

Our Farmers' Union Page

Devoted to Education, Organization, Cooperation and Marketing

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SUBJECTS FOR DISCUSSION IN LOCAL UNIONS

JUNE

1. Have We Cultivated Our Crops as Economically as Possible This Year, and Are We Growing All the Leguminous Crops We Should?
2. Plans for a Neighborhood and Union Picnic This Summer.

MAKE "DO BUSINESS" YOUR MOTTO

In Local, County and State Meetings Give Less Time to Miscellaneous Talk, Speeches, Resolutions, Etc., and More Time to Real Cooperation

"WE DIDN'T get started on the right basis in this county," writes the secretary of a County Union. "The original organizer exaggerated to the extent of telling them they could buy things for almost nothing if they would join the Union," etc.



MR. GREEN

And this reminds me that the criticisms of President McAuliffe, of Kansas, on this point are not without reason. The original landslide to the Farmers' Union in the Southern states was produced largely by appeals to "feelings" and sentiment rather than a presentation of practical business ideas. The idea of getting something for "almost nothing" will always be responded to by thoughtless and thriftless people—and they feel keenly disappointed when they fail to realize a hundred cents on the dollar from an investment of nothing. It isn't any wonder that swift reaction follows any method of organizing that holds out the hope of getting something for almost nothing. I am fully aware that many of the favored classes in this country are all the time getting something for nothing, but it isn't done in legitimate business or under equitable economic conditions.

And, as Brother McAuliffe intimates, the local organizer who held out excessive claims and appealed to sentiment is not the only one who is responsible for error of judgment. In our state and national meetings being "long and strong on needed legislation, both state and national" instead of "making use of the opportunity for self-help offered by the Farmers' Union," so as to make membership in the Union a real asset, represents some of the misdirected energy that has done nothing towards keeping alive the Local Unions, which must live through the transaction of cooperative business in executive meetings if they live at all.

I like President McAuliffe's instruction to his organizers not to organize new Locals if the farmers uniting to form such Locals don't intend to cooperate along business lines and actually do business both in buying their supplies and selling their products. The same rule should apply with even more emphasis in re-organizing a delinquent Local Union because its members went to sleep on their opportunities and refused to transact business for themselves.

"Do Business," is a good motto to build or rebuild under. While it may in some instances require time to develop a cooperative selling proposition, it need not take long to get in

the habit of buying cooperatively, and a Local Union that does not buy its supplies collectively is lacking in the thing that is necessary to keep it alive, and that thing is just one business leader who will get on the job of buying and stay on the job, giving some of his time and maybe using some of his own financial resources, temporarily at least, to get the business started.

I sincerely hope that the basis of our activity in North Carolina this year will be under the motto "Do Business" in every Local Union in the state, and that when the time for the next state meeting comes, we shall have laid the foundation so firmly upon this basis, that the proceedings of the session will be remarkable for two things,—first, a minimum amount of resolutions, and set speeches, and written addresses, and second, for a maximum amount of discussion by members who are doing business in their Local and County Unions.

J. Z. G.

What Is Your Sunday School and Church Doing to Help the Community?

THIS is a question which should appeal directly to each one of us. It is a vital question, and one which vitally concerns not only the church and Sunday School membership, but the entire community as well.

Any community with a good live, aggressive church and progressive Sunday School is a good community in which to live. These are invaluable assets to any neighborhood, though often too lightly esteemed.

The writer knows more than one community in his own county which has been literally transformed by the earnest work of a few devoted men and women who were willing to pay the price that their neighborhood might be the better. In one of these Sunday schools, and a rural Sunday school too, was developed a spirit which veritably made anew the church and revolutionized the entire community. The superintendent of this school having caught a vision of better things, gathered about himself a few men and women who were imbued with like aspirations and desires, and with their help new plans were discussed and adopted which ultimately have Christianized practically the whole community.

Among the plans used were contests for new scholars, contests for attendance, contests among the various classes for the honor of having the banner which designated that particular class as the banner class for that month. New Sunday school and church music was introduced, a singing school was taught after the busy season was over, or after crops were laid by. Picnics were arranged, a Sunday school library was put in, and good literature was provided for the entire school, including several copies of a juvenile paper. The school was organized into classes, the Baraca and Philathea classes playing an important part in the activities of the school and also of the church as well. A system of prizes and rewards was perfected which stimulated attendance among the primary classes. When the time for the annual revival came on in the autumn it seemed as if the fields were already ripe unto the harvest, so great was the ingathering into the fold. At least ninety per cent of these uniting themselves with the church had been active pupils of the Sunday school.

Why cannot the work accomplished in that Sunday school and church be duplicated in many, many places all over the South? Are there other places that need this transformation? Are there places where the attendance upon the Sunday school and upon the church service is not just what its membership would have it be? Is there a place where a little personal work might count mightily for the moral and the social uplift of the community? If so, then here is a field for the activities of some one who does not feel willing to let things take care of themselves.

It is the faithful few in all the ages that have wrought things worth while, and who have not been content with aught save that of a life of service for the Master and for humanity. Have we done what we could? Has it been our policy to help instead of to hinder, to praise instead of to criticize? Oh, it is so easy to do the latter. When things go wrong anywhere it is so plain that some one else could have done better under the same conditions, and among the same environments and human nature is so prone to say it might have been different. Let us learn to be charitable.

If your church has no Sunday school, then won't you see if something cannot be done in this direction? Help the cause by your presence at each service. So often are those who lead discouraged by the absence of those whom we may reasonably expect to attend. Your pastor expects your presence at the church service. Do you attend as regularly as you should do, and are you always prompt? These are very personal questions, but that kind of question is needed now and then, often to remind us of duties forgotten.

May each church of every denomination have a well-conducted, well-patronized Sunday school before the end of the present year, and may we, each and all, do our whole duty to God, and to our fellow man.

C. C. W.

The Cotton Market Situation

THE market has been active and firm this week, and prices have risen into new high ground. At Savannah, good middling is pushing close to 22 cents, and a good deal of cotton is being turned into cash at the high level. New crop months are even stronger than the old crop, indicating that spinners are willing and prepared to pay these prices for another crop. Not much fresh cotton is coming into sight, and it looks as though there may not be as much in the country as was counted on. Not very much more is now available for export, although foreign buyers are considerably short in their takings.

Early prospects for the new crop are not particularly cheerful. Despite the great incentive of the high prices, it now appears that the acreage is rather less than last year's, and the condition not as good as at this season last year. The world needs a crop not only equal to last year's but about 2,000,000 bales larger. Consumption for this year is running about 2,000,000 bales more than the crop, and there will be no surplus carried over to help out. As much will be wasted next season as was used this season under a continuance of present conditions, and restorations of space would bring a vast increase to the demand, with nothing at all to satisfy such increase.

Our cottonseed oil has enormously helped out the situation in the lard supply, and this one of the most important food items. The high prices bear eloquent testimony to the great usefulness of our cotton crop, and we alone can make the cotton. Our farmers are growing more food crops, of course; this is well, and it means vastly increased independence next fall. But the country and the world will need the cotton, and we on our part, will need the money for it. We have less acreage in cotton; we have the weevil and other restrictions to producing cotton. The proper course then is to work as never before, and make each acre produce as much as the natural restrictions will admit of.

W. T. WILLIAMS.

Savannah, Ga.

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