

"There was a time when to be a Roman citizen was to be equal to the king of any other land. For a feverish little while in France, the citizen was greater than the king. But in this country we are all satisfied to be plain Mister. A Mister is a nobody, and always was. We 'sovereign voters' need a title that has some body to it, and has something back of it. If we could once realize that when it comes to exercising the power of ruling, and insisted on being treated as such, things would soon be different. Instead of having a politician coming round at election time and yelling across the street:

"Hullo, Donald! How's your liver today? we would have him coming around with his hat in his hand, and asking politely:

"How is your Highness this morning?"

"Yes!" exclaimed John, "and if he did, you would be the very first to laugh in his face."

"Don't interrupt me," said Donald Ban, "when I am trying to think what I would do if I were a king. Instead of telling the politician about the state of my liver, I would summon up all my dignity, and go at him something like this:

"Oho, Mr. Member of Parliament, so this is you, is it? I see by the labels on your suitcase that you have been living at the Russell and King Edward, and other high-priced boarding-houses. Tell me, now, what you have been doing as my representative in Ottawa?"

"Oh," says he, with proper humility, "I have been trying to keep track of the business of the country."

"Very good! Have you noticed that Montreal claims to have over a hundred multi-millionaires living in it, and Toronto is doing its best to catch up with that record? I haven't seen it reported that any of these men made their millions by teaching calves to drink out of a pail or by doing any other kind of farm work. They made their money chiefly by being in on the ground floor when a railroad was being built and was being spoon-fed by the Government. Or they put through mergers of one kind or another that would gouge every man in the country out of a few cents—not enough for him to make trouble about, but these few cents, when piled up, amounted to millions. Then there are the banks. They have branches in all the small towns to borrow money from us farmers, so that it can be sent to Montreal and Toronto, and used in pushing along all kinds of Big Business that usually mean death to every kind of little business that men like me might want to go into."

"These are big questions, your Highness," says my Member of Parliament.

"They are that," says I, in my kingliest manner, "and I am too busy keeping cow records and doing chores to go into them myself. I want you to study them up without asking a lobbyist for the Big Interests to explain them to you, in his oily way, and when you have got the right of the matter, see that something is done about it."

"You Highness shall be obeyed," says he, and then backs out of my presence, as if he had a patch on his pants that he didn't want me to see."

"That's all right," said John, "as a joke, but while you were thinking that out, I was finding out just what can be done in a very important matter with the means we have at hand."

"Well, well! Tell me about it!"

"A few days ago I wrote to Duncan Ross, our member, to find out if anything could be done to put a stop to the killing of people on the level crossings by our railroads."

"That scare you got yourself seems to have made you public-spirited."

"Maybe it has. Some of us have to be jolted by a train before we think of being public-spirited. But listen to what he has written to me:

"Any person who complains about the safety of a crossing, can, without expense, forward his complaint, together with the reasons for thinking the crossing dangerous, to the Board of Railway Commissioners at Ottawa. The matter will then be looked into by the Commissioners, and an order made, apportioning the expense of making the crossing more safe, between the railway company, the municipality, and the Dominion Government."

"He tells me, besides, that three years ago the Government voted \$1,000,000, to be spent at the rate of \$200,000 a year in doing away with level crossings or in guarding them with electric bells, gates or watchmen. And, in spite of the fact that, since that law was passed and that money voted, the railways have killed 174 persons on level crossings and wounded 218, so few complaints have been made that only \$10,847.02 of the Grade Crossing Fund has been spent. If the people had taken advantage of the law, fully \$3,000,000 would have been spent in the past three years in doing away with the level-crossing death-traps, because only twenty per cent. of the cost can be paid by the Government. The rest has to be paid by the railways and the municipalities."

"Do you mean to say?" asked Donald Ban, "that if I made a complaint to the Commissioners about that level-crossing death-trap down in the village, it would be looked into at once, without my having to go to the reeve or the council to get them to make the complaint?"

"I do. All you would have to do would be to send your complaint to the Commissioners yourself, and they would do the rest, without bothering you in any way."

"Well, there have been two men killed on that crossing to my knowledge, and I was nearly caught there myself one day when I was riding with Jim McPherson and we were talking politics."

"Then, your Highness should send in a complaint at once."

Donald Ban smiled at the sarcasm, and then asked:

"Do you know of any case where the Commissioners acted on the complaint of a private citizen?"

"I do. A man whom we both know complained that the level crossing at Glencoe was dangerous, and in less than two weeks an order was issued compelling the railroad to guard that crossing with gates and watchmen both night and day. And the member tells me that practically every complaint that has been received by the Commissioners has been acted upon, and the crossings complained of protected."

"Very good," said Donald Ban. "I shall send in a complaint about that village crossing to-day. It is we farmers who have to drive to the village to do business who are in the most danger, and we are the men who should complain. Now, what are you going to do?"

"I am going to lodge complaints about every dangerous crossing in the township. If a man in every township would do the same, we could have every level crossing in Canada protected properly in five years."

"Go ahead and do it to-day! I see, John, that there are a few things left that we 'sovereign voters' can do if we bestir ourselves. If we kings would only stick together, and each do our part, it is wonderful how much we could do for our country. Now, clear the things off the table and get the pens and papers, and we'll write our letters at once."

Grange Still Active.

