, Ellersburg: W. D. Ellis, J. B. Gordon and R. J. Campbell. **Summerside:** Robt. Mills, W. E. Osler and J. F. Kline. **Thos. Smith and E. Shaw.** **Pirbright:** R. G. Ward, Chelmsworth: W. M. Tate, Tario: H. Osler, Regina: Geo. Brown, G. Spring Rice, Spy Hill: J. A. Brown.

It is interesting indeed to read the minutes of that first convention. He decided in the resolutions which were passed, were the various issues upon which the grain growers of the three Western provinces were later to make their fight. Three of the most typical resolutions are reproduced as follows:—

"That section No. 42 of the Grain Act be amended to empower the Warehouse Commissioner to compel all railway companies to erect every loading platform approved by the said commissioner within thirty days after said approval is given, and in default the commissioner shall have power to impose penalties on such defaulting railway, and collect same through the courts; and that the height of such platform be level with the floor of the car, and that this amendment come into force on May 1, 1902." (Motherwell and Snow).

"That railway companies be compelled to provide farmers with cars to be loaded direct from vehicles at all stations, irrespective of there being an elevator, warehouse or loading platform at such station or not; and that this amendment come into force on May 1, 1902." (Motherwell and Lang).

"That the Grain Act be amended making it the duty of the Railway Agent, when there is a shortage of cars, to apportion the available cars in the order in which they are applied for, and that in case such cars are misappropriated by applicants not entitled to them, that the enforcement of the act be enforced against such parties." (Brown and Snow)."

#### Rapid Growth of the Movement

It was not until the first Grain Growers' Association was formed in the Territories that it finally became apparent that the farmers were in earnest about their grievances and really intended to fight. About the first thing that was

done to indicate the spirit of the grain growers was a local action taken against railway agents in an effort to test the ability and force of the grain act. A test case was held at Sinitanta and the grain growers won it. After the farmers were treated differently in the matter of the distribution of cars. When a farmer wrote his name in the car order book at the railway depot he got his car in his proper turn. The elevator company was not able to get them all as previously. When the Manitoba grain

office until 1912, when the honor of presidency was conferred upon J. A. Maharg, of Moose Jaw. Mr. Maharg has also taken on parliamentary honors, and now sits in the House of Commons for the constituency of Maple Creek.

#### Organization in Alberta

Meanwhile, farther west in Alberta, the grain growers' movement was taking form. In 1902, the Alberta Farmer's Association was launched as the third provincial unit in the Grain



The Secretaries of the Three Provincial Farmers' Organizations.  
H. Huggins, Secretary U.F.A. J. B. Musselman, Secretary Sask. G.O.A. and  
W. R. Wood, Secretary Man. G.O.A.

Act became the Canadian Grain Act a few years ago a special grain commission was appointed to administer it, the car distribution clause was secured and retained. It is embodied today in the minds of pioneers of the grain growers' movement as a sort of bill of rights—a state monument to their cause. From that time, up to the present day, the struggle for equal rights with other interests has continued with a measure of success, at least, to the organized farmers. They have fought the transportation companies and the financial and manufacturing institutions of the country and have flourished and grown strong on such stern diet. The grain growers of the west have banded themselves together and developed a clan spirit which would have done justice to that of the old convener of Scotland almost two centuries ago. Their determined and unconquerable spirit has been developed by the same deep sense of conviction and the consciousness of obstacles to be overcome. Their expression of political faith for many years was that of the first French republic, namely—"Liberty, Equality, Fraternity." That the grain growers of the West, it is most important to note, have not been political agitators as has been the case with so many other farmers' movements throughout America. While living under the aegis of the French revolution, they have kept their feet solidly upon the earth. The Grain Growers' Movement, which otherwise might have become a body of revolutionists, has been ballasted by the establishment of a series of successful non-political institutions, and today the watchwords of the whole movement are:—**Organization—Education—Co-operation.**

After its birth in Saskatchewan the Grain Growers' idea spread very rapidly. In April, 1902, Mr. Motherwell, at the request of J. W. Seallie, of Viridian, went into Manitoba and assisted in the organization of the first Grain Growers' Association in Manitoba. The first president of the Manitoba association was Mr. Seallie, who is still the grand old man of the movement in that province, and we hope will live for many years yet to occupy his present position of honorary president. D. W. McCaig, of Portage la Prairie, was the second president in Manitoba, while E. C. Henderson, of Chelmsworth, was the third. Mr. Henderson has since won the additional honor of being elected to the Dominion House of Commons as the member for Macdonald. It should also be recorded that Mr. Motherwell remained as president of the Territorial Association until it evolved into the Saskatchewan Grain Growers' Association. E. N. Hopkins, of Moose Jaw, was the next president, and he was followed in 1909 by P. M. Gates, of Fillmore, who remained in

