

become manifest. The turning point in his life came after he entered the political arena. Entrusted by the people to represent them not only in the law-making bodies of the Dominion, and of the Province, but also at the same time as a member of the Council governing the great territory west of Manitoba, he was clothed with the power of a Midas, as everything he touched seemed to turn to gold. Had he served the people of the Dominion of Canada, who entrusted him to represent them, with the same fidelity he has served the Hudson's Bay Company, looking after the interests of the shareholders of this vast corporaion, what would have been the economic condition of that great Dominion to-day?

It is written of a certain king, who, at the zenith of his regal power gave a great feast, at which a thousand of his courtiers were present, and while in the midst of the revelry his guests were profaning the sacred vessels, a hand writing appeared on the wall of the palace. The writing was in a strange language, incomprehensible to him and his guests, even to all the wise men of his kingdom. But a young man was found who told the king the doom of his kingly power. This Deed of Surrender, with its reservation of one-twentieth of all the lands in the Fertile Belt, in the provinces of Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta is the *Mene, Mene Tekel Upharsin* of land monopoly on the American Continent.

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## THE FARMERS' MOVEMENT OF CANADA.

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### A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE FARMERS' ASSOCIATION OF THE PROVINCES OF ALBERTA, SASKATCHEWAN AND MANITOBA. THE MOST HOPEFUL MOVEMENT TOWARDS SOCIAL JUSTICE IN THE WORLD TO-DAY.

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(For the Review.)

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By LUTHER S. DICKEY.

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In the early nineties a prominent attorney of a Central Illinois City said to the writer: "I have read *Progress and Poverty* and regard it as one of the great books of the nineteenth century. Its arguments are convincing. I had no difficulty in realizing the full purport of its teachings—how completely it would revolutionize society, by undermining the pillars supporting the great interests which thrive on the privileges they enjoy. However, when I considered that these powerful interests would not be alone in opposing it, but would enlist in opposition the very class to derive the most benefit from its application, I concluded life was too short for me to waste my time in advocating it." "What class, in your opinion, would receive the most benefit by the application of the principles of *Progress and Poverty*?" "Why

the farmers; but you can never get them to see it. They will never be able to see the difference between *land* and the *value* of land; and as they possess the most land area they can never get rid of the notion that they will have to pay the heaviest taxes. Those who profit by the present system of taxation control not only our colleges and universities, but also dictate the editorial policy of our great newspapers, and you can rest assured neither college professors nor newspaper editors will ever try to enlighten them. No, life is too short for me to waste it in an effort to better the condition of the masses of men, who would be the very first to crucify those who espoused such a cause."

This lawyer enjoyed a lucrative practice from a clientele composed largely of farmers and was evidently averse to antagonizing them. Yet his very candor, and the enthusiasm evinced during the conversation was an indication that he did not hold to the full import of his words. This was scarcely ten years ago and yet the following recently appeared in a leading editorial of the organ of the most aggressive and intelligent farmers' organization in the world:

*"The farmers are prepared to have the necessary revenues for the conduct of public business raised from a tax on land values. Of course, they are not unanimous, but those who have studied the question know that a tax upon land values is the most equitable system of raising public revenues. It will shift the burden from the backs of the farmers and laboring classes and place it upon the exploiters and monopolists where it belongs. The value of the land in the cities and towns in Canada is far greater than the value of all the farm lands, so that the farmer's taxes would be greatly reduced."*

The above appeared in the *Grain Growers' Guide*, published weekly at Winnipeg, Manitoba, under the auspices of the Manitoba Grain Growers' Association, the Saskatchewan Grain Growers' Association, and the United Farmers of Alberta, and is absolutely owned and controlled by farmers.

A notable event occurred last December at Ottawa, the capital of the Dominion of Canada; 800 farmers from the provinces of Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Ontario, Quebec, New Brunswick and Nova Scotia met the Prime Minister and the members of the House of Commons in the legislative hall of the Dominion. This great body of farmers did not appear before the Government begging for privileges, but to demand that other interests be prevented from levying tribute upon them. No movement of the same nature and magnitude was ever before seen on the American continent. It is the first instance in the history of either the American Republic or the Dominion Government that the farmers have taken a firm and united stand for fundamental economic justice. An extract from the address of one of the spokesmen will indicate the representative quality of the farmer delegates from the provinces of Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba. It is as follows: "Let me in closing refer to the vast aggregate of invested capital represented by this delegation; each member of the Western part of it we estimate has a half section of land valued with its equipment at at least \$10,000. There are 30,000 in our Western organizations, which means an investment of \$300,000,000. If, as our friendly rivals

declare, we are only twenty-five per cent. of the Western farmers, we would represent the enormous aggregate of \$1,200,000,000, and we think we may fairly claim to be the articulate mouth-piece of the whole."

