

# THE KANSAS UNION FARMER

Organization

Education

Co-operation

SALINA, KANSAS, THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 29, 1923.

NUMBER 16

VOLUME XVI

## Union Activities In the United States During Past Year

W. C. Lansdon, National Lecturer Gives Very Interesting Report at National Convention Held in Omaha November 20-24

To the Officers and Delegates of the National Farmers Union, I have the honor to submit the following report of my work during the year just closed.

In the year now past I visited Minnesota, Iowa, Nebraska, Colorado, Kansas, Missouri, Arkansas, Tennessee, Virginia, Georgia and the District of Columbia in connection with duties assigned to me. In all I travelled 26,559 miles by train, 3,015 miles by automobile and 800 miles by steamboat, a total of 29,880 miles. I attended and addressed 103 Farmers Union local meetings including picnics, barbecues, county and local conventions and organization gatherings.

In addition to what may be called my regular work I attended and in most cases took some part in a number of national and sectional conferences held for the purpose of advancing the interests of cooperation. Shortly after the adjournment of the Lynchburg convention I went to the initial meeting of the National Council of Commodity Marketing Associations, which was held in Washington. I spoke to that gathering on "The Place and Record of the Farmers Union" in the development of cooperative marketing. So far I have not learned of any tangible results that followed that gathering and the permanent body that was organized at that time.

In May I attended the National Conference on Railroad Valuations that was held at Chicago on the call of Senator Robert M. La Follette. I was confirmed in my belief, as a result of that meeting, that the railroad industry in connection with the Interstate Commerce Commission are planning to permanently valorize a great body of watered and worthless securities as part of the rate making valuation of their properties. This is a matter in which every farmer is interested and one that requires some direct action of congress. If the valuation methods now being employed are not disturbed by legislative interference the people will be required to pay income on about \$10,000,000,000 of wholly fictitious railroad valuation.

In June I attended the National Wheat Conference which was held in the Sherman House at Chicago, as the personal representative of the governor of Kansas. That meeting was called by Governor J. A. Prew of Minnesota and was quite largely attended by railroad officials, bankers, millers, bakers, agricultural implement manufacturers, representatives of Boards of Trade, grain dealers and others interested in the handling, transportation, conversion and consumption of wheat and wheat products. In addition there were a few farmers and several representatives of farmers organizations. That conference perpetuated itself as the National Wheat Council which proposes to study the whole field of the production, marketing, conversion and consumption of wheat and wheat products. So far the Council which maintains headquarters in Chicago, has recommended a fifty per cent increase in the tariff on wheat and has worked out an acreage reduction scheme to prevent the accumulation of a surplus. The recommendation as to the tariff is wholly silent about the draw back or rebate provision that enables American millers to import and manufacture Canadian wheat for re-export as flour without the payment of duty.

So long as the millers are allowed a rebate of 9.9 per cent of the duty paid on imported wheat, if that grain is converted into flour and re-exported the tariff is useless to the wheat grower. As the Council's plan for acreage reduction was not published until after most of the fall seeding was done it is not likely to have much effect on next years wheat production and prices even if the growers should some time find out about it.

In October I went to Denver to attend another general conference on wheat marketing that had been called in connection with the regular meeting of the Board of Directors of the American Wheat Growers Association. That meeting was attended by Aaron Sapiro, Carl Williams, Eugene Meyer, F. W. Mondel and other administrative and cooperative leaders in addition to the representatives of the wheat growers association now operating in Washington, Oregon, Idaho, Montana, North Dakota, Colorado, Kansas, Nebraska and Texas. There was no attempt made to effect any permanent wheat marketing system except in an informal way which resulted in several smaller meetings at other places a little later. Mr. Sapiro presented the program, as far as it was ready at that time, of the National Advisory Wheat Committee which will be discussed in another part of this report. It was pleasant and friendly party and it is not too much to say that a good time was had by all.

I also attended the Farmers Union State Conventions held in Winchester, Virginia; Marissa, Illinois

Topoka, Kansas. The Virginia and Kansas Conventions were up to their usual high standard in attendance, activities and interest. The Illinois convention was reported to me by many of the old timers as the best that had been held in that state for ten years. The Union in Illinois is made up of a fine body of loyal and determined cooperators and it is my opinion that a well organized and aggressively pushed campaign for membership would result in great growth in that state. I was also present at the last days session of the Missouri State Convention which was held in Kansas City. Plans for increasing the membership were worked out there and the future may see the organization considerably strengthened in that state.

Early in the year I attended what was called a Corn Belt Conference of farmers called by William Hirth of Columbia, Missouri, which met at the Baltimore hotel in Kansas City. While nothing in the way of any permanent organization developed from that meeting it was valuable because it resulted in a better acquaintance among farmers of a wide middle west area whose interests are identical.

In September the Kansas Farmers Union held an Educational Assembly or Farmers Union Chautauqua that occupied an entire week. Leaders of the Union and of other interests attended from all over the country. The most extensive platform program ever attempted by any of our organizations was presented. It was a busy session and the attendance was not large on any one day but a total of about six hundred men and women participated for a part or all of the time. The Kansas Union plans to make Educational Assembly week a permanent feature of its activities as a school for instruction in organization and cooperation. The plan is well worth consideration by other state unions.

I take pleasure in reporting that the cooperative enterprises organized and conducted by the Union have had a prosperous year. Our facilities for marketing live stock cooperatively on the terminal markets are the best of their kind and do a larger business than any other similar enterprises in the world. They now include commission houses at Omaha, Sioux City, South St. Paul, Chicago, Kansas City, Wichita, St. Joseph and Denver. At most of these points the Union house is now at the head of the trade in volume of business and at all of them there has been a very rapid growth. The Kansas City house has increased its sales about a hundred per cent over last year. The Wichita House went to second place in volume of sales during its first month of operation on that market. The three-house so efficiently and profitably conducted by the Nebraska Farmers Union have all greatly increased their business. The whole body of live stock commissions houses established by our organization will handle a volume of sales for this year amounting to approximately two hundred million dollars and will distribute about \$300,000 in shippers dividends on December 31st. Attempts on the part of regular or old line commission houses to boycott or otherwise interfere with the usefulness of our Union houses have failed all indications are that next year will see a still greater growth in the operations and in the value of the services of these enterprises.

