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GRANGE COOPERATION AT WORK.

How Conditions Were Improved in an Isolated Town as Seen by a Writer for the Country Gentleman.

[BY JAMES ALVIN.]

A few months ago the Reporter made mention of the fact that Lynn B. Meekins, Esq., a writer for the Country Gentleman, one of the Curtis Company publications, had been in Centre Hall gathering material for an article on cooperation. In the Country Gentleman of May 4th, Mr. Meekins, under the name of James Alvin, writes a two-page description of "Grange Cooperation at Work." There are four illustrations, all of which are well executed. The article, which is well written, is published below.—EDITOR.]

PART I.

Centre Hall, Pennsylvania, a town of five hundred population, has four definite cooperative enterprises; and all are successful. Farmers who belong to the grange combine in buying, do their own fire insurance, manage a unique telephone system and own a valuable fair-ground equipment, which they run on original and profitable lines.

The more we study the cooperation movement in America the more we realize that the best criterion of cooperative effort is to be found in the small community. The two things that have delayed cooperation most are big mathematics and glittering generalities. Again and again we have had figures to show the wonderful savings and the greater returns that are to come from getting all the farmers in a hard-and-fast buying and selling agreement. Moreover, we have had the benefits of the plans put before us in fine language and have been lifted from earth by the spirit of brotherhood. But it takes trouble to corral even a small crowd of farmers in a general business proposition, and it is difficult to hit a glittering generality to dollars and cents.

While in Pennsylvania and elsewhere are considering cooperation in the large it is well to visit Centre Hall and see how the farmers of Centre county have worked out their problems. First we are struck by the fact that they had a good leader; and second, that they really cooperated. This is vitally important, for to many people cooperation is simply a new business benefit which will enable the farmer to save on what he buys and make on what he sells, whereas in order to get benefit of cooperation the farmer must himself cooperate.

Just about at the center of Pennsylvania is Centre Hall; and it is also near the center of Centre County. Here the undulating acres stretch away like great billows and look down upon Penn's Valley and other fertile sections are the Nittany Mountains, a part of the Blue Ridge. The population is of German and English origin and very orderly and thrifty in its ways. The little town has five churches, some of them of stone and architecturally noticeable. It is as neat as a pin. It never has rowdiness and over its life breathes a peaceful prosperity. All around is a high and beautiful country with no great riches but with universal well-being. Here, then, are a saving and serious people who have the capacity to deal with the problems of cooperation and who have worked out their success with the materials at hand. They have had a good counselor in Mr. Leonard Rhone, who for eighteen years was master of the Pennsylvania Grange and who has devoted his later life to doing what he can to put into operation the grange forces and principles in his own neighborhood. Under Mr. Rhone's leadership they have shown the real spirit of getting together and enjoying the labors and the results. We find, for example, what this spirit did in the building of the grange hall at Centre Hall. The local grange is Progress, No. 96. It was organized in 1874. It has 180 members and is incorporated. For a long time the members wanted their own hall. The town needed a central auditorium. It was a somnolent, indifferent place without associated interest. The grangers, therefore, ambitiously planned a building with plenty of room for their own needs and a hall that would seat 400 persons. The year 1898 was good for building. They could get lumber at \$12. They did the hauling and made a contract with the planning mill. Every Monday morning they had reports of the work done and the cost of labor. The members brought stone from the mountains, did the excavation and put in the foundations. They hauled the brick. They watched every step of the construction and saved on each detail. They erected a building of first-class material and good workmanship which cost them only \$5000. Today it could not be duplicated for twice that sum. They financed it themselves and paid off the indebtedness gradually, so that there was no burden.

A HALLMARK OF PROGRESS.

The completion of the hall meant a new era in the town. It centered the social and educational life. The ministers joined in the general purposes. The community got the benefit of good lectures, entertainments and pleasant social functions. Recent speakers were such men as Doctor Hunt, dean of the

School of Agriculture at the State College, and Dr. Crosby, of the United States Department of Agriculture. Every two weeks the ladies of the grange have their programs and excellent work is done in home economics. There is a free state library and the building is open every Saturday afternoon for the exchange of books. I went over the building and found it attractive. The hall has a good stage. The second floor has ample rooms for the men and women and the various uses of the grange. There are all the facilities, including a kitchen. Grange members themselves constructed this building, and it is therefore a product of that cooperation which means personal sacrifice and service.