The day prior to the convention a mass meeting was held in the Grand Opera House at Ottawa, which was addressed by a delegate from each of the respective provinces represented. E. A. Partridge, of Sinaluta, was selected to represent Saskatchewan on this occasion. Of all the speakers the appearance of Mr. Partridge evoked the greatest applause. There is a significance in this that does not appear on the surface. For of all the men in the farmers' movement in Canada E. A. Partridge is the most intelligent, aggressive Henry George propagandist. His address at this time was exceedingly conservative, although he made an argument for free trade and taxation of land values. There was too, a special significance in his selection as the spokesman of the Saskatchewan delegation. While recuperating from injuries received in an accident the year before Mr. Partridge was unable to attend the ninth annual meeting of the Saskatchewan Grain Growers Association which was held at Prince Albert in February, 1910. However, a letter from him was read to the convention from which the extracts below are taken:

No material prosperity will avail anything in the securing of happiness except as it affords an improved opportunity to increase that "right wisdom" which leads men individually and collectively to perceive and act in accordance with the truths enunciated in the Golden Rule and the Sermon on the Mount. This great movement of the tillers of the soil in which we are ranked as leaders is only truly great and will only be truly successful so long as it remains fundamentally seeking after social justice wider than the advancement of self or even class interest—a desire to enjoy the fruit of our labors that we may the more efficiently discharge our duties as husbands, fathers and citizens, not forgetting, however, the duty we owe ourselves to cultivate our powers of body, mind, and spirit, that we may live as fully our individual lives, as the discharge of our duties to others will permit. Our chief limitation as a class is the lack of proper ideals as to what environment, opportunities, interests and activities are necessary to the leading of full and dignified lives. We so seldom remember that we—all of us, not simply a few who possess material wealth, position or power—are children of the Eternal Father and as such are co-heirs to all the possibilities and possessions of an Infinite Universe. We lack dignity. We give honor to those who consume rather than to those who create. With the ballot in our hands we bow down to those who stole our national heritage, and are daily stealing our opportunities to cherish our wives and educate our children, under forms of law which outrage all sense of human or divine Justice. We need the initiative, referendum and recall, but we need to know the sinister causes of poverty and inequality of opportunity. Men in high places know the causes, but unfortunately they profit by them and do not desire to see them removed, hence the farce of commissions solemnly sitting to enquire why the cost of living is so high, when it is as plain as noon-day that while wages and prices of farm products as they come from the farm have advanced somewhat, the price of everything the wage-earner and farmer must buy has advanced a great deal more. Every gift of nature and natural advantage of position, coal mines, timber limits, water powers, commercial sites from which men draw their supplies, or opportunities to create shelter, food, clothing and tools have been seized, capitalized at their monopoly value, and this capitalization to use God's bounties taking the form of stocks and bonds goes on demanding its toll from generation after generation of toilers without surcease as the work of exploitation

continues. And each little holder of stock based on a monopoly of privilege of one kind or another, be he active mechanic, farmer, merchant or retired worker of any sort, helps to darken counsel because of his little selfish interest in the institutions by which the princes of monopoly are holding the working world in thrall."

#### THE MOVEMENT THAT OPPOSES ALL THE HUDSON'S BAY COMPANY TYPIFIES.

The inception of this farmers movement was in 1901. W. R. Motherwell, the present minister of Agriculture of Saskatchewan, was then an ordinary farmer, residing fourteen miles from town of Indian Head. He and Peter Dayman, of Abernethy, another farmer, drew up a letter and sent it to the farmers in that section of the Province of Saskatchewan, which resulted in a meeting at Indian Head, when the Saskatchewan Grain Growers Association was organized; the first annual meeting of the Association being held at Indian Head in February, 1902. During the Summer of that year Mr. Dayman spent some time at Winnipeg in an endeavor to secure more favorable treatment from the railways in the placing of cars for loading. His attempts were fruitless until an agent was prosecuted and fined for not supplying cars in compliance with a statute known as the Manitoba Grain Act. An appeal was made by the Railway Company, but the judgment of the convicting magistrate was affirmed by the Supreme Court. This caused the farmers generally to take notice, and branch associations were formed rapidly, all over the Province.