In this connection is gratifying report that all the larger Union cooperative associations appear to be efficiently and economically conducted. One of the difficulties in the way of successful cooperative marketing appears to be excessive overhead costs. The Georgia Cooperative Cotton Association and the Georgia Cane Growers Association, both largely composed of Union men and directed by Union officers have made splendid showings. The Cane Growers Association has probably done more for its membership than any other commodity group in the country. Its books and reports indicate that it has increased the prices of its product received by growers about 300 per cent since it was organized. The Arkansas Farmers Union Cooperative Cotton Association is another enterprise that has been highly successful. Its settlement at the end of the last marketing year was the best made by any similar association and its records and reports show that it received higher prices and operated on lower percentage of expense than any other cotton marketing group in the country.

The year has seen a great expansion in cooperative banking but unfortunately not much of it to the credit of our organization. The great group of labor banks initiated some years ago by the founding of the Brotherhood National Bank at Cleveland has grown in number and resources. There are now some sixteen such institutions with combined resources of more than \$50,000,000. The farmers of the country may well congratulate the wage workers on their success in this important field of cooperative endeavor. There has been

some progress along the same line in our own organization.

Phillips County, Kansas, now has the largest local Rochdale enterprise in the country, a society that has about 1000 shareholders, \$200,000 of paid up capital and does not owe a dollar. The success of that business has been very largely due to the fact that the Union farmers of that county have organized and are conducting two state banks and one national bank with a combined capitalization of \$100,000 and with a surplus at this time of more than \$50,000. The Farmers Union of Phillips County are successful by reason of sensible, loyal and business like support the farmers of that county have set an example well worthy of emulation.

The Kansas Farmers Union is now organizing a \$200,000 state bank at Kansas City, Kansas. The Board of Directors have been selected and have qualified, a large part of the stock has been subscribed for without solicitation and operations will probably begin very shortly after the first of the year. Properly managed banks are the best safeguard for cooperative business associations. The great cooperative banks of Denmark, England and other European countries are object lessons on the value of such institutions. The farmers of this country must learn to centralize their liquid capital in their own institutions and use it for their own interests.

All of the Farmers Union Mutual Insurance companies are prosperous with their operations constantly expanding. The Farmers Union Mutual Life Insurance Company established by the Iowa Farmers Union has had a steady growth throughout the year. As soon as possible that concern should be nationalized, endorsed and as far as possible adopted by the National Farmers Union and supported by the membership all over the country. The time has come for the decentralization of life insurance reserves which under old conditions accumulate in eastern money centers to be used for the exploitation rather than the service of policy holders.

It would require too much time to relate the whole story of our cooperative achievements during the year but a few other enterprises should be mentioned. The state Nebraska Farmers Union Exchange, The Farmers Union Jobbing Association of Kansas City and the Producers Exchange of Richmond, Virginia are rendering especially valuable services not only to their shareholders and to other members of the Union but to agriculture in general in the territory in which they operate. The Kansas and Nebraska Union institutions are now and for several years have been able to fix the price of binder twine to consumers. In this way the price of this essential commodity has been reduced to the benefit of five cents a pound to all farmers in Kansas and Nebraska for each of the past six years. This represents a positive saving of at least \$2,000,000 a year. The Producers Exchange of Richmond and the Farmers Union State Exchange of Kentucky have rendered services of even more value to the farmers of those states in securing fertilizers at fair prices.

The existing state and the operations, purposes and plans of the various state units for cooperative marketing wheat are of peculiar interest and importance to the National Farmers Union. With the exceptions of Minnesota and North Dakota every one of such associations is in a state in which the Union has a state organization. So far there has been but little cooperation between the State Unions and the State Wheat Marketing Associations. In Kansas the Union has definitely adopted the pooling plan for wheat but thought best to organize its own wheat marketing association which, in a certain measure, has operated in competition with the Kansas Wheat Growers Association.

On the whole the progress in the organization of wheat for cooperative marketing has been disappointingly slow. The units formed, for the most part, control volumes of grain so small that profitable operations have been difficult and in several groups that nothing very much worth while can be accomplished until something like fifty per cent of the annual wheat production is controlled by the cooperatives and it is equally obvious that without some new impulse towards pooling the existing organizations can never sign up that proportion of the crop and that many of them must go out of business on the expiration of their current contracts with growers. This condition means failure for the entire wheat pooling movement that was undertaken with such sanguine expectations unless something is done at once to stimulate the state campaign for membership.

A few weeks ago a group of cooperators and supporters of cooperation met in Chicago and constituted what is known as the National Advisory Wheat Committee. Jimmy Robertson, William O. Lowden of Illinois, Governor Frank O. Lowden of Illinois, Governor New York, Senator Arthur Capper of Kansas and other well known men are members of this group of which Aaron Sapiro is counsel and cooperative adviser. It is the

(Continued on Page Four)

## M. F. A. to Organize Creameries

A Committee is Now Making Extensive Investigation in Northern States

A Committee appointed by Wm. L. Steiner, President of the Missouri Farmers' Association, is now making an investigation of Cooperative Creameries in several Northern states where such creameries have been very successful. The Committee which the President was instructed to appoint at a meeting of the State Board of Directors of the Missouri Farmers' Association, left Columbia a few days ago and is now in Wisconsin, E. W. Barth, Clinton, Missouri, W. R. Sedalia, Missouri, both fieldmen of the M. F. A., and Howard A. Cowden, Secretary-Treasurer of the organization, constitute the Committee.

The Committee will visit the larger and most successful cooperative creameries in Iowa, Wisconsin, Minnesota, South Dakota, and Nebraska. In Iowa, the Committee will work in conjunction with the Wisconsin Butter Makers Association. A. J. McGuire, Secretary, Minnesota Creameries Association, an organization with over 400 cooperative creameries as members, and which maintains selling agencies in both Chicago and New York, will direct the activities of the Committee in Minnesota where a very complete survey is expected to be made. From Minnesota the M. F. A. Committee will go to Aberdeen, Missouri, where the Farmers Union and the Farmers' Equity are operating the largest cooperative centralized creamery in the world. In Nebraska visits will be made to several large creameries being successfully operated by the Farmers' Union.