The hall is given precedence because it is the head-quarters of other cooperative work, and because its benefits have spread beyond the grange and become a factor in community progress. It stands as a sign of the other work that the grange is doing.

The grange practices cooperation in buying. It has a purchasing committee of four members who collect from members orders for supplies that are to be bought in bulk, particularly fertilizer, salt, binder twine and fish. The committee is unpaid. Its purchases amount to \$4000 a year or more. As the total losses in all the years have been less than ten dollars it is readily seen that sound business principles prevail. The plan is gradually unfolding.

[Concluded next week.]

Snyder County License Court.

Judge Johnston held license court in Snyder county and refused seven retail licenses. The old stands refused licenses were:

S. S. Bowersox, Centre township.
H. H. Stratiff, Chapman township.
S. D. Bargo, Perry township.

The refused applications for new retail stands were:
Levi Herrold, Jackson township.
Louis E. Young, Monroe township.
Jerome F. Kerstetter, Washington township.

Dr. Eyer Walter, Selinsgrove borough.

N. W. Vanhorn withdrew his application for renewal of his retail privilege in Washington township at the notorious "Summit House."

Hoffer Street Improved.

Hoffer street has been very much improved, in fact, it is in first class condition now, and will remain so for a number of years if it is given any attention whatever. The work was done with a road scraper hauled by a traction engine. The scraper was manipulated by William Lucas and the engine was driven by John Durest with Christ Durest as fireman.

The street from Church street to its terminus at Foreman's grain house was given attention. The work is a very great credit to the men in charge of the machinery. The road bed is well rounded up and is uniform in its grade to the ditches.

With a King split-log drag, Street Commissioner Flory will be able to keep Hoffer street in fine condition.

After School Boards.

The county is being overrun with school book agents who are making a special drive to sell geographies of all grades. On reflection it would appear altogether sensible to postpone the purchasing of new geographies until the industrial matter of the 1910 census could be incorporated. It may be claimed that the geographies now offered for sale contain the late census report, but how can they when the industrial feature of the census is not yet given to the public by the census bureau, and the industrial feature is the one valuable item gathered each census year by book publishers from the reports issued by the census department.

Woodward.

Mrs. Kessler spent Saturday at Millheim.

Mr. Glantz entertained his brother from Green Burr Saturday and Sunday.

Mrs. L. L. Weaver and daughter Maude spent several days last week at Coburn.

Solomon Von Neida, of Laurelton, spent several days last week with his daughter Mrs. Treaster.

Prof. and Mrs. Charles Kreamer, and son Carl, of Aaronsburg are spending a few days at the home of the former's parents, J. L. Kreamer.

Communion services were held in the Evangelical Association Church Sunday evening, conducted by Rev. Wentz, P. E., from Allentown and the pastor Rev. C. D. Caris.

President William Howard Taft, Republican, and ex-President Theodore Roosevelt, Republican, are calling each other liars. That's bad enough, but the worst is that both are speaking the truth.

Remember the Malins and Malones.

Secretary Campbell's Address.

A number of interested citizens gathered in the Reformed church last Friday evening to hear Mr. W. J. Campbell, State Secretary of the Y. M. C. A. County Work, discuss the subject of organizing Centre county. The attendance was not as large as the importance of the subject demanded, still a goodly number were present and listened attentively. It was the first of a series of like meetings to be held throughout the county; and Mr. Campbell was so well satisfied with the result of this meeting and the superficial survey of the county previously made that he gave expression to the opinion that Centre would soon be organized and provided with an expert Secretary; and so join the sixty or more counties of the United States already at work supervising the religious, educational, social, and physical development of boys and young men.

Some of the points made by the speaker are that the Y. M. C. A. is not an organization apart from the church but is simply the church doing a special work. A Y. M. C. A. is a group of christian young men seeking growth in a well-rounded christian character and desiring to help boys and young men live a true life. This particular phase of the association's work is called County Work because the county is the unit. The county employs a secretary who lays his life along side of the young wherever possible helping them to realize the best that is in them by finding and training leaders for groups, and by inspiring them by his own example and enthusiasm. The aim of the county secretary is to find leaders in each community who in a natural way will gather around them a company of boys or young men, and, by taking an interest in the things that they are interested in, shall enable them to learn to appreciate and strive for the things that make for true manhood.