A few months after the Grain Growers Association of Saskatchewan was organized its first president, W. R. Motherwell, was invited by a veteran farmer at Virden, Manitoba, J. W. Scallion, to assist in organizing the farmers of Manitoba. The organization was effected at Virden with a membership during the first year of one hundred and twenty five with Mr. Scallion, known as the "Father of the Manitoba Grain Growers' Association," as president. The first meeting of the central Grain Growers' Association of Manitoba was held at Brandon in March, 1903. Mr. Scallion was also elected president of the central body. In 1908 the United Farmers of Alberta was formed by the combining of the Alberta Farmer's Association with a Canadian organization that was an off-shoot of the American Society of Equity. The constitution of these three provincial organizations is practically the same, and they number approximately 30,000 active members.

Although this movement had its origin as a protest against the exactions of the elevator combine and railroad contempt for the individual farmer's rights, these organizations have not confined themselves to these grievances, but have assailed privilege and monopoly in all their forms. During the winter of 1910-11 the foundations were laid for a working organization of farmers that should extend throughout the Dominion, from the Atlantic to the Pacific, to be called the Canadian Council of Agriculture.

#### THE GRAIN GROWERS' GRAIN COMPANY LAUNCHED.

In 1905 Mr. A. E. Partridge, of Sintaluta, Saskatchewan, was delegated to represent the Grain Growers Association and to study the market conditions

at the Winnipeg Grain and Produce Exchange. After his report had been made following his suggestions a new organization was launched in the fall of 1906, known as the Grain Growers' Grain Company. It is a joint Stock Company with shares at \$25. each, held only by farmers, their wives or sons, the number of shares to be held by one person being limited to four, and one vote only being allowed to each person. No share can be sold and transferred without the sanction of the shareholders at the annual meeting. This precaution was taken to prevent speculators from gaining control and to prevent it from being listed on the stock exchanges. Mr. Partridge was elected president of the new organization, and as representative of the company, purchased a seat on the Winnipeg Grain Exchange, the only wheat market in Western Canada.

Mr. Partridge and his co-workers in the Grain Growers' Grain Company, the number being very limited, solicited trade from the grain growers, proffering to handle the business at one cent per bushel. Their appeal for business was not in vain. The new company had effected arrangements with one of the best chartered banks to finance them, and business kept steadily increasing. A factor in stimulating the business of the new company was a proffer to distribute co-operatively the profits of the company; that is, after a reasonable interest had been paid upon the capital stock the balance of the profits was to be distributed to the patrons pro rata to the number of cars shipped. The Council of the Exchange notified Mr. Partridge that such a proposition was contrary to the law of the Exchange and must be abandoned. Partridge declined to yield and the company was suspended from membership. Three farmers at the head of the company were compelled to pledge all their property to maintain the credit of the company with the bank financing it, and by a member of the Exchange violating the rules of that body, bought the grain they had on hand at reduced price and thus prevented them from going under.

The Grain Growers' Association and the Grain Growers' Grain Company are two distinct organizations without any affiliation except that the members of the latter company are members of the former. At this time the Manitoba Grain Growers' Association membership numbered over five thousand, all of whom were voters. This organization requested the government to take action and the latter after an investigation ordered the Exchange to reinstate the company, which the Exchange refused to do. But on a threat of the government to call a special session of the legislature to annul the charter of the Exchange, the latter weakened, and after being suspended seven months the Grain Growers' Grain Company was reinstated. Mr. Partridge, who is quite a wag, humorously remarked, when informed of the action of the Exchange in reinstating him, "Those fellows have been eating partridge for a long time, but now they will have to eat crow."

Notwithstanding this suspension of seven months and the consequent drawbacks, the company's report at the annual meeting in July, 1907, made a splendid showing, it having marketed 2,500,000 bushels of grain; they had a profit of \$790.54 and had also sold 1,835 shares of stock which, of course, was distributed exclusively among farmers.

Before entering on the second year's business the Grain Growers Grain Company effected arrangements with the Home Bank of Canada to finance them. This bank had recently moved into the west, and the Grain Company became the sole agency for the sale of the stock of the bank, taking considerable of the stock in the name of the Company. Two directors of the Grain Company are directors of the bank. At the end of the first year Mr. Partridge voluntarily retired from the presidency of the company, and Mr. T. A. Crerar was elected president, a position he yet retains. At the end of the business year in the summer of 1908 the company had marketed 5,000,000 bushels of grain at a profit of \$30,190.24. The total number of shares sold at this time was 2,932.

