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Value of the Association

I wrote you recently asking you to oblige me with a short article on "What the G. G. A. has done for the farmer." I received a reply from the office saying that you were in Ottawa, also that I should write again. Now, I would be very pleased if you would write me a short article on the above subject, as there are a few of the opinion that the G. G. A. do nothing. A few facts from you may enlighten them a bit. I mean to put it in the local paper and if you care to give a series of articles to be printed now and again it would always keep it before the public. Trusting you will favor me, as I would like to see a larger membership.

CHARLES THOMPSON,
Sec., Semans Assn.

Charles Thompson, Esq.,

Yours of the 29th to hand, in which you ask I should write a letter or series of letters setting forth what has been done for the farmer by the Grain Growers' association. An adequate answer would be impossible in an ordinary letter. It would take a book. No one can commence to understand what has been done unless they first understand the nature of the contract entered into by the railways with capitalists for the construction of line elevators along the line of railways and the agreement on the part of the railways to construct terminal elevators and rent them to the builders and operators of the line elevators and the condition of the country at the time the agreements were made. You must also understand who the capitalists are with whom the agreement was made, the ramifications of their business operations as grain dealers and the influence and effect of the Manitoba Grain Act on their operations. You must understand the inspection act and grading system; the transportation routes, storage and grain handling facilities; the influence of one on the other, especially the banking institutions of our country; the country adjoining—its trading routes, ports and banking institutions; how all are more or less affected by the passage of our grain thru them.

But in a general way these interests have been antagonistic to those of the farmers. That is to say, they have always tried to get the farmers' grain as cheap as they could and make as much out of it as they could. The banks, the elevator men and the transportation men make a very strong combination. Having said this, read our "Engine of Democracy," copy of which is enclosed, showing the history of the Association in a general way, the cause of its formation, and general results.

But to be more specific, I would say: Thru our efforts we secured such amendments to the Grain Act as to practically break the grain dealers' monopoly; we secured individual freedom of shipments at initial points, the construction of loading platforms and the right to load at a platform, thru an elevator or at a switch. At times of blockade we have forced an outlet via the Soo and thru the United States. We sued the Grain Exchange, secured the appointment of a Grain Commission to study the whole question of grain grading, elevating and transportation, and compelled interests to respect the Grain Act.

We sent out our own men to make a private investigation, resulting in the formation of the Grain Growers' Grain Co. The same men organized the Grain Growers' Guide. Read it regularly. We further entered an action against the railways and compelled them to respect the Grain Act. We asked for and secured the appointment of a Railway Commission and extension of their powers from time to time.

Saskatchewan

This section of The Guide is conducted officially for the Saskatchewan Grain Growers' Association

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13—	Dr. Henry, Mildred
14—	Jno. N. Burrell, Gerowville
15—	Thos. Conlon, Archie

rectors have no control over your actions as secretary."

Reply in part:

"Well, friend, this is most astounding news to me, because, in so far as I am aware, my relationship with each and every one of the Directors is most cordial. I have not had one single complaint from any of them along the lines suggested by yourself. No instructions given by the Executive or Directors have ever been neglected or disregarded in so far as I am aware. My confidence in the personnel of my Board of Directors is such that I can hardly believe anyone spreading such a report received his information from a Director, or has the good of our Association at heart.

"I trust you will be good enough to get a definite statement from any person who may have received such an idea as I feel sure it will be found to be a misunderstanding.

"But, of course, in one sense, I am not controlled by our Board. That is, I am not gagged by them. Neither do they lead me about. The greater part of the time I am compelled to act without their advice or direction. If no fault is found, advice or orders given, I assume my work is satisfactory in so far as the Directors and Executive are concerned.

"It should be remembered, too, that I also am a Director, and have my own views and individuality, which are expressed on the Board. If that is what is referred to, I do not propose that any man shall control my thought, views or expression.

"But the Convention is approaching, and every delegate will also have an opportunity to make any complaint he may have, openly before the assembly from his own local viewpoint, and if I am found guilty, in any way, I hope to be able to take patiently such chastisement as the Convention may have to offer.