The Missouri Farmers' Association which is the most powerful cooperative organization of its kind in the country is now operating more than 400 local cream buying stations which last year handled approximately \$8,000,000 worth of butter fat, some months ago conducted a very thorough investigation of prices paid for butter fat in Missouri. Questionnaires sent to all sections of the state showed that prices paid by creameries for butter fat ranged as much as 17c per pound. Some of the best cream producers of Missouri were receiving 17c per pound less than producers of the same grade of cream in other sections. It was found also that certain creameries were paying 11c more in some places than the same creameries were paying at other points on the same day. After this investigation was made, the Directors of the Missouri Farmers' Association asked all of the big creameries doing business in Missouri to send representatives to a conference which was held in St. Louis. At this conference the creameries were asked to base the price paid to the producer on the basis of the Chicago Butter Market. This the creameries refused to do. The Missouri Farmers' Association decided, after it became evident that the creameries were unwilling to cooperate in stabilizing prices, to begin the financing of several cooperative creameries. It was decided to make a very thorough investigation of cooperative creameries in the state mentioned above. The Committee will doubtless form the basis for a very aggressive creamery program. One of the most important things the Committee will determine is whether a few very large centralized creameries will be promoted by the M. F. A. or smaller local intensive dairy societies. The Country the local creamery has been very successful but in other sections where there are fewer dairy cows the big centralized creamery has been more successful.

Another thing which will be given careful consideration is the steps necessary to improve the quality of Missouri butter. The farmers of Missouri are penalized several cents per pound at the present time because of the poor quality of Missouri butter as compared to the butter being manufactured by the cooperative creameries which the Committee is visiting. This difference in quality is costing the farmers of the state enough to build a great many creameries every year. It is generally conceded that the cooperative creameries of Denmark are producing a better grade of butter than is produced in any other country. The cooperative creameries of Denmark are becoming a factor in the American market, even though they are forced to pay a tariff of 8c per pound in addition to freight across the Atlantic. The Cooperative Creameries, by improving the quality and developing new and better markets, have revolutionized the farming industry of Denmark. They have made Denmark one of the most prosperous of agricultural nations. The report of the M. F. A. Creamery Committee will be the opening wedge in the fight of the cream producers of Missouri for better markets and will therefore be of vital interest to every cream producer. It will no doubt include recommendations regarding the contract

plan which was ratified by the seventh Annual Convention of the M. F. A. held in Sedalia the latter part of August. Most of the successful cooperative creameries are based on producers' contracts. It is the belief of the leaders of the Missouri Farmers' Association that the farmers of Missouri can successfully handle the quality problem, as well as that of better markets, by cooperation.

## MIAMI COUNTY PLANS MEMBERSHIP DRIVE

The Miami County Farmers Union held its annual meeting at Paola December 17th. All members of various standing in the Farmers Union from all parts of the county were present at ten o'clock.

After a short conference the legislative and resolutions committees decided to present a joint report.

After a splendid two hour's committee meeting during which various phases of Farmers' Union activities were discussed the following resolutions were prepared and adopted at the afternoon session:

RESOLVED: That our County Union continue to support Farmer candidates for Public office until the farmer is justly represented in State and National offices.

RESOLVED: That our County Union urge the passage of a state law fixing a tax on gasoline, the revenue thus derived to be used for road building, and that we discourage systems of road building which place the burden of taxation on the land.

RESOLVED: That our Union be well pleased with the present system of leaving the auto license fund in the County where raised, and we urge the amendment of the law so the County Commissioners will have complete control of all road money.

RESOLVED: That we endorse the agreement made between the Farmers Union Cooperative Wheat Marketing Association and the Kansas Wheat Growers Association to market their wheat together; and will endorse any other steps which will bring various farm organizations closer together when such can be made without injury to the Farmers Union.

RESOLVED: That we recommend a meeting of the various boards of Mutual Telephone Companies of the county for the purpose of urging the passage of a law forcing the Long Distance Companies to give the Mutual Companies direct long distance connections.

(Signed)  
E. F. Schiefelbusch  
Owen Hunsberger  
George Frank  
N. J. Kaiser  
Henry Dageford  
J. R. Williams  
Wheaton Slyter  
P. H. Hecker  
W. E. Hays  
I. M. Wagner  
A. P. Chandler,

Committees.  
The afternoon session convened at one o'clock and was the largest and best meeting we have had for a long time. Some of the old officers, feeling that they had served long enough begged for a change which was granted by the union with a feeling of reluctance as our old officers have been good ones. The following have been elected for the coming year:

Wheaton Slyter, Paola Local, Fontana, Kansas, president; Bro. Lohr, Rock Creek Local, Wellsville, Kans., vice-president; E. F. Schiefelbusch, Geary Valley Local, Oswatimie, Kans., secretary-treasurer; Geo. Frank, Highland Local, Paola, Kans., lecturer and organizer; Charles Prothe, Block Local, Paola, Kans., conductor; Ira Wagner, Union Valley Local, Oswatimie, Kans., door keeper.

One of the big things we did at the meeting was to institute a membership drive. Let all the local and Miami County take notice and help in this campaign for increasing our membership so that Miami County may continue to be the leading Farmer Union County in Kansas.

Yours Truly,  
E. F. SCHIEFELBUSCH  
County Secretary.