At the demand of the Manitoba Grain Growers' Association the legislature of Manitoba made so many radical changes in the charter of the Grain Exchange that the latter finally decided to relinquish the charter and is now a voluntary association, known as the Winnipeg Grain Exchange. But there has been no further friction between the Grain Growers' Grain Company and the Exchange. Frequent attempts have been made by speculators to squeeze the farmers company on the exchange, but as the latter does a strictly commission business it cannot be affected by the speculators. During the third year the company marketed 7,500,000 bushels of grain at a profit of \$53,902.08. The total sale of stock at the end of the third year was 7,558 shares.

In the Fall of 1909 the Grain Growers' Grain Company adopted a policy of advertising heavily and carrying on a publicity campaign. A rule of the Grain Exchange required all members to charge a commission of a cent a bushel. The Exchange dropped the "Commission rule" so that members were free to charge any fee or nothing as they saw fit. It was evident that the elevator companies had a hand in this action with a view of squeezing the Grain Company out of business. Commissions were dropped to a half cent and some handled the farmers grain without charge, expecting to make a profit by manipulation. But, the result was a complete victory for the Grain Growers Grain Company, for the business of the year far exceeded their brightest anticipation. 16,000,000 bushels of grain passed through their hands at a profit of \$95,662.78.

This made the Grain Growers' Grain Company the largest grain commission concern in Canada, putting this farmers' company at the top of the grain trade. The company had a paid up capital at this time of \$292,957.55. A 15 per cent. dividend was declared, \$25,000 set aside for an educational fund and the balance placed in reserve. The educational fund was devoted to grants to the three provincial Grain Growers' Associations and also to the support of the official organ of these association, the *Grain Growers' Guide*. During the year ending with the Summer of 1910 the company did over \$20,000,000 and have demonstrated that farmers are capable of conducting their affairs. They have blazed the way to success against the allied forces of the big pioneer grain companies with unlimited financial backing, combined with a great elevator monopoly, the latter of which will soon be a thing of the past.

## PROVINCIAL ORGANIZATIONS.

A brief analysis of these organizations of the prairie provinces of Canada will enable the reader to form a clearer idea of the scope and importance of these farmers' companies. In the province of Manitoba there are over 200 local Grain Growers' Associations; in Saskatchewan 350, and in Alberta 200 local unions of the United Farmers of Alberta. Each local organization of farmers holds meetings either monthly or semi-monthly for the discussion of matters purely local, such as purchasing supplies, marketing produce, discussing municipal laws and other subjects of paramount interest to the immediate community.

In addition provincial matters relating to government ownership or control of elevators, direct legislation, taxation of land values, co-operation, meat packing plants, mortgage laws, supplying seed grain, and a score of other subjects receive attention. Great interest is taken in Dominion affairs, such as the tariff, public ownership of public utilities, government ownership and operation of the Hudson's Bay Railroad, railway legislation, the banking system of Canada and the conservation of natural resources. Each year there is an annual convention held in each province when from 500 to 600 delegates from the local associations attend to legislate for the provincial organization. It is at these parliaments that the policy of the associations is laid down and plans outlined for future progress, and these annual gatherings of intelligent farmers are rapidly becoming factors of great importance in western civilization.

The local organizations in the three provinces are bound together by central organizations, which form the connecting link and unite the three provinces for one purpose. The Manitoba Grain Growers' Association's central office is in Winnipeg in charge of the secretary, Roderick McKenzie, a native of Ontario, of Scotch descent, for more than a quarter of a century a resident of Manitoba and a farmer who is thoroughly familiar with all the problems confronting the farmers. The headquarters of the Saskatchewan Grain Growers' Association is at Moose Jaw with the secretary, F. W. Green, in charge. Mr. Green is a native of England but he has lived in Canada for a generation and is recognized as one of the big farmers of Saskatchewan. The central office of Alberta is at Innisfail with E. J. Frean, secretary, in charge. Mr. Frean is also a native of England but has been in Canada for 20 years.

Every member of the local associations pay annual dues of \$1.00, one half of which goes to the support of the central office. The Alberta and Saskatchewan associations receive small grants from the provincial governments, but such grants in no way affect their independence. These associations of Western Canada have no political or governmental strings upon them—and therein lies their strength.