Bible study is the basis of all work. This alone makes the work enduring. Then an effort is made to satisfy the young man's craving for social and intellectual advantages, the want of which in the country takes so many to town. Attention is also given to the physical life, the need of which is manifested by the fact that, while the death rate in the city is decreasing, in the country it is increasing or standing still. A boy's religion is not to be measured by a man's standard. Under the influence of this work boys have been found able to eradicate evils, such as profanity, even when the law and other agencies have failed; and this is proper work for a religious boy. Finally, this agency, being interdenominational, has power to combine the religious forces of a community, which combined are all powerful. It promotes a community consciousness which leads to a community conscience. After the address an informal conference was held and several points elucidated by questions. Mr. Campbell is a pleasant speaker and made a good impression by his courtesy and evident understanding of the subject in which he is deeply interested.

Mr. Malin Misrepresents the Reporter.

In pleading his case for a perpetual electric franchise in Centre Hall borough before the town council at its regular meeting on Friday night, Mr. Malin misrepresented this paper in one or more statements. He charged that the Reporter conveyed the idea in one of its articles that he was seeking for an "exclusive franchise," which is a misrepresentation. What was said on the subject is this:

The proposed franchise ordinance is very brief, but it means very much. The franchise is not exclusive, but would not the citizens of this borough have much difficulty in persuading a second corporation that there was enough business here for competition? If a perpetual franchise were granted to one corporation, would it not oppose the issuing of a charter to a second in the same territory dealing in the same commodity?

The writer's reply to Mr. Malin before the council was that his ordinance as presented, if adopted, would in effect be an exclusive franchise. And so it would regardless of what Mr. Malin states to the contrary. Mr. Malin is not coming to Centre Hall for love, he comes here for business; he is trying to force through the council a measure in the interest of his company; the welfare of the citizens of this town is secondary to him. To date his methods may at least be termed cunning.

Talking about "knocking," what's knocking harder than high taxes without adequate returns for the money when again expended. The last who should accuse of "knocking" are those who through a series of blunders for which there was no excuse have obliged the citizens to lay down good money. The best boosting force any town can have are officers who expend revenue judiciously; exercise good judgment in all matters; and have sense enough to say "no" when occasion demands it.

LETTERS FROM SUBSCRIBERS.

Reporter Subscribers' Correspondent Column—Interesting Communications.

C. D. Runkle, formerly of Centre Hall, who is employed by the Hill Top Ice Company, at Knoxville, in the Pittsburgh district, writes the Reporter thus:

Enclosed you will find one dollar for the Reporter, which is a welcome guest every Friday noon.

Perhaps you would be interested to hear something about Knoxville. We have three daily mail deliveries; three voting precincts; fifteen hundred voters, twelve churches, two fine brown stone school houses with twenty female and six male teachers, a High School. The Y. M. C. A. put up a fine building costing \$100,000. Just a half square from us is King's School of Oratory, which cost \$50,000, and two squares away is the Knoxville family theatre, also quite an expensive building.

I must not forget to say that Hon. John P. Moore, assistant manager of the Knoxville Land Improvement Company, was again nominated in the 45th senatorial district. Senator Moore is well known to Mr. Allison, Mr. Noll, Mr. Kepler, former members of the legislature from your county, as well as to yourself, Capt. G. M. Boal, Landlord Runkle, D. A. Boozer, W. B. Mingle, of your town, whom he met in Centre Hall in company with our mutual friends William Grim, cashier of the Knoxville Land Improvement Company, and William L. Runkle, my son, who is manager of the Hill Top Ice Company.

Borough Council Meets.

The Centre Hall borough council met in regular session on Friday evening, the members present being the president, Daniel Daup; Secretary, W. Frank Bradford, William H. Meyer, John Martz. The principal business before the body was the hearing given to W. L. Malin, representing Centre Hall Electric Light Company, a branch of a public service company doing business in the central part of the state. A month ago Mr. Malin had introduced in the council an ordinance giving the corporation named a perpetual franchise; also a contract calling for a term of ten years street lighting at the rate of \$60 for arc lights and \$24 for forty-candle power incandescent lights. The ordinance was referred to the light committee, with instructions to ascertain information on the subject. The committee reported that nothing had been done to inform themselves on the subject, and as a consequence no action was taken. Mr. Malin suggested a special meeting be called for Saturday evening, 11th instant, at which time he will again appear to urge the passage of an ordinance.

A half dozen or more citizens were present at the meeting, some of whom expressed themselves freely as favoring the passage of the ordinance, and others expressed themselves with considerable earnestness in opposition to the movement.