"I thank you kindly for your information and wish both friend and foe the compliments of the season.

"Jan. 3rd, 1914. "F.W.G."

The Closer Touch

We would like very much to get into a little closer touch with you. We are still alive and I believe thriving. Our numbers are few so far, yet during the year that is almost gone, we can look back and see some good work that has been done. Last meeting, our numbers and interest, was the best we have had yet. Our next will be our annual meeting, when we expect to enroll quite a few new members. The meeting is to be on Monday, the 12th of January. We would like very much to hear from you before then, and if you have any good hints to give us they will be gladly received.

GEORGE MESS,

Sec., Perley Assn.

George Mess, Esq.:—I note you would like to get in a little closer touch with me. How this is to be done I do not know. A local association is a working unit within itself. An engine supplied by its own boiler, its business and duty is first with and to itself, as affected by local conditions and surroundings. Its business being to serve and protect the special interests of its own particular membership. Next, its duty through its duly appointed delegates to the Central body. In that respect we would particularly like to get in closer touch with you.

What we want from you is your advice, the advantage of the consolidated gray matter of your members. If regular meetings are held by your local and a thorough study given to questions properly put before the meeting, erroneous opinions sifted out and the majority voice registered in properly drafted resolutions on the various questions of general public interest of either univer-

sal or class cause or effect, and forwarded to this office, you can readily see what assistance such resolutions would be, coming in from all the local associations all over this province. These classified, we would have a moving panorama of the best thought of our members before us regularly, and to secure the application of ideas and ideals thus expressed, would be a work for this Central body which might well make any man or group of men, feel proud to perform. It could not fail to be effective and would certainly command due consideration from all bodies to whomsoever presented.

Now let us have your best thought embodied in a resolution or set of resolutions passed in your regular meetings. Is not this the principle of Direct Legislation and pure Democracy?

F.W.G.

Co-operation the Key

We recently had a visit from Thomas Spence, secretary of Sandford Dene. He informed us that that local is very progressive. They do not think \$1.00 per year is anything like sufficient for membership fee. They charge their members 25c per month in addition and keep a room open where members can drop in and where papers and books are on file. They have debates twice a month and business meetings once a month and one social meeting each month. The 25c per month extra defrays expenses for the hall and literature and also furnishes revenue with which to promulgate special ideas of their own.

They are very anxious to have lecturers visit them. Co operation is their key word and around that their endeavors concentrate and believe that the activities of the local should tend to put money in the pockets of every individual member thereof.

F.W.G.

Strongfield Active

The Grain Growers of Strongfield recently spent a most enjoyable evening consisting of music, speeches, etc. Mr. Simpson being in the chair was the first on the program, followed by an instrumental by Miss A. Thompson, then a lengthy and enjoyable speech by Mr. Maharg, president of the Saskatchewan G.G.A., and president of the Saskatchewan Co-operative Elevator Co. He spoke first of the necessity of the farmers having an association to look after their interests legislatively, educatively and co-operatively. He gave a lengthy description of the association since its inception as an organization about three years ago. He also showed the great necessity of the farmers going in for co-operative buying of all materials used on the farm, such as coal, lumber, flour, binder twine, and all other articles which could be handled in car lots. He also appealed to the people to become members of the Local Association, which was replied to in a handsome manner. The next day, until 3 p.m., was taken up by the farmers interviewing him in regard to matters in connection with shipping wheat at local and terminal elevators, and also by A. A. Kennedy giving the use of his auto to give Mr. Maharg a view of the surrounding country, which was much enjoyed. Mr. Thompson, newly appointed director of co-operation in the Saskatchewan government, also gave an address which was appreciated very much by all. We were also favored with a song by John Elliott, a recitation by Miss Hale, which was encored. Lunch was served at the conclusion and ended an evening of pleasure not soon to be forgotten.

J. W. ROBINSON,

Secretary, Strongfield Assn.

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