The function of the central office is to supply information for the guidance of the locals and for discussion at their meeting, to conduct the organization work throughout their respective provinces, and to keep a watch on everything that bears on the interests of the farmers. During the winter months

organizers are sent out through new districts in the country by the central office and addresses are delivered on subjects in which the farmers are interested. Each central office is a bureau of information for the local associations, and it also furnishes inspiration and incentive for greater activity where needed. The central association has a regularly elected president and other officers and a board of directors for the conduct of its business. The Saskatchewan Association has inaugurated a life membership scheme, the annual dues being \$12, the funds being invested in farm mortgages to supply a permanent fund from the interest for the support of the central office. The Manitoba and Alberta sections are contemplating the same action.

This farmer's movement in Canada has for its leaders earnest, capable men, fired with the inspiration of a great principle. "Equal rights to all and special privileges to none," is the motto inscribed on the banner under which they march. And under such a standard they are determined that the Provinces of Canada shall not be comprised of a citizenship of millionaire landlords and servile peasants, of masters and servants, but democracies of equal citizens, "where competition becomes co-operation, and the interdependence of all gives true independence to each; where moral progress goes hand in hand with intellectual progress, and material progress elevates and enfranchises even the poorest and weakest and lowliest." To inculcate these doctrines throughout the Western Canadian Provinces they have established a Journal which has been accepted as the official organ of the Saskatchewan Grain Growers' Association of the United Farmers of Alberta, and published under the auspices of the Manitoba Grain Growers' Association and financed by the Grain Growers' Grain Company, and known as *The Grain Grower's Guide*.

This paper was established in 1908, beginning as a monthly. The first number was issued in June, 1908, 12,000 copies being printed, most of which were distributed gratuitously throughout the western Provinces. The functions of the *Guide* were described in the first number as follows:

"Devoted to the work of organizing the farmers for their mutual protection and advantage, keeping them accurately informed in all matters and movements of importance to them as farmers, and furnishing a medium through which they may exchange ideas and information for their mutual benefit and the building up of an enlightened public opinion on economic and social conditions."

Two years ago a separate company was organized for the publication of the *Guide* and it has since been issued weekly at a dollar a year. The new company has erected a magnificent plant from which is distributed over the Canadian provinces 20,000 copies each week and the whole owned and controlled by the organized farmers.

The *Guide* is absolutely free and fearless in attacking special privilege in every form and its aggressive policy has been such as to alienate the advertising patronage of the concerns that grow fat on privilege. But the farmers have loyally contributed to make up any deficits and the *Guide* continues to grow and flourish. With such an organ of public opinion each week, spread-



ing the gospel of free trade and the taxation of land values, it is obvious that the farmer's movement in Canada presents the most formidable and hopeful advance towards fundamental democracy that we have in the world to-day. The men in the leadership of this movement are intelligent and have a much broader grasp of economics than the men who represent them in the legislative halls of the Dominion.

Notwithstanding these men are large landowners they are in favor of concentrating all taxes on land values, and exempting everything in the way of improvements from taxation. They are opposed to customs duties, to taxes on occupations, to taxes on earnings, on investments, on the building of houses, on the cultivation of fields, on industry and thrift in all forms.

The men most active in the farmer's movement in Canada believe that any tax that interferes with Production and Exchange violates the moral law and they clearly perceive that to tax land values for maintaining the government would permit the farmer to retain the full produce of his labor. He has object lesson in every township in the provinces of Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta south of the North Saskatchewan River that make this clear as noon-day. Men in England who do nothing to promote the prosperity of the provinces—shareholders of the Hudson's Bay Company—demand of the citizens of these provinces increasing tribute in proportion to the material growth, public improvements, and increase in population. If these distant landowners can demand by reason of public improvements increased revenue from the citizens who reside in these provinces, have not the governments which maintain the police power and make the improvements a greater right to demand at least a portion of the value thus created? Out on the vast savannahs of these western provinces, men can readily see that the value of the land itself, irrespective of the value of any improvements in or on it, always indicates the precise value of the benefit that should go to the community, and they are nearly unanimous that whatever is necessary for government should be taken from this fund.

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HON. W. S. U'REN expresses his opinions of the political situation in Oregon on the first page and part of the second of the illustrated section of the N. Y. *Herald*, Sunday, September 10th. In one paragraph he says:

"Well, 'Progress and Poverty' gripped me just as it gripped Tom Johnson, made me a Single Taxer, just as it has made Lawson Purdy, president of your New York City tax commission, a Single Taxer—struck me, in fact, with its undeniable truths, just as it has struck millions of others—and I came up to Oregon determined to do what I could to bring about the conditions of equality that Henry George advocated."

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"FAIRHOPE, the Forerunner," by J. Bellanger, is the leading article in the September number of the *Twentieth Century Magazine*. The article is profusely illustrated and exceedingly interesting.