## THE WHEAT GAMBLER.

The big gambler in the wheat business is the farmer. He seeds in the fall hoping that in spite of dry weather, winter killing, green bugs, chinch bugs, wet harvest, black-rust and scores of other hazards, he may be able to reap a harvest the next summer. In that hope he invests his labor in the expectation of fair returns on his investment in land and equipment, his expenses for harvest, seed, fertilizer and the living expenses of his family and teams for a year. He takes a long chance, a ten to one bet that he will come out even with a little over to buy decent clothes for his wife and children and defray the expenses of his education. If the farmer wins in his game with climate, weather and insect pests, he should be able to collect his bets. In existing marketing conditions he does not do this nor can he ever reach such a result as long as he sells in competition with his neighbors and hands the grain trader the finest business opportunity enjoyed by any group of merchants in this world. It is not the organized grain trade but the unorganized grain producers, that make grain prices the weather vane of the world's markets. From the annual address of State Master John Morris

## Echoes of the Assembly

Under This Heading Each Week We Expect to Print Excerpts or the Addresses in Full of the Different Speakers Who Were on the Program of the Farmers Union Educational Assembly at Salina.

HOW TO GET AND KEEP MEMBERS (By M. O. Glessner)

I am going to tell you only another's opinion or another plan but before I get through I am going to present a plan for getting new members. I don't guarantee that the plan will work but that if it will work, it will keep the members. We have heard the big bugs of the Farmers Union from all parts of the country. They tell us we should keep out envy, not allow superstition to creep in. I will recite you a little of a poem I think very appropriate at this time.

That small voice is the voice of the creator. In as much as we have to live we first come within the jurisdiction of that natural law. We have made a big success and progress as individuals in the world working under that natural law. It is going to be necessary for us to go back and understand and try and follow our own particular law of nature we must abide by. We are forced to abide by those laws of nature. Later on, as an individual we learn that as an individual self preservation was a law of nature. I have been noticing a little squirrel out by the side of this building. He is busy storing nuts given him by another law of nature. Take the law of nature again. Self preservation. In-as-much as self preservation is the first law of nature, we find it necessary to unite our individual efforts and occupations.

As long as it is possible to maintain our happiness by ourselves we will not cooperate. The law of misery, not the law of happiness, causes us to cooperate. Two differences, misery or happiness. Look back over the talks made during this meeting. A. C. Davis, when he showed to us as long as conditions are favorable for the little pigs each one as an individual laid out by himself and enjoyed the sunshine but when conditions became such that they were miserable out there alone, they got close together. He came in at the bottom of the pile because he was cold and he could best protect himself by cooperating.

That applies to all nature. On the plains there still remains the rings of buffalo. When there was plenty of buffalo grass, his only enemy was the coyote. We find the rings when it became so miserable they had to cooperate. The young were placed in the center and the old buffalo stood with their heads out and fought off the enemy. Follow the organizations springing up in the South. A great many of them sprang up after the Civil War. They were in a miserable condition. They were not happy by refusing to cooperate so we find they organized. Since the great war, in England conditions are much more miserable than before the war. Before the war there were 5000 cooperative societies in Russia. Now they have over 60,000 cooperative institutions. English membership is increasing in cooperative societies 10 times faster than it increases in population. It looks like if we are going to build up our Farmers Union, organization, there must be some kind of conditions that makes it so miserable they will be forced to join a cooperative organization for their protection. One thing proves the Farmers Union is a success. That is that our membership has dropped off half. We have made conditions so that it is not necessary for him to stay in the Union so they have got out to dig for themselves. Look at the Live Stock Association, the Insurance Company, the Jobbing Association, etc., they have built up and made conditions in the state of Kansas. The membership joined the business associations and they have dropped out of the parent organization. They are loyal to their business institution but they have forgotten about the Farmers Union. The Farmers Union is a great deal like a building.

We are faced with this same proposition. We have to rebuild the house and we did not have it insured. We have to take the pieces we have, which were once whole, that have been torn by storm; lumber which is not whole but in bad shape. We have to take that material and make a respectable looking house. That is the material the Farmers Union. Nearly everything said here has tried to show you the bright side. I am not trying to show you how good our business organizations have made conditions for the loyal members that it is miserable for them to stay. They can get the same benefits outside the organization and don't have to pay dues either. We have to meet this condition.

Our local elevator association at Bison, my home town, was organized for the purpose of loading wheat on the cars. That was their only function. We found out the private individuals charge 22c and higher. We considered we were so miserable the only thing we could do was to protect ourselves, organize an elevator ourselves. These local elevators

for associations over the state had a high volume of business, if all the wheat went through one elevator in the town. As long as all the wheat went through that one, the handling charge would be small. When there were several elevators in that town, it was necessary to force each elevator to take more money or the services rendered. In most of the towns of Kansas there is at least two or three or four elevator associations. The patrons divide their wheat between the different elevators. The farmer had to organize an elevator and put all his business through the one elevator. You do business on a profitable basis. The live stock commission company has that same idea. They charge the same commission the other fellows do. At Bison, we started up there and when we started the first year we bought on about as large a margin as we could. That was about 12c. We handled a large volume of business and we made money for the stockholders. We had about 10c to give back. That showed what profit the other man was taking. All it cost our stockholders was a charge of the stock managers wages interest on the capital stock and investment. That is all it cost the members then and that is all it costs them now.

Here is where we made our mistake. Just as soon as we went into one business we got a cooperative charter. We were granted that charter with the understanding that we would adhere to the principals of the Farmers Union. We boosted the price at our elevator for wheat to more than what the other fellow was paying. The man outside hauled his wheat up and put it in our elevator. We were all right that year. We made money also. We were not striving for good will among all mankind and brotherly love among ourselves. We took that other fellow's wheat to make a profit. That was not all right. We charged that man more than our services were actually worth. That was all right then because we were making money off the other fellow. We forgot all about the cooperative idea. We were the one who received the benefit from it. When we began to take the other man's wheat who did not belong to our elevator we made our big mistake. The other fellow said that outside wheat belonged to him just as much as it did to us. If we were living up to our obligation, we would not have bought the other fellow's wheat.

