

U.F.A. President's Address

Inspiring review of year's work delivered by W. J. Tregillus at opening of Sixth Annual Convention at Lethbridge.

January 21—Past year the banner year for Alberta farmers' organization—Call sounded for the abolition of special privilege and the bringing in of a new day of Justice to all

Ladies and Gentlemen:—We have assembled for the Sixth Annual Convention of the United Farmers of Alberta. The past year has brought us the satisfaction of work well done, and the reports which will be presented to you will show the activities of the various committees. We have increased in membership, grown in our knowledge of economics and in every way developed as an organization, which is most encouraging and gives us new visions and bright hopes of work for the future.

This convention will stand out in the history of our organization because it records the greatest step forward that organized agriculture has ever made in the province. A few of us realize the possibilities which will grow out of these first practical results in our endeavor for freedom from the toll collector.

The Best Year Yet

The seventh year of our organization excels the previous ones for it has given us the Alberta Farmers' Co-operative Elevator Company Limited, which marks a new period and is the beginning of a new activity; we have also obtained the Co-operative Associations Act, the Direct Legislation Act and the Machinery Act. This year reminds us of one of the great days which mark the eras of the creation of the world. We read in the Great Wonder Book, "the evening and the morning were the first day." So this period indicates the creation of institutions that prefigure the great days of our economic freedom, in which, after preliminary effort has passed into the evening of dream and the night of vision then follows the high dawn of promise and the glorious day of fulfilment. As during the days of the Creation, step by step was taken, so, in these great economic days are we going step by step. Each day's work rests upon the past and gives promise for the future.

Farmers Thrive on Opposition

In our march forward we must expect and be prepared for the opposition which we are sure to meet, especially from those who have been accustomed to exact toll from our produce. No tonic is equal to that of opposition. The Grain Growers' Grain Company—which is now the greatest farmers' organization in the world—would not occupy the position it holds today but for the fighting it had to do and the opposition it has had to contend with from within and without. The Elevator Question will be fully dealt with in their special committee's report, and Mr. Fream will give an outline of what has been accomplished by the Elevator Company to date; but I should like to testify to the value of this Company to the Grain Growers of this province in reducing the spread and margin, also in guaranteeing weight and full prices. As more elevators are built and operated we shall be able to give assistance to a greater number and cover a larger area. The constant satisfaction expressed by farmers at being able to market their grain with the feeling of confidence that they are getting the weight, grade and price to which they are entitled is most encouraging.

Direct Legislation and Single Tax

The Direct Legislation Act will require some modification before it will fully serve the purpose for which it is intended; we are, however, glad to see it on the statute books, and we must now endeavor to get it into workable shape. Single Tax is working satisfactorily and gaining friends; it has brought many settlers from the States to Alberta, and is consequently causing much discussion. In matters of taxation, Alberta has been called—with good reason—the experimental station of taxation of the Dominion. We are proud of this distinction, as we have largely contributed to

SPARKS FROM A STRIKING ADDRESS

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"We are beginning to recognize that co-operation is not only the life of trade, but the very life of national existence. Ours must be the beneficent democratic combine of the greatest good to the greatest number."

"With thorough organization and co-operation, the day is not far off when privilege, trusts, monopolies and every other method of levying tribute on the producers will be out of existence."

"Before we can get equitable laws, we must have in our Federal Parliament men who will unmake all unjust laws, and make just ones; make laws that will square with the Golden Rule: laws that will abolish privilege and monopoly."

"We have enabled those who exploit us to be our law makers."

"Some people regard politics as merely a game which is unworthy the thoughts of serious men."

"We shall be wanting in courage and duty if we allow this convention to close without taking a decided stand for righteousness and justice in government."

"We must stand firmly against being drawn into the maelstrom of ruinous expenditure for the barbarous custom of human slaughter to settle national differences."

the adoption of advanced methods of taxation. Single Tax has not been in operation a sufficient length of time for its benefits to be much felt; but when it has, we shall find that money tied up in high-priced land schemes, will flow naturally into legitimate channels of production and industry, and greater prosperity will abound everywhere.

Co-operation the Remedy

The Co-operative Associations Act is a good one, and it will benefit producers and consumers alike. The high cost of living, affecting both classes, will doubtless direct attention more and more to co-operation. The day of co-operative effort is at hand, we are beginning to recognize that co-operation is not only the life of trade, but the very life of national existence. But we must be careful to keep it unselfish, equitable co-operation. We must combine for mutual help, service and protection; ours must not be the monarchical but the beneficent democratic combine of the greatest good to the greatest number.

Woman Suffrage and Righteousness

At previous conventions we have endorsed Woman Suffrage, but I trust something more definite will be done at this convention to supplement their own efforts in securing this. This matter will doubtless be taken up at their own convention—at which we wish them every success—and we shall, I am sure, give them any assistance they desire of us.

