

Democratic Watchman

Bellefonte, Pa., March 14, 1890.

An Address Delivered Before Centre Grange.

The following address, which needs no comment, was made at the last regular meeting of Centre Grange, P. of H. No. 254, by Mrs. David Miller, who was tendered a vote of thanks for the able and interesting discourse with a request that it be printed in the county papers and Farmers' Friend:

WHY HAVE WE THE GRANGE?

Worthy master, brothers and sisters, the subject to which I desire to call your attention at this time, "Why are we Grangers?" seems one of every day mention, but thinking there might be, and doubtless are, very many different notions among us, why we are grangers, I think it best possibly to modify it and say "Why have we the Grange?" You have doubtless all heard the saying that it is useless to try to build a fire with but one stick of wood, and so we may have many number of sticks and have them scattered about in different places and they will do us no good. We must get them well in hand together into close contact, and by so doing we can have a fire to serve whatever purpose we may wish. This is the best illustration of the farmer's position I can think of.

We must have co-operation; but what is co-operation? Webster defines it as the act of co-operating or of operating together to one end, and co-operator, as one who labors jointly with others to promote the same end. Now, can we best co-operate by being scattered, one here and another there, or any where, each one working independent of the other? Most certainly not. Like the sticks for the fire I just mentioned, we must be brought together in order that we may exchange thoughts and suggest plans, ways and means by which we can best accomplish our purpose.

History teaches us that the best way to accomplish this end is by organized co-operation, which is the only way to success possible. If we are not, no matter how worthy our purpose may be, or how much for the benefit of ourselves or the country, we are comparatively helpless. Hence we have the organization called the Grange. That the farmer in past years has not availed himself of this means of working for his own interests, as all other classes of the industry have done, is too plain to demand a passing thought. So we are compelled to take matters as we find them today. We, as farmers, have at least advanced one step by having our organization, which we do claim is for our benefit; but as every one is supposed to know most about his or her own, we to-day take up the grange work and consider in what ways we can best co-operate in the grange to bring about the greatest benefits to ourselves and others, financially, politically, socially and educationally, these being the fundamental principles of the grange. We who are members of the order should use our influence as far as possible to have these principles carried out in such a way as to be of the greatest possible good to ourselves as well as a help to those around us.

I trust, however, that I am not vain enough to think that I can teach any one present anything in regard to our work. But our minds should all be open to improvement, and if we can assist each other in any way it should be our whole duty so to do.

First, then, the financial work of the Grange. Why I mention this department of the Grange work first I am sure I cannot tell, for I by no means consider it the most important one. But as we are more familiar with it, and it is so better understood than any of the others, it will be necessary to say but very little about it. We do claim, however, that there are great financial advantages to be derived from the grange. We know, too, that we who are inside the gates enjoy benefits and privileges which those who are outside do not and have no right to; yet at the same time we do not hesitate to say that the grange is and has been a great, advantage to all classes of people all over the country, and we could cite many instances to prove our assertion, but one will suffice. What exorbitant prices would our farmers have had to pay for binder twine last season had it not been for the grange, in which case we claim in the grange to have been a benefit also to those outside our gates, because agents could not demand their exorbitant prices which were heralded through the columns of the press all over the world, by the twine trust setting the price as much as twenty-five cents per pound. But by the co-operation of the grange the twine was purchased for less than one half. I am sure the twine matter did more toward opening the eyes of those who were determined to be blind, than almost any other grange transaction.

Next what can the grange do politically? We obligate ourselves to interfere with no ones politics, and yet we think farmers make a great mistake in not co-operating together to one end,

that of their own best interests, instead of to the best interest of every other class of men. They should keep themselves well informed as to the political aspects of the country and use their knowledge in such a way as to make their influence felt by all political parties, and let them know that we have some of the spirit which animated our forefathers when they demanded political and religious liberty for all. I do not claim to be a politician and have not the ability to comprehend the vast issues at stake between the great political parties. But we do think we know that there are men in both parties noble and true, who would stand firm and defend our cause if only we can get them into our legislative and congressional halls. Some of us talk of setting our political views aside, but perhaps that is not the better way. All may not want to do that. But let our brethren of all parties stand firm together and use their utmost efforts in placing men in nomination in each party who have the interest of the American farmer at heart. Then each one can vote for his own political preference; so it will matter little to our farming interests which one would be elected. But if this cannot be accomplished, then set your politics aside and positively refuse longer to do the bidding of the bosses. Oh! that we could induce every farmer to join our ranks and help us fight the great battle and share the honors of the victory, for we believe victory will be ours if we are true to ourselves and our cause, and the sooner we go to work in earnest the sooner will her laurels crown our efforts.