The other elevator man says "if you made \$14,000.00 and I did as much business as you, that shows how much I have been making. Then he went to overbidding us. The other fellow paid 2c a bushel more than we could pay. Conditions changed. We had to keep up with him in price or we didn't get any wheat. They took their wheat to the other fellow. Our manager was forced to keep up with the other elevator. He had to pay what the other fellow did. In order to keep our membership our elevator manager was forced to pay 2c a bushel more than we were paying. The other man had to bid up again because the outside men came to us and they weren't quite sure about his being right. It got so we were getting about all the outside wheat. He could not pay what we did because he was losing money. When our elevator was full and our doors shut so they had to go to him, the price of wheat went down 6c. I finally got so we were getting 10c on only one load of wheat and we lost money on 10 loads. We had paid, by the end of the year \$10,000.00 or \$16,000.00 more for wheat than what we got for it. We were building up an association there that was a benefit to the outsider. When we had a loss we paid that loss. The man on the outside was responsible for that loss. The shareholders and Union men were not. The outsider did not have to stand the loss that you had and he could sell his wheat at our elevator. It was more profitable to be out of the elevator than it was to be in. Why would a man come into the organization when he was getting more benefits to stay on the outside. We had to get down to Farmers Union principles and do business on a profit.

The government doesn't allow people to come into this country and not become a part of this institution. If that is a practice of the government we will have to change our policy. We will not take a bushel of wheat from men who do not belong to the organization. We will buy wheat on a large margin. We have shut the doors to the outside. We will buy wheat on just as big a margin as the other elevator. The outside man will have to sell his wheat to the other fellow and he will get placed in his misery, at the mercy of that fellow. When we were at his mercy, it cost us 22c. What will happen to him. Every bushel of wheat will come

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Published Every Thursday at Salina, Kansas By THE KANSAS BRANCH OF THE FARMERS EDUCATIONAL & CO-OPERATIVE UNION

Entered as Second-Class Matter August 24, 1912, at Salina, Kansas, Under Act of March 3, 1879

Acceptance for Mailing at Special Rate of Postage Provided for in Section 1103, Act of October 3, 1917, Authorized July 30, 1918.

JOHN TROMBLE ..... Editor and Manager  
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DON C. ESTES ..... Director of Advertising

Subscription Price, per Year ..... \$1.00

Notice to Secretaries and Members of Farmers Union of Kansas. We want all the news about the Locals and what you are doing. Send in the news and thereby help to make your official organ a success.

All copy, with the exception of notices and including advertising, should be in five days before the date of publication. Notices of meetings can be handled up until noon Monday on the week of publication.

Change of Address—When change of address is ordered, give old as well as new address, and R. F. D.

Communications and Questions—Communications are solicited from practical farmers, members of the F. E. & C. U. of A., are at liberty to ask questions on any phase of farm work. Answers will be either published or mailed.

### ADVERTISING RATES ON APPLICATION



THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 29, 1923.

### THE BUILDING FUND ASSESSMENT

In explanation of the admitted fact that his own Local has lost two thirds of its original membership Brother Carney Barr of Bayard says:

"Adding that assessment for a new building cost us a lot of members and then we got no building and that cost us a lot more."

That statement is part of a letter published in last week's issue in criticism of the present officers of the Kansas Farmers Union. Not one of the present officers held his place when that assessment amendment was voted by the State Convention. The assessment for building purposes was not imposed on the membership by the present officers or by the officers who were in service when it was proposed and adopted.

The State Convention that met in Topeka in 1921 voted to submit the assessment amendment for the building fund to the Locals. That was done by the Board of Directors in due time. Neither the officers of the Union, the Board of Directors, or this paper ever urged the members to ratify that amendment but the Locals gave it a substantial majority and it became a part of the by-laws of the State Union. The present official family has acted in this matter only as directed by two State Conventions and by the membership.

Brother Barr says that the fact that no building was constructed cost us a lot more members. This is hardly fair. The collection of assessment is not yet completed. It is uncertain just how much money will be realized, probably not more than \$30,000 when it is all paid in. Topeka State Union Convention last January decided, and apparently with wisdom, that the assessment could not return enough funds for the erection of a Farmers Union Home Building in Topeka of the kind that is needed. Therefore it was voted to complete the collection, to invest the fund in interest bearing securities and to use the income for paying rent for headquarters offices in the Farmers Union Insurance Building at Salina until the organization ordered otherwise.

The orders of the Convention have been carried out. The Building Fund is safely invested. The rent that the State Union pays for offices in the Insurance Building returns to the members of the organization in reduced costs of insurance. The farmers who have dropped out of the Union rather than pay that ONE DOLLAR building fund assessment spread over two years certainly do not seem to have known the facts.

### SOME DEBATABLE QUESTIONS.

The farmers must be able to take his own part. It is all right to hire an advocate once in a while but most of the time the man who cares to have any influence in the neighborhood or any standing in the business world must be able to speak for himself. The man who can stand on his feet in front of an audience and can think and express his thoughts clearly will always be a force in the world whether he is a farmer, a lawyer or a coal miner.

Debating is the very best of all forms of mental exercise. There is the element of contest which is stimulating. There is pride in a creditable performance which is always justifiable. There is a growing self confidence as subject is studied and presented which is always desirable. Every rural community should have debates.

The days are growing longer. The work of the farmer is not so pressing. The necessity for the farmer to defend himself is more urgent than ever before in the history of American agriculture. Why not be prepared? Why not be making careful studies of the subjects with which the farmers must deal during the next year or two.

Here is a good question for the next debate in your Local: Resolved that wheat farmers should reduce their production to conform to the reasonable demands of domestic consumption.

### SHORTER HOURS FOR WOMEN.

A good many states have declared by law that eight hours shall be a full day in all public employment. That is the law of the United States.

For a long time there was a demand for a minimum wage for women. Many states passed laws establishing such a minimum.

Neither of these regulations applies to the women who work on the farms of this country. They have neither an eight hour day nor a minimum wage. They begin early in the morning and they quit after every worker on the farm has finished his job for the day.

The farm women of Kansas are entitled to shorter hours and to better returns for their labor. These things they can get through organization.

### THE MEMBERSHIP CAMPAIGN.

The Union folks of Anderson county have perfected an organization for pushing the campaign for collection of dues and for new members. They say down there that all they want, besides getting a lot of new blood into the organization is the first prize for the largest number of paid up members on December 31st and the Blue Banner for the largest total membership on the same date.