Grain Growers' Movement. At that time, there was also in existence in Alberta, the Canadian Society of Equity, which had been imported to Canada from the United States by Nelson, a man who had come across the line to settle in the far West. Their headquarters were at Edmonton, with R. C. Owens as president and J. A. Thayer as secretary. Attempts were made in 1906 and 1907 to amalgamate the Canadian Society of Equity with the Alberta Farmers' Association, but both attempts resulted in failure. The bone of contention between these two bodies which assumed the form of a difference of opinion with regard to the name "Equity," was finally overcome in 1908. Arrangements were made in September of that year for the formation of the United Farmers of Alberta which would have as its motto the word "Equity." The reason for the objection of those in the Alberta Farmer's Association to embodying the word "Equity" into the actual name of the new amalgamated body was due to the rather objectionable failure of the Society of Equity in certain commercial ventures which it undertaken. It was felt that the suggestion of any connection with the old administration of the Society of Equity would prejudice a new United Farmers Association in the mind of the country, and so, finally, a satisfactory compromise was made when the amalgamation was crowned with the name, "United Farmers of Alberta," having for its motto the word "Equity." The Alberta Farmers' Association was formed in 1902, with W. W. Warner, of Edmonton, as first president, and Rice Sheppard as secretary. Joshua Fletcher was the next president, and W. E. Stevens was the second secretary. Mr. Stevens resigned in 1908, however, to become livestock commissioner for the province of Alberta, and he was succeeded in the secretaryship by E. J. Froun, who was first secretary to the United Farmers of Alberta after the amalgamation of the Society of Equity in 1909. The first president of the United Farmers of Alberta was James Bower, of Red Deer. W. J. Tregillus, of Calgary, succeeded Mr. Bower in 1911, and when he died in November 1914, James Speakman, of Ponhold, was appointed. He remained in office until his death in 1915. The present president, H. W. Wood, of Carstairs, was called to this office at the convention in 1916.

#### Total Membership of 70,000

So much for the personal history of the associations in the three provinces. These grain growers' associations, during the years since Mr. Motherwell started the movement in Indian Head, have grown until at present they have a combined membership of nearly 70,

000. Saskatchewan, as before the most largely populated province and also the outstanding grain-growing area of the Dominion, leads with a membership of upwards of 30,000. Their conventions are the real parliaments of the middle western provinces. Resolutions and recommendations of all sorts and dispositions, are debated and decided upon. Questions of far-reaching influence, socially, morally and economically, have had their beginning and end as Western Canada is concerned, in the Grain Growers' Conventions. Long before ex-Premier Scott of Saskatchewan was launched prohibition as a policy, and thus gave impetus to the wave of temperance which has since swept over the whole Dominion, reform in this direction had been advocated and unanimously upheld in the Grain Growers' conventions of the whole three provinces. Records of these associations show that besides recommending the establishment of co-operative elevators, co-operative banks, co-operative dairies and trading societies, free trade, single tax and many other economic reforms, the Grain Growers, in convention, have advised and urged woman suffrage many years before that measure was generally favored and won also the first women in Canada, of the ideas of direct legislation and proportional representation. In the federal field, too, as the representation from the West has increased, the influence of the grain growers has made itself felt with greater force every year. They have been the direct cause of public opinion in the Western country. They have shown an independence in public thinking which has done much to mould the thought of the people of the West in the past few years. Issues rather than personalities have been their guiding impulse. Furthermore, through their organizations, the Grain Growers have been able to think about and discuss, questions of the day, and when called upon to take some attitude towards them, were able to consider them with mature judgment. It is safe to say that with the future problems facing the Dominion of Canada, the organized body of public opinion in the West, which the Grain Growers will become an increasingly important factor in determining all national affairs.

#### The Commercial Aspect

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The story of the commercial enterprises of the Grain Growers is told elsewhere in this number and constitutes one of the most romantic phases in the experience of organized agriculture anywhere in the world.