The councilmen, as individuals, stated that the borough could not afford to light its streets with electricity, and this eliminated every bit of argument in favor of passing the ordinance. Mr. Malin, both in private conversation and before the council, admitted, that the borough could not have afforded to accept the contract presented, but he now proposes to present an ordinance without a contract for lighting the streets attached. This ordinance, he claims, can do the borough no harm.

Mr. Malin and his company are not so much concerned whether or not they have a contract with Centre Hall borough. What they do want is a perpetual franchise, and this in effect means an exclusive privilege to do business in Centre Hall. The ordinance Mr. Malin will present will not ask for an exclusive franchise, but the conditions locally will make it such.

The following bills were ordered paid: W. F. Flory, labor on street, \$10.65; Clymer McClensahan, lights, \$13.00; Briabin & Company, lumber, \$2.62; interest on bond (Mrs. Ruhl) \$18.00.

Privilege was asked by and granted to W. Gross Mingle to sink a cess pool in the alley at his residence.

Everhart-Head.

Samuel E. Everhart, of the Branch, and Miss Grace Reed, of Huntingdon, were married on Saturday morning at the Grayville Presbyterian parsonage, by Rev. R. M. Campbell. The groom is a well-known young farmer, highly regarded by all his acquaintances, and exceptionally industrious. The bride is a handsome and accomplished young woman, and will be able to do her part toward making a home what it should be.

The Reporter extends its best wishes to the young couple, who will be at home at the Branch the latter part of May.

DEATHS.

Early on Thursday morning of last week Martin Luther Rishel, a lifetime resident of Gregg township, and one of its most prominent citizens, passed away. He was confined to bed but a few weeks, yet all through the winter suffered from stomach trouble which for many years attacked him at times.

About 1800 there came to Centre county Henry Rishel, a young man of German descent and probably of German birth. He settled at Green Grove, near Penn Hall, where he purchased one hundred and thirty acres, the farm now familiarly known as the Gregg Burrell farm. In 1847 he passed away, his remains being buried in the Union cemetery, Farmers Mills.

His son Col. John Rishel, father of the gentleman whose name opens this sketch, was born at Penn Hall, in 1805, and at the age of sixteen years accompanied his father to the Rishel homestead, near Farmers Mills. He erected the buildings on the homestead named, and also added eighty acres to the farm. He was elected county commissioner twice—from 1849 to 1855—and was a justice of the peace for a little over thirty-one years, and at the time of his death, in 1878, was jury commissioner. He was also a prominent figure in the Lutheran church, and donated the ground on which the Union church now stands. His first wife was Rachel Reynolds, and his second wife was Catharine Homan, who died in 1897, aged eighty-nine years. The children born to this union were these: Samuel, Martin Luther; and Rosetta, wife of Prof. E. F. Smith, of Freeport, Illinois, the only survivor of the family.

Deceased was a son of Col. John Rishel and was born on the old homestead near Farmers Mills on January 3rd, 1850, hence was sixty-two years, three months and twenty-nine days old. Like all boys on the farm his schooling was confined to from two to three months a year, but his thirst for knowledge was so great that he persisted in his studies until he was twenty-one years of age. At that age he went into partnership with his father in farming the Rishel homestead and two years later he rented the same. When his father died and the homestead had to be sold to settle up the estate Mr. Rishel bought one hundred and twelve acres of it and has made that his home ever since. Mr. Rishel was not only a progressive and successful farmer but a man who took an active interest in everything pertaining to the welfare of the community in which he lived. He was a Democrat in politics and for years one of the leaders in Gregg township. As evidence of the confidence the people of Gregg township had in him is the fact that he filled the office of justice of the peace for the past consecutive twenty-seven years, and was always regarded one of the fairest men in the county. He was a member of the Evangelical Lutheran church of Farmers Mills and during his long term of membership filled every church office. He was the type of a man that any community can ill afford to lose and he will be greatly missed by the church and the public at large.

On January 12th, 1871, he was united in marriage to Miss Catharine A. Houtz, a daughter of Edward and Catharine Houtz, who survives with five children, namely: John E., of Tusseyville; William F., at home; Mrs. Elizabeth J. Bradford, of Centre Hall; Mrs. Carrie E. Sinkabine, of Penn Hall; and Miss Rosa Irene, at home, and sixteen grandchildren; also the sister named above, who came east three weeks ago and was with her brother during his last illness.

Funeral services were held at his late home near Farmers Mills on Monday morning by his pastor, Rev. F. W. Barry, of Centre Hall, after which burial was made in the Union cemetery at Farmers Mills.