It was an enthusiastic conference of the delegates of the subordinate Granges which met in Victoria Hall, Toronto, last Wednesday and Thursday, to transact the regular business of the organization and discuss topics affecting the society and the community at large. While in numbers the meeting was not quite as large as that of last year, there were more delegates present than at the last annual meeting. This is accounted for by the fact that many of those present on the former occasion were not delegates, but came to hear the discussions. Naturally enough, one of the topics which brought forth much discussion was the defeat of Reciprocity. The delegates who spoke on this subject with one accord believed that the measure would have been a good thing for the basic industry, agriculture, in the interests of which the Grange is putting forth its greatest effort. The meeting felt that they had started right, and optimism is alone necessary to success. The need of more education on economic problems was pointed out, and the necessity of farmers' East and West, standing together in demanding their rights regarding the tariff and other matters deemed of vital interest to the country's welfare, was emphasized. Partisanship came in for no small amount of censure, and it was pointed out that, until those exercising the franchise became willing to lay aside their party preferences when large questions which affect the whole economic status of the country were at issue, and vote according to their honest convictions, no very great improvement in conditions could be brought about.

In replying to Mr. McNeice, who raised the question as to whether or not it was advisable to deal with political questions in the Grange, Henry Glendinning, Master-Elect, said: "It is impossible to avoid dealing with questions which may have a bearing on politics, and it is only by dealing with such questions as affect our interests that we can hope to accomplish anything."

James McEwing thought that the Grange should not be debarrd from debating matters of vital interest to its members, and political questions often affected them very directly.

Single Tax, Militarism, Good Roads, Co-operation, and Direct Legislation, were subjects which aroused much enthusiasm and spirited discussion, each being covered by resolutions, which follow:

THE MASTER'S ADDRESS.

N. E. Burton, retiring Master of the Grange, in his report, explained that Provincial elections had delayed the date of meeting. Plunging then into live questions, he recalled that a year ago last December, nearly a thousand delegates, under the direction of the National Council of Agricul-

ture, appeared before Parliament, demanding that farmers be given redress from unjust trade restrictions. The result of the partial concessions the Government saw fit to grant should impress farmers with the necessity of thorough organization and a determination to stand firmly together. It also showed very plainly that the manufacturers have long since laid aside party affiliations in matters affecting their business interests.

The proposed tariff commission offers farmers an opportunity to again place before Parliament and country demands for justice and the removal of laws which favor a few at the expense of the agricultural and industrial workers. In this matter the Grange should seek co-operation of other organizations. Further points opened for discussion were direct legislation, high cost of living, military expenditure and military training in the public schools, Government ownership of trunk telephone lines, woman's suffrage, and safeguarding of savings-bank deposits. Congratulating the organization upon its progress and growth, the Master announced that nearly thirty local Granges had been organized during the past year.

This address was discussed clause by clause, and out of it grew the passing of several resolutions.

The report of the Executive Committee stated, among other things, that "Our agricultural population is only in a semi-conscious condition regarding the mode of operation that is being used to accomplish the purpose of the moneyed interests. The power of prevention and cure rests with us if we are able to harness and control the latent power of this great bulk of the electorate, success will be ours. We trust that some means will soon be found, ere it is too late, to start this great balance wheel into intelligent motion."

The report of the Committee on Legislation contained many clauses, all of which are embodied in the resolutions adopted.

RESOLUTIONS CARRIED.

Iron and Steel Bounties.—We desire again to protest against the granting of public money to the iron and steel industries of Canada. Whatever justification for such a practice may have existed in years gone by, it exists no longer. Millions of dollars have already been paid out of the Federal Treasury to pay dividends upon the watered stock of such industries as need no public aid, or to maintain in existence, with terrific economic loss, industries unsuited to their location. It is high time that the practice of giving public money to private corporations was abolished, as its fruits are only political corruption and economic loss.

A Canadian Navy.—We commend the proposal to refer the whole naval question to the people, and sincerely trust that nothing will prevent its fulfilment, and that no method of referring the question to the people will be adopted such as will prevent the electors from giving an honest and clear expression to their convictions.

Military Expenditures.—We view with alarm the rapidly increasing expenditure for military purposes, and also the attempt to make our schools recruiting grounds for army or navy. Canadian farmers, who have to pay the major part of the expense, may well ask: "Whither are we going, and what influences are behind this movement?" At this stage in the history of the world, the attempt to turn Canada into a war-power, and to impose upon us the crushing burdens of the older nations should rightly cause the gravest anxiety.

Railway Taxation.—We desire to reaffirm our oft-expressed conviction that railway and other corporation property should be taxed on the same basis as other property, and we hereby express our gratification that one political party in Ontario has at last officially and unreservedly accepted the policy of railway taxation long advocated by the Grange.

Local Option in Taxation.—We also desire to place ourselves on record as favoring such a change in our assessment law as will allow municipalities the right to exempt improvements from taxation, either in part or in whole. Much can be said in favor of such exemption, and nothing can in justice be said against allowing municipalities the right to do this if they so desire.

Further, we would draw farmers' attention to the enormous increase of land values in our large cities. These values are created by all who contribute to the building up of and to the carrying on of business in these cities, and they constitute a heavy toll upon the business transacted therein. These values, we believe, ought to return to the public who created them, by the taxation of land values, and not find their way, as they do now, into the pockets of private landowners.

Reciprocity.—We believe that the Dominion Grange should make it perfectly clear that Reciprocity is not dead. The late Dominion election was in no sense a fair referendum upon the single issue of reciprocity with the United States. Numerous other issues were inevitably mingled with it, and the bitterness of the party fight led to such distortion and misrepresentation, such