

President Coaker's Address.

The time has come for Union Members of the House of Assembly to take a part in administering the public affairs of the Colony and when the elections of next year are over, it is probable that some of the Union M.H.A.'s will be selected to take charge of Departments of the Public Service, and thus become responsible for the good government of the Colony. It is therefore necessary for us to amend our Constitution and provide for such a contingency.

Members who have purchased Dry Goods this fall to the value of \$5.00 at any Outport Union Store will have his Council fee of 30 cents paid for him by the store. Therefore all such members will enjoy our membership without any cost whatever.

During the year several members have received aid from the Disaster Fund. That fund has now no income as members are not called upon to pay anything into the fund. I would suggest that the amount to the credit of the fund be utilized for the purchase of stock in the Electric Power Company and Shipbuilding Company in equal proportion and the dividends be utilized for relieving pressing cases of distress amongst unfortunate members.

During the past year I made my annual trip of inspection in the Motor Yacht and visited sixty-five harbours between Bay-de-Verde and LaScie, and I hope to pay a visit to the Councils in Burin and Fortune Bay Districts during the next month or January, and will organize the Union throughout those Districts and provide them with Union Candidates for the next Elections. I will also endeavour to visit a portion of Burgeo District.

The funds of the F.P.U. will amount to \$20,000.00 by the end of the year, providing the Trading Company's contribution for discounts this year amount to \$1,000.00. This will be forthcoming.

No assessments will be collected in future if you approve of the foregoing suggestions. The \$20,000.00 will be used partly as a loan to the Union Publishing Company and for shares in the Electric Light and Shipbuilding Companies. The interest and dividends will be the sole income of this Council in future. There will be no salaries paid, or contributions available for any but the most distressing cases. Thirty cents annual fees will be payable by Local Councils who will contribute five cents per member as usual to the District Council and retain twenty-five cents per members for Local Council expenses.

The cost of Circulars will be defrayed by the Supreme Council and a proportion of the Solicitor's fee. You will therefore recognize that in future the transacting of the F.P.U.'s business at Headquarters will not cost Union members one cent. If necessity should compel your President to issue an appeal for direct subscriptions for a particular reason, I trust all will do their duty.

I would also remind you that not one cent of money raised by assessments go to make up the \$20,000,000 fund we possess. It is entirely composed of the income derived from discounts and subscriptions. The money loaned to the Publishing Company for the purchase of machinery will be covered by a Mortgage and therefore fully protected. In addition to present funds this Council owns half the interest in the F.P.U. Motor Yacht.

A detailed statement of the account for 1915 was furnished in January to all Councils. At the end of this year a similar statement will be forwarded. I

consider the income derived from interest and dividends will be sufficient to cover the annual expenses of this Council. After eight years existence your Union is independent enough to be self supporting and its mighty work will go on, on your behalf without cost to a single member, which is a record that no organization of like nature in the world possess.

Every man in the Colony will now be convinced that my motive in establishing and labouring for the F.P.U. was not personal financial profit or gain, as so many rashly contended during the early years of the existence of our Brotherhood. For eight years of labour as your Leader, Editor, Organizer, and President I have been paid \$3,600.00. I am to-day a poorer man than I was eight years ago, hence you can defy our opponents—if we have any—who without the slightest justification maligned you and me by falsely asserting that my object in organizing the Fishermen was to enrich myself at your expense. After eight years of strenuous toil, during which scores of enemies have been employed to search out all my doings—to scrutinize all my actions and expose them publicly—may I ask whether anything has transpired that would even lead you to think for a moment that my work is anything but that which I proclaimed it to be from the day I started the Union at Herring Neck?

I am greatly encouraged in my work by the knowledge that hundreds of Fishermen who refused to support me in the past are now strongly upholding our cause, and not only upholding it, but building it up by the investment of their savings.

I have no misgivings concerning the result of the next appeal to the Country. I will go forward to the Polls next fall without faltering, convinced absolutely that our cause will come through triumphantly. I can assure you that I consider public life as a burdensome duty, entailing tremendous sacrifices from those who have entered it intent upon upholding RIGHT. If I would consider my personal wishes I would not again ask any Constituency to send me back to the House of Assembly, and I think I can say the same for all Union Members of the Legislature; but my duty is to consider Country first, and if the people want us it is our duty to respond, irrespective of our personal feelings.

