

GOPHER DAY, MAY 1ST.

In view of the supreme necessity of greater production of food stuffs during the present year, the observance of Gopher Day assumes even greater significance than ever before. We are being urged continually to produce, produce, produce, and greater efforts than ever are being made to comply with the request. While, however, production is of supreme importance, conservation is but little less so. Immense quantities of wheat are every year being consumed by those busy little rodents which are to be found in such large numbers in all parts of the province, the extent of whose depredations can scarcely be estimated, and it is to the interest of every farmer to see that these depredations are reduced to the smallest possible extent.

Last year more than half a million gophers were destroyed by the school children, who, in this way, it is estimated, have saved at least 1,028,280 loaves of bread, and there can be no doubt but that a much greater saving than this can be effected if our rural population get down to the work in real earnest. Under ordinary circumstances one would hesitate to ask young boys and girls to take to the destruction of animal life, but when it is a question of choice between the feeding of animals and the feeding of human beings, especially at a time of so great suffering as the present, there cannot be any doubt as to what course we should take. How great is the waste from this cause may be realized to some extent from the estimate put forward by M. P. Tullis, acting weeds and seed commissioner, to the effect that "a quarter-of-a-million acres of plowed, cultivated, and seeded land do not produce a kernel of grain because of the ravages of the gopher." In other words, the destruction caused by gophers in a single season is estimated to be equal to the production of a quarter-of-a-million acres of land. This is a form of waste which ought by all means to be stopped.

May 1st again has been chosen as Gopher Day, and a beautiful silver-plated shield will be presented by the department of agriculture to the school which has the most gophers to its credit by that date. In addition to this F. H. Auld, deputy minister of agriculture, will present a gold watch to the scholar who destroys the largest number of gophers as proved by the number of tails sent in, while a bronze shield will be awarded to the school which has the highest number of points in each of the 36 divisions into which the province has been divided for the purpose. A bronze medal will also be presented to the individual competitor who obtains the most points in each of the other 35 divisions. The competition begins with the appearance of the first gopher, and closes on May 15th. Three points will be allowed for each gopher destroyed up to the close of Gopher Day, May 1st, and two points each after that date until the close of the contest. Gophers secured after May 1st, however, will not count in awarding the medals. It is hoped that a much larger number of schools will take part in the contest this year, and so result in a much larger saving of grain than in any previous season.

VENEREAL DISEASES

The subject of control of venereal diseases has become a most pressing one, and vigorous measures have been taken in several States of the Union to deal with the matter. Up to the present time, however, Saskatchewan and Ontario are the only provinces in the Dominion to take action. Many expressions of approval have reached the office of the commissioner of public health on account of the thorough character of the measures taken in this province.

Under the regulations issued venereal diseases are declared to be infectious and dangerous to the public health, and every person thus affected is required to report the same to a registered practitioner, and to undergo treatment. Physicians giving treatment in these cases are required, within three days of the first visit of the patient, to mail a card to the Commissioner of Public Health, stating the age, sex, color, and other particulars as to the patient, together with a statement of the nature previous duration, and probable origin of the disease. They must also hand to the patient a circular of information

and advice, and a copy of the regulations. The physician is further required to notify any other physician under whose treatment the patient has been placed, that the patient is now under his treatment, and should the physician who previously treated the case fail to receive such notice within thirty days of the patient's last visit, it will be his duty to report the name and address of the patient to the commissioner so that the case may be followed up. Any person giving treatment who is not a licensed practitioner is to be reported at once to the commissioner. Local boards of health, or their medical officers are required, when so directed by the commissioner, to institute measures for the treatment and care of venereally diseased persons. All reports are to be confidential, and inaccessible to the public. In the case of children afflicted with such diseases, the parents or guardians are to be held responsible for compliance with the regulations. Persons afflicted with such diseases are prohibited from following certain occupations or handling food or milk, and any persons neglecting or refusing to comply with these provisions are liable, on summary conviction, to a penalty for each offence of not less than \$2.00 nor more than \$25. The nature of such diseases naturally tends to concealment, but sooner or later the persons afflicted must place themselves under treatment, and it is satisfactory to know that such complete measures have been taken to deal with cases once they come to the notice of the medical profession.

It is satisfactory too to know that treatment by irresponsible persons is, so far as possible, to be prevented, as such treatment in the past, if not actually encouraging immorality, has at least failed to do anything to decrease it. The whole problem of immorality is one extremely difficult to handle because of its secrecy, and our provincial government is to be congratulated on the thorough and efficient manner in which it is to be dealt with. It is too much to hope that such diseases will be stamped out, but at least we may look with confidence to a great measure of control and consequent lessening of the evil.

GIRVIN INCREASES MEMBERSHIP

Girvin local has certainly done fine work. To raise the membership in one month from 30 to 217 is splendid. In addition to that, however, they have secured the co-operation of the town in the purchase of a piano which from now on will be of great assistance in their work. We wish them continued success, and trust that they will combine some sound educational work with their social activities. The secretary's letter follows:—

Enclosed please find post office order for \$2.00 for 100 membership cards.

Our membership contest for February closed on Saturday. We began by choosing up sides, our president and vice-president leading their respective sides. The conditions of the contest were that the losing side was to put up a supper and concert at the close of the contest. At our meeting on Saturday after all reports were in, the figures stood as follows: President's side 89 new members, vice-president's side 98 new members, previous membership 30, making a total membership of 217 members.

Finding ourselves handicapped in our program for want of an instrument, a committee was appointed to look into the matter of securing one, and arrangements were made with the town that the G.G.A. pay two-thirds of the value of a piano, with the result that within two weeks sufficient money had been collected and a new piano placed in the hall.—F. B. Fraser, secretary.