The past year has been one of general prosperity for the Dominion as well as for this province, and—withstanding the money stringency—thanks to the Giver of our wonderful soil and climate, we have been enabled to gather a bountiful harvest, and demonstrate our stability and security.

When economic conditions are placed on a sound and just foundation the causes of money stringency will disappear. The aim of the organized farmers of Western Canada is to bring about right conditions, and we are proud to be allied to such a just cause. The greatest danger to our country is our economic bondage, but when we get Single Tax, Free Trade, Direct Legislation, public ownership of

public utilities, with equal suffrage and universal peace, we shall be on a foundation which nothing can shake. These conditions will come—if we are faithful—then will begin a new age of new contracts, new sympathies, and new achievements of co-operation and peace. "Righteousness alone exalteth a nation," and "Peace on earth, good-will towards men" furnish the only foundation upon which can be built the lasting achievements of the human spirit; therefore let us "go forward and fear not," and deal with our national life in a spirit of candor, righteousness and good-will.

What's Wrong With Canada?

The causes which are responsible for our present unsatisfactory economic conditions have been so frequently pointed out and are so well known to us that it is unnecessary to repeat them in detail. These causes were put very succinctly on the cover page of The Guide recently, and in brief are as follows: A handful of Canadian citizens have, thru the aid of special privileges, been enabled to take for their own use a large portion of the wealth created by others; they have monopolized prosperity, and the consequence is a vast majority of our citizens are not receiving the full return for their labor, and an ever increasing number of our citizens are in absolute want. The only remedy is the creation of economic conditions that will give to each and every citizen the full complete return for his labors."

How is this to be done? How can we prevent such an obvious anomaly as having in our midst and on our farms men, women and children without the bare necessities of life, when we have just gathered our greatest harvest? Is it within our power to remedy such lamentable conditions and bring about those which are just and equitable, so that a full share of prosperity may be found in each and every home in the Dominion? Yes, it is possible for the people to do this, and it will be done just as soon as we realize how utterly impotent and helpless we are individually, and realize also the fact that only by joining hands and working together can conditions be rectified. Possibly there is no greater

superstition than this, that individual effort can change our economic or social systems. If we are to change our conditions, our markets and our laws; it must be done collectively; we must work in co-operation, and this is the lesson that we as United Farmers are learning, proving and trying to teach. With thorough organization and co-operation the day is not far off when privilege, trusts, monopolies and every other method of levying tribute on producers will be out of existence thruout the whole Dominion.

Farmers and Politics

The question now arises, what is to be done to bring about these desired conditions? There is no other way than to have just and equitable laws and to have them adhered to; but before we can get these we must have in our Federal Parliament men who will unmake all unjust laws and make just ones; make laws that will square with the golden rule, laws that will abolish privilege and monopoly, and laws that will remove all artificial impediments from our paths, and give to everyone—man, woman or child—a fair start and an equal chance in the race of life.

The Dominion Parliament consists of 221 members. Of these 75 are lawyers—over one-third of the whole,—there are 32 farmers, 27 merchants, 18 doctors, 13 manufacturers, 8 agents, 7 notaries, 5 brokers, 2 capitalists, 1 student, 1 drug-gist, 1 surveyor, and 1 representing labor. Many of the lawyers are corporation lawyers, representing large interests. Many of the farmers are more interested in other directions than in agriculture. The manufacturers are given as 13, but 14 others appear under other captions, making 27 instead of 13, representing a very wide variety of industries. They also represent much interlocking of directorates and other forms of control of industrial power. Considering the representatives in the Federal House of Parliament, can we expect government ownership of railways and other public utilities, Free Trade, Direct Legislation, Direct Taxation and equal suffrage, or any other measure of reform; or need we be surprised that we have want in the midst of plenty, poverty side by side with bountiful harvests, and extremes of very rich and very poor people?

Conditions as we have them today are the result of legislation which is the achievement of privilege; this has been permitted thru our attitude of indifference, and we have thereby enabled those who exploit us to be our law makers. No man can plunder the public except it be by special privilege obtained by legal delusion and jugglery; yet all the advantages of invention, discovery and the abundant gifts of nature have accrued only to benefit the few monopolists, while the masses, deprived of all the material advantages of civilization are as helpless and hopeless as if they lived in a declining world. Until we can prevent monopolies, mergers, combines and trusts—which are the roots of all economic evils—from plundering the people, and the Dominion Government from devoting millions of dollars of the people's money to titled paupers and millions more for armaments and warships, it will be impossible to prevent unnatural inequalities, grinding fruitless toil, corrupting idleness, hereditary poverty and hereditary wealth.

It will be well for us now to consider how governments are elected. Most men in the exercise of their citizenship are actuated by and vote according to their political allegiances, giving little consideration to the immense value of the vote, and forgetting at what tremendous cost the vote was obtained for us by our forefathers, and that it has been

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