For the sake of your Country and your Children, men, be firm and loyal next fall and avail of the opportunity open to you of placing in power a party of men, of your own selection, that will strive with all their power to eradicate the evils and wrongdoings so strongly entrenched in the system of governing under a constitution such as ours. May Providence guide the Electorate next Fall in choosing representatives, and may it strengthen us if we are trusted, to do that which is right in administering the affairs of the Colony and in our endeavour to make poor old Terra Nova the brightest jewel in the Empire's Crown.

Remember, comrades, that the sole aim of our Union is to promote Independence, prevent pauperism, help the masses to rise above demoralizing influences that find solace in the acceptance of Charity that entail national degeneracy and a pauper's grave. I want our country men to trample those demoralizing influences under their feet. All my efforts are aimed at the destruction of those pit falls. Men cannot realize what it is to be men, if they are not independent enough to resist accepting something for nothing. We aim also to

create confidence and hopefulness for working men, to be a beacon of light to which when hard pressed all may look for guidance and advice.

Our endeavours are also directed to lessen the great inequalities that exist wherever we turn and to diffuse the luxuries and comforts of life more evenly and to treat all humanly as members of one family—one grand Brotherhood. There is no place amongst us for the lazy and the indolent, or wasteful! We want men to be Industrious, Persevering and Thrifty. The possession of those three virtues must bring comfort and pleasure. To be without them must surely bring poverty and misery. This goal is open to every man and woman. Those who will not work and know nothing about surmounting obstacles cannot succeed in life. Our Country holds out to all who will toil constantly, endeavour persistently to overcome difficulties, and watchfully take care of what they earn, a comfortable and independent living; and if such ideals are adhered to I know of no country where working men can do better than here in Terra Nova.

During the past five years great changes are observable amongst the Fishermen, which can be attributed to our work as Unionists. Fishermen are more independent in spirit, outspoken and fearless than at any other period in our Country's history. If we continue the same rate of progress during the coming five years the change will revolutionize conditions, and Newfoundland will become a new place for all, and will recognize herself as being the equal of the best of any country. The progress made has been satisfactory, but what would have been possible had the War not come to cripple civilization, and progress?

Many of our noble lads—members of this organization—who went forth to fight for Liberty and Freedom since 1914 are lying in graves on foreign soil, some far away in the land of the Pharaohs, other in Sunny France. What noble boys! They went forth willingly at the Call of Duty and we rightly call them Heroes. They went while thousands heard the call and heeded it not. Their places are empty at the firesides. They were our best! What a cruel monster that man is who demands such an awful sacrifice in those days of human uplifting. What death is too cruel for those who plunged the world into such a catastrophe?

Our Empire has accomplished wonders. Her sons have shown from whence they sprung and proved once again that Britons are the equal of the best on the face of the Globe; but at what cost! And still there is much to do. Let me plead once again for the cause we all should recognize. Men are still wanted, and must be forthcoming. Surely some young men will recognize that duty now beckons them to come forward. Do you know that for the last three months I have been tormented over the problem as to whether I would be more useful to my Country on board the H.M.S. "Briton" than I am to my Country at the Head Office, and I cannot arrive at a conclusion.

I look at the brave young lads that have returned from the Battlefield, and I am reminded that they had no more right to go than I. They went; I remained. Perhaps for reasons absolutely justifiable, but if I am compelled to remain behind, being convinced that my duty demands it, what about thousands who are not so placed?

I want to be fair in this matter. I am forbidden by you to leave my post.

Very well; but my example may effect others. What about that? Hundreds can be better spared to go forward. If that is so, will fifty young men offer to go in my place and enlist in the Navy? Will fifty of the thousand young men in the Union come forward and enlist, that I may with a clear conscience be reconciled to a decision to remain at my post? Will you in your Councils appeal to the young men and send me along the names of fifty heroes who will go forward in my place, thus supplying fifty recruits for one that you forbid to go?

"That is a fair deal. Who will the fifty be? Let them act at once."

During the next twelve months must come the day of reckoning for Germany. Every available Briton should respond to bring that day nearer. The only instrument capable of accomplishing Peace with Honour is "force," and force means "men and ammunition." To all who have given of their best for the great cause of humanity now being decided on the Battlefields, our sincerest sympathy is extended. May God console them in their sorrow and wipe away their tears, and may He soon bring Peace to the World, and with it the end of all strife and war between men.