OUTRAM SETS PACE

Outram is certainly going full steam ahead. The fact that the membership has jumped from 16 to 146 since the

convention a month ago proves conclusively that when the ideals and aims of the association, together with its past record, are put before the farming community they are ready to come in. Farmers all over the province are recognizing the good work of the association and our prospects for a tremendous increase in membership are bright. The district director, Mr. Nelson Spencer, writes as follows:—

Some of our locals are doing well in the line of increasing their membership. I was up to Outram on the 9th, and although the weather was cold and the roads bad there was a fair turnout, some people walking in a distance of 14 miles.

The last report to Central previous to our convention showed a membership of 16. They divided into two canvassing committees for members, the side that secured the least to put up a chicken pie social, the result being that the membership was increased to 146. I understand that they have every man in the neighborhood a G.G.

I was invited to attend the social and the ladies put up such a splendid supper that I was really glad that the one side lost. After supper I was asked to address the meeting, of about 75, which I did for about one and one-half hours. I never addressed a more attentive audience; everybody, young and old, is greatly interested in the Grain Growers' movement. After the address we had a round table discussion. One of the principal questions discussed was the building of a G.G. Hall in Outram. There is no public meeting house in the town and it was thought that a hall was just what they needed, where they could hold G.G. meetings, picture show, church, or any kind of meeting required, also a store-house in connection where they could house their supplies when necessary.

Outram is a thorough grain growers' community, and as far as I know it is the banner local of District No. 3. If any local can beat it kindly let me know.

From Outram I went to Gainsboro. On arriving there I found the G.G. taking delivery of a car of oats. We had a meeting and discussed the advisability of incorporating as a co-operative local. It was thought it would be good business, and the secretary was instructed to ask Central to forward the necessary forms, a copy of the by-laws, and a copy of the Act. No doubt you have heard from them by this time.—Nelson Spencer.

HEARNE LOCAL DOUBLES

The Hearne Local is in the swim, and is making good progress. At the time of writing they have all but doubled the last year's membership. A hopeful feature about this local is that their membership list includes the names of three women school teachers, and some married women who are ex-teachers. This augurs well for the educational activities of the Hearne local, and we shall look for a good amount of sound educational work in the near future. The secretary writes as under:—

Please find enclosed Post Office money order for \$5.00 for another 25 membership buttons; I have sold fifty this year. We now have 63 paid-up members, and by the time of our next meeting I hope we will have reached the 70 mark, our last years total being 35. We have three lady school teachers as members, besides some married women who are ex-teachers.—F. M. Livingston, sec. treas.

TRIBUNE FARMERS ACTIVE

Tribune farmers are busy. The crowding of their hall for a business meeting is surely a good sign. The experience of the sub-organizer that the best meetings take place in the school houses is worthy of consideration by the secretaries of locals. We are glad to see the work extending in this district. Attention to social and educational activities will, no doubt, have good results if thoroughly tried out.

In this instance, at least, the enthusiasm is already there, and there should be little difficulty in doing some good work in this direction. Mr. Fred C. Freddy, who is one of our sub-organizers in District Three, writes as follows:—

As you would like a report of our progress at Tribune up to date, I must state that the weather has handicapped us a little. At our first meeting since I returned from convention I was very pleased to see the hall crowded, and the farmers are out for business, and intend getting co-operative trading in full swing. From this local we have opened up three new locals, and since convention I have visited two, and they are doing great work. The locals are Dravland, Little Butte and Westdale, and there is lots of room for more locals south.

I find the best meetings take place in the school house, as they all stop and listen. Little Butte local was formed one week with entertainment committee and membership committees. The entertainment committee in the following week got up a box social for the relief of the Armenians and Syrians; result, \$103. This week another entertainment in aid of Church Funds, and they also meet every week, weather permitting, for general business and debate.—Fred C. Freddy, sec. treas.

MOSSBANK RALLY

A very successful rally was held at Mossbank on Wednesday, March 20. A number of locals united for this rally. The meeting was held in the Orange Hall, Mossbank, and began at 3 o'clock. W. B. Bodie was chairman of the meeting. The mayor of Mossbank welcomed the farmers to the village, and spoke in the highest terms of the work which the organized farmers are carrying on. He was glad to believe that the time had come when the farmers, as well as village people, could unite in efforts to promote the essentials of democracy. He thought that we are realizing today, perhaps more than ever before, our common brotherhood, and that there was great need for the closest co-operation among the common people.

H. H. McKinney, superintendent of organization, from the Central office, was then introduced and spoke on the subject of "The Importance of our Organization." He urged the need of all our members doing their best to promote greater production and conservation. The speaker declared that there was no reason for apologizing for urging that our organization should be well supported during these critical times. Our fundamental aim and purpose is to promote the best things of democracy and in this way further the ends for which war is being fought. Mr. McKinney reported the splendid progress which has been made in organizing new locals and in securing new members, and urged that the largest possible number of these members should be brought into life membership.

Mrs. Ida McNeal, director of the Women's Section, outlined the work of the Women's Section and their plans for this year. She dwelt especially on the importance of labor saving devices for the homes during these times when help was so scarce and the work of the farm women so important. The Women's Section are hoping to secure a large number of new members during this year. The work is progressing nicely and they have reason to feel encouraged.

R. M. Johnson, a member of our executive, gave a splendid address in which he reported the progress of the co-operative trading activities of the association and discussed the policies of the executive. He gave a great history of the association and explained the system of organization and how the association is governed. Mr. Johnson's address was listened to with a great deal of interest.

In the evening session, several important resolutions were passed and a considerable general discussion occurred on the subjects of the resolutions. Rev. B. Howard, of Expanse, gave an excellent address on the subject of social service, outlining the work which the association may do in promoting community development and improving the social conditions.