There are fifty or more counties that were organized in the Union before there was a Local in Anderson county. Any one of a dozen should have more members than this comparatively new county but Anderson has the pep and the loyalty to the Union that will carry the folks down there a long way towards their goal.

Stafford is another county that proposes to do its duty in strengthening the Union. Nor is Cowley with its twenty-four locals, most of them wide awake and stirring about to be overlooked in this matter. Every Union county in Kansas should get busy and do its share of the work.

### THE LIVE STOCK BOYCOTT.

On September 26 the traders in the stock yards at Kansas City quit doing business with the Farmers Union Live Stock Commission Company. They gave no reasons but simply refused to buy from or sell to the Union. That condition affected only stocker and feeder trade and Manager Woodman and his force were able to carry on without any loss in business. Fact is that October, the so-called boycott month, was the biggest since the Commission Company was established five years ago.

The trouble has now been adjusted. The Union house is admitted to all the privileges that had been denied it, including the clearing house, the blanket insurance and the services of the so-called hog doctors. An agreement that should prevent any further trouble was finally reached and everything is running smoothly in that business now.

### 100 PER CENT LOCALS.

A ONE HUNDRED PER CENT LOCAL is one that has collected dues from every member on its rolls. Beginning in January of the New Year every such Local will have its name, number and location printed in this paper in the Honor Roll of Locals. To get on that roll it will be necessary for every dues paying member to be clear on the books until December 31st, 1924.

Secretaries and other officers of the Locals should interest themselves in this matter. It costs no more to say up now than it will two or three months or a year from this time. If the income of the State Union could all be collected in advance a lot of money could be saved and also a lot of trouble.

It is only a little more than five weeks until the end of this year. During that time it is possible for every member to pay up for this year, if he has so far neglected that duty and to pay in advance for 1924. This would put the Union on a business basis and that is where it must go if it is to do the work that is so necessary in the interest of the farmers.

### READ THIS PAPER ALL THE TIME.

If the members of the Union read this paper it is worth more than it costs to the organization. If it is used only for lining pantry shelves and kindling the kitchen fire it is hardly worth while to keep it up. There is something every week that everyone in Kansas should know.

There are a few folks who read only to criticize. The editors want all the criticism that is fair and constructive. It is quite a job to get the material together for a paper of this size. There may be a better way to do it. It may be possible to get news that is more interesting. Tell us how. The only singular quality that we claim for the Kansas Union Farmer is that it always prints the truth. That alone makes it the most valuable newspaper in the state.

### GOT A NEW MEMBER THIS WEEK?

The members of the Union have mighty good grounds for asking their neighbors to join the organization. It has made good. Union purposes are the best. Union ideals are the noblest. Union achievements are the most substantial and beneficial.

The best way to help the Union to do better and achieve more is to get more members. Use the application cards printed in this paper.

### WEAK COOPERATIVE ENTERPRISES.

It is true that many cooperatives have failed. That is too bad. It is even more bad and sad that there are other Union cooperatives that are certain to fail in the future. The principal reason for such failures is that the patrons have dropped out of the Union and no longer feel under any obligations to support our enterprises.

The best and quickest way to restore the usefulness and the financial strength of a failing cooperative association is to reorganize the Union in its trade territory. Yes, the word is RE-ORGANIZE. If the people in its neighborhood belong to the Union and live up to their obligation there can be no failure.

The Union enterprises can very well afford to spend a little money in getting more members. That is the best insurance against failure that it can buy at any price.

### TEN GREAT AMERICANS.

Keep working on your list of the ten great Americans. This paper is asking everyone of its readers to join in this search. Ten Americans living or dead whose contributions to art, literature, science, invention or any other necessary calling have done the most.

The voting will begin in a short time. Have your list ready so that you can get it in early after the announcement is made.

### ONE HUNDRED PER CENT MEMBERS.

It is easy enough to have a one hundred per cent Local. All that is necessary is to collect all the dues. Making a one hundred per cent Union man out of every man on the rolls is another matter and probably, except in mighty few cases cannot be done.

A one hundred percent member attends all the meetings of his Local and goes to the County Union whenever he can. He reads the Kansas Union Farmer every week. He speaks a good word for the organization wherever he can. He gets a new application for membership at least once every year. He patronizes all the Union enterprises in his neighborhood. His house and barns are insured by the Farmers Union Mutual Insurance Company. He consigns all his car lots of live stock to the Farmers Union Commission Company either at Kansas City, St. Joseph or Wichita. He sees that his wheat is consigned to the Farmers Union Jobbing Association. He never knocks on the Union but is always ready to give good reasons for supporting the organization.

There are other marks of the good Union man but any one who lives up to all these will not be far wrong.

### THAT LIVESTOCK COMPROMISE.

The Kansas City newspaper recently announced that the Farmers Union Live Stock Commission Company had compromised its disagreements with the members of the Live Stock Exchange. A good many folks do not like the word compromise. To enter into a compromise agreement requires that something be conceded to the other fellow and it is generally admitted that a concession in a controversy is a sort of admission of error or fault.

The members of the Kansas Farmers Union may relieve their minds of all worry in connection with the reported "compromise." Before the alleged boycott was started on the 26th of September the Union Commission Company was deprived of access to the clearing house that served the Exchange members in the yards; could not participate in the advantages of the blanket insurance enjoyed by other dealers; was denied the services of the so-called "hog doctors" and carried on its operations under some other small disadvantages. Notwithstanding all these things its business was profitable and was growing more rapidly than that of any other concern on the Kansas City market.

Under the terms of the "compromise" the Farmers Union is readmitted to the clearing house privileges; may avail itself of the advantages of the blanket insurance; and may have the services of the "hog doctors" on equal terms with Exchange houses. The only thing that it gives up is the privilege of employing an unlimited number of solicitors for country shipments on full time at high salaries. The Farmers Union Live Stock Commission Company needs no solicitors if its members will do their duty to themselves and to their own organization. The "privilege" that was conceded in the "compromise" should save the Commission Company a lot of money and should not result in the loss of a single shipment.

