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EDITORIAL COMMENT.

THE STATE MEETING.

As we have remarked before, a convention of farmers can not be expected to do anything to hand out benefits in tangible form. They can only act in an advisory way and give expression to what the majority of the body thinks are the proper progressive ideas to support. Quite a number of resolutions were passed at the meeting here at Raleigh last week, all of them possessing merit. If there be criticism that farmers' conventions load themselves down with too many requests and resolutions, it may be said that few of the members of the convention expect to produce activity enough among the rank and file for immediate results from all the requests made in the interest of social and economic reforms, but these reiterations of old resolutions and the adoption of new ones have their important educational value. The resolutions bearing most directly upon rural economics were probably those that related to the Torrens system of registering land titles and asking for establishment at the A. & M. College of a chair of rural economics, including the subject of rural co-operation and the marketing of farm products and that the State Department of Agriculture establish a department of markets and rural co-operation also. Numerically the Farmers' Union is still larger in North Carolina than in any other State and reports received from the various counties indicate that there has been a great deal of constructive work through the establishment of Union distributing warehouses and other enterprises. The aggregate assets of these various enterprises will reach close to a half million dollars and many other new ones are in process of formation.

TIME TO BEGIN PRACTICAL CO-OPERATION.

In a recent issue of the *Progressive Farmer* Dr. Butler makes the following sensible comment:

"A reader says that the farmers of his section would co-operate in marketing butter, eggs, chickens, canned vegetables and similar products if they knew how."

"That is the point. We have had several years' discussion through the press, and at farmers' meetings, about the importance of co-operating, and the wonderful results that will follow this co-operation, and it certainly does appear to one who has observed the trend of this discussion that the time has come for less agitation and generalities, and a little more definite instruction. We know what we ought to do, and what the benefits will be from co-operative marketing; but now some one should show the farmers how they can co-operate.

"It is doubtful, if left to themselves, if the farmers, as a whole, will make much progress in co-operative activities; or if they make such progress, it will be too slow.

The need is for organizers who actually know how to show the farmers how they can co-operate. It seems to me the agricultural colleges and Departments of Agriculture, through their extension work, must supply this need. Why not each State develop a Department of Farm Marketing? The difficulties in the way of economically marketing farm products are peculiarly great, and these, with the importance of the matter, should justify something being done that will bring forth results. We have probably preached long enough, and some teaching is now in order.

"It is always easier to tell how a thing should be done than to do it. There are scores to tell why and how the farmers should co-operate in marketing farm products, but what we want is someone who will actually do the thing, and in that way show the farmers how they may do it. No more important line of work can be done by the extension department of our agricultural institutes, and they should lose no time in putting men to work who can and will actually get farmers to co-operate in marketing their products."

Definite instruction, as Dr. Butler suggests, that goes down into important detail, as the need of the hour. We might as well remember, however, in this connection that the task of teaching practical voluntary co-operation isn't going to be a short before-breakfast task, and to get quickest results we may need to import into America some teachers from other countries where people really co-operate and who know how to deal with the relative forces that affect or hinder its practical application. It's going to require more capable and efficient men in this field of endeavor than have as yet developed into prominence further than as theorizers and sermonizers.

OUR KIND OF FOLKS.

In his interesting letter last week describing the German system of co-operative rural credits, President Barrett refers to the loyal support given to the enterprise during the pioneer days, and then closes with this statement: "If we have that sort of folks, we can work out an equally as good system. If we have not that kind of folks, it is hardly worth while for us to waste time on the system." Our kind of folks are made up pretty much of the same kind of material that the balance of the human race is made of, and any kind of co-operative system that makes it profitable for them to belong to it will appeal to them all right, if put into practical operation. That putting it into practical operation is where the hard rub comes in. In fact getting something of the kind to going successfully is the whole job, and the man who can do this is the fellow that organized farmers are looking diligently for. It took a long time to find a Maxwell, a Plunkett and a Holyoake in Scotland, Ireland and England. The United States seems to be yet looking for that kind of co-operative leader and hoping that one will develop soon.

OUR PRESENT CREDIT SYSTEM.

Farmers in this country stand in great need of cheaper rate of interest and longer terms of credit. The actual "rural credit" system which we have in operation in the South is supported by two classes of farmers. First the class who deposit their money in the banks at four per cent, which in turn is borrowed by the local merchant at six per cent. He then invests it in supplies and merchandise which he sells at from fifty to seventy-five per cent (yearly basis of interest) to that other class of farmers who have no cash. It is a beautiful system, indeed—for the local dealer.

GET READY FOR ANOTHER YEAR.

Look after the quitters and the members who have become despondent and tired. Have a special meeting in this month, arrange a live program and urge a full attendance, by special written invitation from your local president, of the loyal, and weak-kneed and the indifferent. An

oyster supper, a fish fry, or other refreshments served will be an appropriate social feature during the holidays and in keeping with the custom of many fraternal societies. Then start off with renewed energy and purpose to make your Local Union more interesting than ever during 1913. It's a credit to any community to maintain a live and active organization. There is something wrong with a community that can not maintain such organization. Renew your subscriptions to the *Carolina Union Farmer* and get that despondent member to go to reading it and stay waked up. It has cost tremendous work and money and personal sacrifice of the faithful ones to build up the Farmers' Union in this State. We must not relax our efforts. If we don't keep this organization we will be forced to build up another one. It's much cheaper and better to keep the one we have. It's idle for a farmer to talk about getting along without organization now. It is an economic and social necessity.

PRESIDENT'S ANNUAL ADDRESS.

(Continued from page 1.)

I would commend for your favorable consideration the reports of the officers in charge of the different departments of the State Union. From them you will learn something of the work that has been done to maintain the organization, of the difficulties encountered, and the present status of the Union in North Carolina.

Before passing on I would call attention to the reports of the Committee and Manager of our paper. They have, and are yet, traveling a thorny road. And I would impress this thought on the mind of every member of the Union present; the paper has not been as successful as hoped for because you have not supported it loyally with subscriptions. Less than one-fifth of the membership are regular subscribers. If the full strength of the Union was loyally behind that paper it could be greatly enlarged and improved and would soon become a source of revenue to the Union. I would also direct attention to the report of the State Business Agency. The volume of business shows that it should not be discontinued until a better plan is in reach of all the counties. But it should be made self-sustaining.

The general interest in agricultural education throughout the State is due largely, but, of course, not entirely, to the work of the Union. This is the most important, because the most enduring and far-reaching in its effects, of any work to be done by the Union.

The kind of education advocated and demanded by the Farmers' Union will lift up the tiller of the soil, intellectually, socially, and financially to that position which the importance of his vocation justly entitles him.

If the farmer had as efficient intellectual equipment for his calling as we know is necessary to success and generally obtains in other vocations, we would not find his class, which creates 90 per cent of the wealth of the Nation, possessed of only four-tenths of it to-day, whereas less than a generation ago his class owned nine-tenths of our wealth.

Of course the farmer, as all other men, is entitled to have justice meted out to him: justice socially, justice financially, justice commercially, justice in matters educational, justice before the law and justice at the hands of our law-makers. Any man who pretends that the farmers are now enjoying all these benefits proclaims himself a knave or a badly informed man.

But a new day has dawned. The farmer himself has awakened from the sleep and lethargy that made him indifferent to everything but the plow and the hoe. He is thinking, reading, investigating, comparing, testing means, men and measures. As a result, we find him to-day making suggestions. To-morrow you will find him making demands. To use a slang expression: "He has arrived."

The public conscience is being awakened as