Next we hear of the social phases of the grange. We believe that the principles of the grange are calculated and well adapted to encourage and assist us in rising to that condition of dignity in society which we would have accomplished long since if the farmers' interest had been looked after and advanced as all other interests have been. Why should we not occupy the very highest social position in the land? Are we not engaged in the calling ordained by God himself who created our first parents and placed them in the garden of Eden to till it and keep it? And tell me, has it not been from the homes of the farmers of the land that have gone out many, indeed most of those who have stepped up to the highest and noblest positions that are within the gifts of our people? And surely we all know that in the future as in the past, it will be our farmer boys who will be needed to fill these places whether in the pulpit, on the justice bench, behind the counter, in the educational department, or in the halls of the Legislature and Congress. All this being true, why the American farmers have stood aside and suffered themselves to be looked upon as hewers of wood and drawers of water for so long, it is hard to tell, but certain it is that as a class they have not demanded their social rights any more than their political rights. But just here is where we can bring to our help the grand principles of our order. Owning to the peculiar isolation of farmers' families they have not the social advantages afforded by the larger towns and cities, and consequently are withdrawn into a little selfish world of their own.

Many, if not all, to some extent feel out of place and out of all relation to the highest affairs of the country at large. Hence they are apt to get the idea that no special service or usefulness to others is or will be expected of them. But the teaching of the Grange points to something higher, nobler and better. I think we should especially seek to influence the young and give them larger ideas of their privileges and duties, so that they may become upright, manly, womanly, and by the influence of our lives teach them that we are in earnest striving for their welfare. Let us then guard our rights with jealous care, attend our meetings with regularity and assist each other to attain to that higher plane in life which is the God-given right of every industrious and honest man and woman. But this social department of our work is so closely connected with the last named, the educational, that we find it hard to separate them, and will therefore pass on to consider the work of which the Grange is to be the chief promoter in the advancement of these connected with the order. And hear I say that this principle of grange work is the foundation of all others. It is the corner stone upon which our whole structure is erected. In the first place there are different kinds of education; and have not we as farmers been informed as to many things of which we were ignorant? For instance, the prices of all articles which we need to purchase. Surely the Grange has been a great educator to us in this respect. If we suffer ourselves to be imposed upon now in the price of any article needed, whether on the farm or in the house, it is not that we do not or might not know better. Then again, have we not been educated to see the imposition upon us in the matter of taxes, and other things; have been taught the remedies we must look to for relief as well as how to apply them? But the Grange is also pledged to the advancement of popular education. If you will refer to

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Railway Guide.

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VIA TYONE-WESTWARD.

Leave Bellefonte, 5:55 a. m., arrive at Tyone, 8:05 a. m., at Altoona, 7:45 a. m., at Pottsville, 12:45 p. m.

Leave Bellefonte, 10:25 a. m., arrive at Tyone, 11:55 a. m., at Altoona, 1:45 p. m., at Pottsville, 6:50 p. m.

Leave Bellefonte, 5:20 p. m., arrive at Tyone, 6:40, at Altoona at 7:50, at Pottsville at 11:05.

VIA TYONE-EASTWARD.

Leave Bellefonte, 5:55 a. m., arrive at Tyone, 6:55, at Harrisburg, 10:30 a. m., at Philadelphia, 1:25 p. m.

Leave Bellefonte, 10:25 a. m., arrive at Tyone, 11:25 a. m., at Harrisburg, 3:20 p. m., at Philadelphia, 6:50 p. m.

Leave Bellefonte, 5:20 p. m., arrive at Tyone, 6:40, at Harrisburg, 10:45 p. m., at Philadelphia, 4:25 a. m.

VIA LOCK HAVEN-NORTHWARD.

Leave Bellefonte, 4:20 p. m., arrive at Lock Haven, 5:30 p. m., at Renovo, 9 p. m.

Leave Bellefonte, 9:32 a. m., arrive at Lock Haven, 11:00 a. m., at Renovo, 1:15 p. m.

Leave Bellefonte, 8:49 p. m., arrive at Lock Haven, 10:10 p. m., at Renovo, 12:25 p. m., leave Harrisburg, 3:45 a. m., arrive at Philadelphia at 6:50 a. m.

VIA LEWISBURG.

Leave Bellefonte, 6:00 a. m., arrive at Lewisburg at 9:00 a. m., Harrisburg, 11:30 a. m., Philadelphia, 3:15 p. m.

Leave Bellefonte, 2:30 p. m., arrive at Lewisburg, 5:25, at Harrisburg, 9:45 a. m., Philadelphia at 4:25 a. m.

BALD EAGLE VALLEY.

WESTWARD. EASTWARD.

Nov. 10, 1889.

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