After thinking the matter over seriously, Mr. Citizen, don't you think Mr. Malin rather insistent on the electric light ordinance? Do you think that any stranger ought to present a matter in which he is personally interested to the council and insist on action on the question in his presence? Don't you think, Mr. Citizen, that common courtesy would demand that Mr. Malin present his proposition and then retire and give the council an opportunity to discuss the matter in a free easy way. Really, there is room for objection to the mild form of coercion practiced by Mr. Malin in the past, although he pretends to be deeply interested in the local affairs of the borough. It is safe to say that his interests here will be much greater in case his ends are accomplished according to his present plans.

Don't be either a clam, or a tool.

TOWN AND COUNTY NEWS.

HAPPENINGS OF LOCAL INTEREST FROM ALL PARTS.

Grass fields have a very promising appearance.

A regular meeting of Progress Grange will be held Saturday afternoon.

Read the advertisement in this issue telling of the Odenkirk Store, Centre Hall.

The Patrons Rural Telephone Company will meet to-day (Thursday) in the Grand Jury room, Bellefonte.

The Luther League, at 6:30 o'clock, Sunday evening, will have a program in keeping with the day—Mother's day.

Unclaimed letters in Centre Hall postoffice May 1st, 1912: Rev. S. L. Boston, John D. Curry, Martin Bartley, J. R. Smith, James Smith.

Sunday night there was a light rain, and Monday morning a brisk thunder shower came along. Vegetation is doing its best to cover the earth.

William R. From, road commissioner in Millburg, is also using the road scraper to improve the condition of the less important streets in that town.

Mr. and Mrs. Perry H. Luse, of Centre Hall, and Mr. and Mrs. I. J. Zabler, of Spring Mills, attended the funeral of Mrs. James Martin. Interment was made at Jacksonsville.

Rev. M. D. Geesey, of Aaronsburg, was thrown from a vehicle and narrowly escaped serious injury. The horse he was driving was frightened by an auto car, and ran away after upsetting the vehicle he was hitched to.

Poplar and box alder are two species of trees that ought not to be planted in towns or near buildings. In many boroughs and cities the authorities forbid the planting of these trees, and in many municipalities the authorities are ordering their destruction.

Rev. R. Raymond Jones, on Saturday evening, was seized with acute indigestion and for several hours was very seriously ill. His Sunday appointments on the Reformed charge could not be filled. He has now practically recovered.

Charles Burris, farmer, west of Centre Hall, was surprised the other morning on seeing an ash pile where the evening before stood a brooder with some thirty chicks in it. How it happened, he does not know, but the conditions the next morning proved conclusively that the brooder took fire and with its contents was consumed.

John B. Ream, one of the oldest residents in Gregg township, was a caller at this office on Thursday. Mr. Ream is in his eighty-third year, and is remarkably well preserved, physically and mentally. He expressed great regret over the death of M. L. Rishel, who passed away on that morning, declaring he had been a useful citizen all his life in that community.

The new arrangement of matter in the Millburg Telegraph has greatly improved the general appearance of that paper. The first page is devoted to news, exclusively to news, and that is right. A newspaper that really fills its mission need not put its advertisements on the first page so that they may be seen. Make your paper new, and the reader will read every page each week.

Union county experienced a severe storm recently. A number of buildings were unroofed, stables shattered, etc. Irvin Showalter, a huckster, from Glen Iron, was caught in the storm. He was driving two horses hitched to a heavy covered wagon. The storm turned the vehicle over, and it was only because the driver jumped clear of the wagon that no harm was done him, for the team ran away.

The Millheim Journal says this: A petition is being circulated by the borough council for the erection of a county bridge over Elk creek, on the Peters road, in North Millheim. The old bridge now occupying the site, is unsafe for travel and must be replaced by an entirely new structure. Elk creek, at that place, is very wide and will take a long bridge that will be too expensive for the borough authorities to pay for.

A Ford five-passenger car was delivered to C. D. Bartholomew and sister, Miss Helen Bartholomew, or rather the car was brought here by Miss Bartholomew herself on Saturday afternoon, having mastered the machine in the forenoon in Millheim sufficiently to make the trip. The car was purchased from C. H. Breen & Company, Millheim, who have put out a large number of machines during the past few years. This is the third machine they sold in Centre Hall, the first purchasers being Boozer and Fetteroff, livermen, and the second, Dr. J. V. Foster.