Secretaries of Locals who delay settlements with County and State Union offices should realize that they are trustees of funds that have been paid in for certain specific purposes. The by-laws of our organization provide the amount of dues that must be paid by each member and just how those dues are to be distributed. Local secretaries should make full monthly settlements with the county and state organizations.

There are quite a few Local Unions in Kansas that apparently have seceded from their county and state organizations. Members report that they have paid their dues but the secretaries have not passed them along where they belong. One Local secretary is reported to have declared that he would not pay over the county and state dues in his possession because he does not believe any organization above the local is worth anything to the farmers. The reverse is true. Except for the activities of the county and State Union to death by withholding dues and within twelve months every Local in the state will be dead and every business enterprise will be on the broad road that leads to bankruptcy.

Wherever there is a weak or failing cooperative Union enterprise in Kansas it is certain that there is a dwindling membership. The best way to assure the success of every one of our cooperatives is to organize their supporting territories one hundred per cent strong in the Farmers Union.

Those members of the Union who turn to local meetings only when there is something to eat must ordinarily use their stomachs more than they do their heads.

The Agricultural Extension Service was established to carry the Department of Agriculture and the work of the Agricultural Colleges to all the farmers of the state. Any movement that restricts the services of tax-paid educational agencies to small groups or that creates dissensions and lack of teamwork among men who should be working together worse than wastes the public money.

### Johnson Has Announced

As a candidate for the presidency. This is not news nor does it call very much comment. The senator from California, sometimes disrespectfully referred to as "Howling Hiram" has been a candidate for the White House ever since he entered public life. It is a fairly safe bet that like many other greater citizens of the republic who have cherished similar ambitions Johnson will never reach his goal.

Entering public service as a progressive the Californian has managed to lose the support of large numbers of that group. Nor has he gained the friendship of the conservative wing of his party. Four years ago Senator Johnson was strong enough to carry the primary elections in several states. It is doubtful if he can now get a single delegation outside of California.

### La Follette Has Not Defined

His position in relation to the presidency. It is generally taken for granted and probably with good reason that his name will be presented to the voters in the states holding primary elections. It is the most fair to say that he will carry Wisconsin, Minnesota, both Dakotas, Montana, Washington, Oregon, Idaho, Nebraska and Iowa and have a good chance at the delegations from Kansas and Colorado.

The great strength that Senator La Follette is known to have in progressive states is not nearly sufficient to secure the nomination. It is certain that he can get no votes from any of the states dominated by the regular republican organization where delegates are selected in party conventions. The country already knows that the Wisconsin senator cannot be nominated for the presidency in the national republican convention. What everybody is interested in and would like to know as soon as possible is what he will do after the convention?

### Labor.

#### A Good Part of Labor

Is already preparing to organize a third party and wants La Follette for its candidate. Regularity in a certain limited sense has always been in La Follette's policy. He has never been in accord with the dominant faction of his party and on the other hand has always taken good care not to forfeit his party membership, or jeopardize his standing as a republican. This has enabled him to retain his place on the biggest committees of the senate with the practical certainty of going into the chairmanship of one or two of the most important during the coming session of Congress. La Follette can form his "bloc" of progressive republicans and other independent members and control the organization of the senate. It is not certain that his followers from Wisconsin cannot do the same in the house of representatives. He is in the strongest position that he has ever occupied since he went to Washington. It would be ally himself with a third party at this time and here is one plain citizen on foot who feels sure that he will not do so until after the republican convention and then only in the event of the nomination of some hopelessly hard boiled reactionary.

### Underwood

#### Now Has Competition

For the democratic nomination for the presidency. McAdoo is out in the lead and so far is away yonder in the lead of all other aspirants for the place. While some of the southern states may send Underwood delegations to the convention it is certain that most of the votes from that section will finally go to McAdoo who is himself a southern man. Al- though both by birth and marriage with the Presbyterian Church it would seem that McAdoo has all the elements of strength necessary to secure support in the South.

Wall Street and the east, the great railway officials and the great manufacturers will all oppose McAdoo. Occasionally it has happened that such elements have been able to control the national democratic convention. If they can do so this year and force

### PLAN WHEAT POOLING IN CANADA

Wheat growers in western Canada are discussing the question of forming a wheat pool. The majority of the growers, apparently, are in favor of pooling, but they do not exhibit the same enthusiasm for the system shown by some of its advocates in this country. Discussing the question, the "Grain Growers' Guide," published by the United Grain Growers Limited, says:

"It must not be overlooked that the pooling system of marketing wheat has not anywhere been carried on for a sufficient length of time to demonstrate its real value, and, consequently, Mr. Cramer's suggestion that the pool be organized outside of and separate from the present farmers' companies is the course of wisdom. Such course will give a fair opportunity to test the various systems of marketing in a manner which should afford a real demonstration without endangering the farmers' companies."

Continuing to discuss the benefits likely to be derived from the pooling plan, the "Guide" adds: "Some of the most enthusiastic advocates of the cooperative pooling system are, unfortunately, exag-

gerating the financial benefits to be derived therefrom. The claims made that the pooling system will raise the price of wheat from 12 to 20 cents a bushel over and above a competitive market price are extravagant. "A well operated pooling system may possibly reduce some of the cost of handling wheat, but not in a large degree because the physical system of handling wheat in this country is superior to that in operation anywhere else in the world. While there are economies to be effected, they will be small in the price per bushel received by the grower. There will also be benefits to be derived by the elimination of private profits in the marketing of wheat, but this benefit will only be in proportion to the volume of wheat handled through the pool."

The chief financial benefit to be derived from the pooling system will be in the effect upon the market of having a large volume of wheat merchandised in an orderly fashion throughout the year instead of being dumped on the market within a few months, and the extent of the benefit will depend upon the volume of wheat handled through one selling agency. A number of pools on a competitive basis will not have a very beneficial effect upon the market, but as they sound.

