

A Good Series of Meetings

By W. J. TREGILLUS

As requested, I am sending you a short account of the visit to the Edmonton and Lloydminster districts which had been arranged for Mr. Fream and myself. Unfortunately, Mr. Fream was prevented from carrying out his part of the program, to the keen disappointment of those who looked forward to his visit, and to my own, because I missed his help, although I benefited by having larger audiences through his being announced.

To make my first appointment I had to leave Calgary on Wednesday afternoon, March 22, and so made Strathcona that night. Rice Sheppard fetched me the next day to his home nearby and then drove me to East Clover Bar in time for the evening meeting. The weather, which had been very threatening, became very stormy just at the time of the meeting and prevented such a large gathering as was anticipated, although the school house was comfortably filled. The entertainment consisted of songs, recitations and a few short addresses from the visitors present, with refreshment at half time. The whole meeting was a great success and showed that the unions in that vicinity are alive and that the ladies are as interested as the men. We started early next morning for Edmonton, where Mr. Sheppard had arranged to deliver me to G. S. Long, who, after lunch, drove me to St. Albert. We had a meeting there which, owing to the heavy state of the roads, was not large, but what it lacked in numbers it made up in enthusiasm, and we felt that the time was well spent and look for good progress in that district.

Namoo Meeting

Mr. Long then drove to his home at Namoo, where we had supper, and then repaired to the school house, two miles distant. We found a large number, and before the meeting commenced the room was well packed. Under the chairmanship of J. Rye we had a very interesting time. The discussion after the addresses showed that the audience understood the questions brought up and knew their mind regarding them. After spending the night at the hospitable home of Mr. Long we started early for Edmonton, where a meeting was to be held at one o'clock. The Board of Trade room was well filled with a very interested audience.

When I had spoken and we had discussed different questions, Direct Legislation in particular, I left for Strathcona for a meeting at 3.30. A very pleasant meeting of the conversational kind was held under the presidency of Mr. Ball, and some outstanding questions freely handled.

This ended the meeting arranged for the Edmonton district and I was then anxiously looking for Mr. Fream, who had sent word to say that he hoped to join me at Lloydminster, but when the train time for that town on Sunday evening arrived I could find no one answering his description on the train, and so continued the journey alone. When I arrived there at four o'clock next morning I found Mr. Linton, also Mr. Austin, of Ranfurly, who came down on the same train. At the time appointed in the afternoon we found a large gathering from the surrounding district, including quite a few members of the Grain Growers' Association of Saskatchewan. I hope I was sufficiently orthodox to please my friend, Mr. Green, of Moose Jaw. If I did preach any heresies I shall doubtless hear of it. The meeting was addressed by Mr. Austin, who was well received and made an acceptable speech and a good impression, after which a good discussion was entered into by the members of different unions present, showing that the U.F.A. is alive and has some very able supporters in this part of the province. Mr. John Campbell, of Streamstown, presided.

An Open Air Meeting

Next morning we started early for Mr. Barber's ranch and were fortunate enough to prevail on Mr. Austin to ac-

company us, although he only came down for the Monday. Mr. Linton was in charge of the party, and Carl Rosa, who had contributed so largely to our entertainment the previous evening, also accompanied us. After Mrs. Barber had taken good care of us during the lunch hour we went to the meeting place of the Rising Sun Union, which is a large shack used for meetings, and one wondered where all the people came from, as a large stretch of prairie only could be seen, but no houses. But they did come and in large numbers, with ox teams, heavy teams and Bain wagons, light teams and democrats, buggies, and others on horseback, and a splendid meeting was held out on the prairie under the presidency of D. W. McKenzie. We found at this meeting that Mr. Austin was warning up to his work. We also brought on our reserve man, Mr. Linton, and in addition had some good speeches from the local men, which made a most interesting and instructive meeting. Mr. Fairbrother, the local secretary, is waiting for a bunch of sample Guides, and wants to be put on the best terms, so as to get all the members subscribing.

After the meeting was over we were taken to Sunnysdale school house. A full house of very interested ladies and gentlemen, with a good springing of young people, greeted us at Sunnysdale. Mr. Austin got into his swing and struck a good gait, and Mr. Linton, who is a single gentleman, did splendidly.



Barn of R. A. Stinson, Lyleton, Man.

One might not be wrong if one guessed that the inspiration came from the ladies present. Mr. McLean was in the chair, and all felt that the general discussion, which was freely entered into by the ladies and gentlemen, was most helpful. The enthusiasm created will doubtless mean added strength. Many came long distances and seemed satisfied with what they obtained.

Next morning, early, J. C. McLeod, of Orville, who had come over the evening before, called for us and drove us to his home for lunch and then to the school house where we had a good meeting, a large attendance and good discussion. Again we were favored with the presence of ladies, and our reserve man was at his best. Mr. Young took us back to Lloydminster where we took the train at 3 a.m. to Kitcoy.