Considerable dissatisfaction exists over the prices paid for Fish, this as well as other seasons. The Fishermen desire to have one price paid to all for the same quality of Fish during the same season. Men who are compelled to sell at a reduced figure when the market at St. John's is overstocked, grumble because friends a week previous sold at considerable advance on what the second comers received. The Shore Fishermen also complain about the large difference in value during the past four years. The only cure is the Export Company's proposals, which are to buy fish from members, fixing a current price about October 1st and paying back to members who are Shareholders a bonus per quintal on what fish they shipped when the season's exporting show profits for such distribution.

It therefore behoves all Fishermen who can, to buy supplies at Catalina and ship fish at Catalina, or at outport depots if required, and avail of the opportunity afforded by the Export Company to secure the full value of their fish in case prices advanced after they shipped. On the 1st of October it is possible to fix a price for Shore Fish that would be an average for the season. That date would be suitable to fix the price of Soft Fish. These proposals, which are embodied in the Constitution of the Export Company, will remove all complaints and dissatisfaction regarding prices for fish, as all will receive alike who are members of the Union and own as little as one share of \$10.00 value in the Company. Of course all who wish may sell to the Export Company, but only members of the F.P.U. and Shareholders of the Company will be eligible for the bonus.

The Export Company will probably be ready for purchasing and exporting fish at Catalina next fall. Every member therefore who is interested in the attainment of such conditions, who can afford to purchase Export Company Shares should do so this winter, as it will be necessary to dispose of \$100,000 worth if we are to export to any extent next fall. Most of the Export Company's capital will be utilized for fish buying, very little of it will be invested in the property at Catalina.

The Trading Company will own the premises at Catalina and hire a portion of it to the Export Company. I invite all who possess savings to invest in any

of the four Companies affiliated with the Union, viz: The Trading Company, Export Company, Electric Power Company and the Shipbuilding Company. The Shares of the Shipbuilding Company up to \$30,000.00 are guaranteed 7 per cent. dividends by the Colony. Spare savings are best utilized by investing where safe returns are forthcoming and stability is ensured. Investing money is what creates progress and industry. Money misers who keep their savings in tin cans and stockings are a curse rather than a blessing to a country. Invest your savings and thereby cause the wheels of progress to revolve. Investors become richer and hundreds are given employment and the Country's income expands and the whole community become gainers. Money hid is wealth robbed from the country and means industrial stagnation.

A man four years ago handed me One Thousand Dollars in Gold that he had hidden in the earth for ten years. Since then we have paid him dividends amounting to \$380.00 and in two months he will probably receive another hundred, while in the earth it increased nothing, but was a continual worry. It now gives pleasure and affords means to secure some little comforts while the original investment is becoming more and more valuable.

As the months pass greater and greater confidence grows in the Union Companies and we cannot complain of the past. Cat Harbour alone this year has purchased upwards of \$4,000.00 additional shares in the Trading Company. One Planter in Bonavista Bay has \$8,000.00 invested. One friend who is a great believer in my aims invested \$7,000.00 this season in the Union Companies and intends to make his interest \$25,000.00. Another sympathizer, who in 1913 was an opponent who reside in Bonavista District, is taking \$2,000.00 worth of shares in the Export Company.

I therefore invite all who can of those who hear me and those who read my words to come forward and back our work by buying shares in the Companies. The Trading Company and Export Company paid a 10 per cent. dividend last year, which make 38 per cent. dividend in four years for the Trading Company. The Auditors' Reports will be tabled and speak for themselves.

During the past two weeks the outports have been agitated over the increased freight rates demanded by the Reid Nfld. Co. I consider the action of the Company as outrageous and intended solely to enrich themselves at a time when all true men with wealth ought to be doing their utmost to help the Colony over a difficult period and the Empire in its most pressing hour of need. The Company has been permitted by the Government to add rates exceeding in some instances 200 per cent. the rates charged prior to November 1st. The Colony might truly be said to possess no Government. Those misruling the Colony at present cannot be considered as anything better than interlopers who have secured the reins of Government in opposition to the wish of a majority of the electorate.

I took up the matter of increased rates with the President of the Reid Nfld. Co., but Sir William Reid showed no inclination to consider any interest but that of enriching himself and family at the expense of the people of this country at a time when all who love the Flag and Empire should be making sacrifices for one common purposes.

It will be the duty of the incoming Government to take steps to protect the interests of the outport people in rela-