Reclamation Of Desert and Swamp Land. Will be urged strongly in the next congress by powerful groups of speculators in lands. No such measures should be adopted. The prosperity of agriculture is not dependent on the extension of the acres of plow lands. The farms now being operated are sufficient in extent and in potential productive capacity to supply all food demands for many years to come.

Too many swamps have already been drained. Too many forest areas at the headwaters of great rivers have been demanded of trees. The climate, rainfall and productive possibilities of millions of the most fertile acres in the country have already been seriously affected by the drainage of swamps, marshes and lakes. Man is not yet wise enough to tamper with the balances established by nature.

What agriculture needs and what the country needs more than anything else is improved methods of tillage that will increase the returns from existing farms and better system of marketing for the distribution of such products.

### Cut Over Forest Lands

Now number millions of acres. The clearing and cultivation of such lands is an expensive process and selected men returns a profit to the first generation of pioneers that engages in that work. Much of the cut over land is not fertile. More of it has had the plant food destroyed by the annual forest fires that no one seems to be able to prevent.

The most colossal blunder yet made by the American people has been in the treatment of forest and timber lands. Scientifically cropped there was once an inexhaustible supply of timber. There yet remains forest areas large enough to supply all reasonable demands if proper methods could be applied to the cutting of trees and the preservation and care of the younger growth. We have mined our forests and the next generation will be without timber unless the wisdom of those now in control is able to work out a sensible system of timber culture and tree cutting. The most sensible thing and that which would be most profitable in the long run would be to restore timber growth to all cut over areas. The tree crop is the most promising possibility of such lands.

Football Seems As Uncertain As horseracing. The teams of Kansas and Missouri Universities each played tie games with Nebraska. A little while later Kansas beat Washington University by a score of 83 to 0 and might have done the score if the regulars had been kept in the line-up. The very next week Washington University defeated Missouri. What is the answer?

The guess of this column is that the Missouri University team went to St. Louis the day before the game and that the coaches and manager forgot to tuck the boys in and lock the door before returning to their own rooms.

A good many people were amazed at the unexpected defeat of Notre Dame by Nebraska but after it was over by a wise follower of the sport should have been able to explain that reversal of form. In the first place there probably was no reversal of form. There is no reason why an eastern college should turn out any better football team than that for several years they have not done so. In the second place the Nebraska team had been especially prepared for that game and was at the top of its form. In the third place the Notre Dame

team had been developed too early in the season, had played too many hard games, had travelled too many miles, and was stale and far below its best condition.

This sounds all right now and many too ball followers reading it will agree but if it had been written before Nebraska beat the Irish it would have been considered a weak sort of a joke.

### Colleges

Are Institutions For the higher education of the youth. With one exception every department of every big university is short of funds for use in necessary work. The exception is the athletic department which has nothing to do with the training of the mental faculties, with the extension of the frontiers of knowledge or within any of the other high purposes for which our great educational institutions were established and are maintained. Athletics need no appropriations from the taxpayers. The intercollegiate sports and teams are supported by the public which seems never to object to the high prices charged for admission tickets.

The four foot ball games played at Harvard University this year attracted an attendance of more than 200,000 spectators who paid an average of three dollars a ticket or a total of \$600,000 for admission. That is almost enough money to maintain every other department of the university and is much more than the total budget of that institution called for twenty years ago.

The Kansas Missouri foot ball game to be played at Lawrence this year will draw a \$50,000 crowd. The receipts are split fifty-fifty between the two teams. The total receipts at University of Kansas foot ball games this season will probably be more than \$50,000. That is alright but it looks a little pitiful that a bunch of folks that cheerfully pay \$50,000 a year to support foot ball should make such an outcry over appropriations to pay living wages to men of science, culture and vision who are devoting their lives to learning.

### Reduction Of Wheat Acreage

Is recommended by the National Wheat Council. Fine. But the advice to sow less wheat was not given until seedling was about over. Far too late to do the farmers any good even if they ever hear of it.

The same outfit urges an increase of fifty per cent in the wheat tariff. That might help too if it were not for the curious fact that the same law that imposes the duty on wheat provides for its remission to millers who bring in foreign wheat and manufacture it into flour for export.

Nearly 70,000,000 bushels of Canadian wheat has been milled in this country already this year and none of it has paid any duty. The flour has been exported to Europe in competition with flour made from American wheat and the duty paid has all been refunded to the millers.

No tariff on wheat will do the farmer any good until the drawback provision that permits the miller to evade the payment of duty is repealed. The farmers will ask for that very thing early next month and then watch and see how the manufacturers section of the National Chamber of Commerce will fight it.

### Ignorance Is Only Real Enemy

Of humanity. Abolish ignorance and all other crimes, disease and errors will soon vanish. Make no mistake about what is meant by ignorance. There are more people who can read and write today than ever before in the history of the republic but the real standard of intelligence is lower than at any time since the revolutionary war.

A nation that gets its amusements from the moving pictures so popular right now, that depends on the comic sections of the newspapers for its evening entertainment at home, that supports the scores of cheap and trashy magazines as a substitute for the literature that our fathers loved that rushes in hordes to join a masked and cloaked organization that calls its chief an "Emperor" and still boasts of its Americanism, that elects demagogues fools and knaves to office stand self-indicted as ignorant.

one large pool marketing the bulk of the wheat crop would affect the market to a considerable extent."

### ADVERTISING PAYS

APPLE CO-OPERATIVES Twenty-six farmers' business organizations handling boxed apples sold more than 6,000,000 boxes of apples in the 1922 crop, valued at approximately \$3,000,000, says the United States Department of Agriculture. Sixteen of the associations advertise their products, the advertising assessments ranging from one-half cent a box to 4 cents a box.

Some of the larger appropriations for advertising the 1923 crop are \$35,000, \$30,000, \$22,700, and \$7,200. In the last 10 years more than \$750,000 has been spent to advertise one well-known brand of apples alone.

Pooling seems to be another of the secrets of success of the apple co-operatives, the department says. Of the 26 organizations reporting to the department, 24 associations pool the returns for similar varieties and similar grades. The pool are for periods ranging from two months to a year.

Remember that the radicals are like bull frogs—never so numerous as they sound.