After a few hours sleep and breakfast we were fetched by Mr. Heathcote and taken to his home at North Kitcoy, and after lunch he and his father took us to the school house. This we thought was our last meeting, but we found Mr. D. Gilchrist, of Islay, and Mr. Lively had come over to take us back for a meeting at that town when this meeting was over.

Local Speakers Good

We had a splendid meeting at North Kitcoy, Mr. T. Farrell presiding, and when we had each addressed the meet-

ing we enjoyed listening to the able speeches given by the local speakers. The chairman put lots of vim into the meeting with his real Irish wit and humor, which seemed infectious. He is a splendid speaker and has a wonderful imagination, taking his illustrations from all over the world and applying them with skill. He was very proud of being the one to discover Mr. Austin and helping him to get elected as director, and said that when Christopher Columbus discovered America he knew he had discovered something, but did not know for some time after the value of his discovery, and predicted a similar experience in Mr. Austin's case. We were then taken to Islay for our final meeting. This was presided over by W. H. Gordon, and after the visiting speakers had addressed those present a good discussion on many leading subjects affecting the U.F.A. was entered into and some valuable suggestions came out.

Mr. Austin and I left Islay by the 12.40 a.m. train west for our home; Mr. Linton by the 3 a.m. train east for his bachelor's home. Possibly a few such trips as this may be the means of some alteration. My best wishes go with Mr. Linton, who showed us such kindness through the trip.

My aim at each meeting was to show the importance of the farmers' occupation, in fact the impossibility of a community without agriculture, although possible with that alone; then to point out

their capital! Why should they pay tribute to another part of the community who were legally permitted by unjust laws to levy it? Do not Isaiah's words fit this case when he said: "Therefore my people are gone into captivity for lack of knowledge!" We have allowed the manufacturers to get us into economic bondage for lack of knowledge, and because of our carelessness they have been by scheming, enslaving us. While we have been working they have been watching. We have been working singly. They have been organized. Though we are stronger and more numerous, we have allowed them to bind us and make slaves of us. Think of it! Some 2,500 manufacturers making slaves of millions of farmers. Is it possible? Yes, it is a fact. A thinking man cannot be kept in slavery, and a man who will not think cannot be kept out of slavery. What is the remedy? If we are slaves through ignorance, lack of knowledge, clearly it is to get the light, knowledge. Let us see to it that we get to know just where we are, and as better information can be obtained than through The Guide, and I strongly urged every farmer to subscribe. No better way can money be spent and no way of spending will bring equal returns. This paper is run by farmers for farmers, is staunch and true and can neither be bought nor sold.

Direct Legislation

After showing the absolute necessity of organization I explained Direct Legislation at every meeting and showed how simply and effectively it worked, and urged with all the power that I possessed for everyone to work for its establishment in our province, which would enable us to remove many of the existing evils in a short time. I then concluded by giving details of the work and extraordinary progress of the U.F.A., and after the other speakers had addressed the meeting, invited, through the chairman, questions on any point of interest. In fact I always asked my audience to interrupt me if I failed to make myself clear on any point or if they wanted to ask any questions on any matter I might overlook.

Mr. Austin explained how he became a farmer in Alberta, and, although previously used to other kinds of business, had succeeded satisfactorily. He also told how he became a member of the U.F.A. and how he was determined to stick to both. He enthusiastically described the work the association was doing and its value to farmers, and pressed every union to send a full delegation to the annual convention. He advised ordinary members, if they could afford it, to attend also. He said it was like attending a Methodist camp meeting, it filled a man with enthusiasm. He had been to two conventions and in each case when he returned he did more work than he would have ever thought of doing had he not attended. He urged everyone to make an effort to do so and said they could not make any sacrifice that would not be more than repaid by being present. He said we should aim to have at least one thousand delegates at our next convention, and work to that end.

He also pointed out that we must take more interest in our own political affairs and attend to them, and told in his own dry, humorous way how he was at the last federal election canvassed by a gentleman who stated that he was a brother farmer and who seemed wonderfully interested in him, and being so kind, so smooth, Mr. Austin said, "he drew me out, and then I told him he hadn't the hall mark of a farmer, having a stove pipe hat, frock coat, hair carefully parted down the centre, an ample girth, carrying a good deal under the waistcoat," in fact, he said, "he seemed to me to be altogether too well fed and too well groomed for a farmer," and Mr. Austin warned his hearers to give such smooth men a wide berth and seek out some good man to represent the district and take a leaf

Other Burdens

In addition to the fleecing we were being subjected to from these sources, we were carrying the tremendous burden of tariff so that we were weighted beyond endurance, and what was the reason for our being in the position we found ourselves? Why should farmers work harder than any other class and simply get in return what amounted to only a small interest on