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THE GRANGE MOVEMENT.

The Parcel Post Plan Which the Grange Favors.

It is only fair to say that of late years the leaders of the grange movement have been farsighted and conservative. They have been thoroughly convinced of the righteousness of any course before they have espoused it; but, once so convinced, they have brought all the force of a pulsant organization to bear upon the subject in hand and in matters of legislation have been most notably successful. The rural free mail delivery system, the denatured alcohol law, to mention no others, are achievements made possible very largely by grange influence and grange effort.

But there are other problems at hand which the leaders of the Order believe to be within their province to solve or at least to lend a hand in their solution. One of these is the parcel post question. The position of the grange on this subject is this: It eliminates the passenger idea entirely and proposes the establishment of a minimum weight parcel post, both general and rural, to begin with a practical minimum, increasing the package weight by easy and experimental stages until as perfect a system as may be is obtained. For a general parcel post they would make the maximum weight eleven pounds, on which the rate would be 25 cents from any postoffice to any postoffice in the United States. This rate and weight are reached by easy gradation, thus: Three ounces and under, 1 cent; over three ounces and under six, 2 cents; over six ounces and under nine, 3 cents; over nine ounces and under twelve, 4 cents; over twelve ounces and under one pound, 5 cents, and 2 cents for each additional pound or fraction thereof. In the rural parcels post they advocate a rate of 1 cent for one pound or less and 1 cent for each additional two pounds up to a maximum of eleven pounds. I have given these details inasmuch as they are not generally understood either by grangers or others.—J. W. D. in Tribune-Farmer.

GRANGE NATIONAL BANKS.

Grange National Bankers' Association of America Recently Organized.

On Oct. 12 a convention was held at Williamsport, Pa., which is the first of its kind and deserves more than casual attention. It was the meeting for the organization of what has been styled as the Grange National Bankers' Association of America. Its object is to extend the system of grange national banks which has been so successful in Pennsylvania to other states in the Union where the grange is organized. There are now fourteen grange banks in Pennsylvania, and they sent seventy-five representatives to the Williamsport meeting. John C. McHenry of Benton was elected president of the association and E. R. Dorsett of Mansfield was elected secretary.

Mr. McHenry said that thus far they have in fourteen banks a total number of 2,100 stockholders, 185 directors and officers, with \$962,000 of money invested, and in every instance the holding control of these organizations lies entirely with grange patrons. He also remarked that the movement is not antagonistic to other banking institutions, and that this is true is shown from the fact that while the deposits have exceeded their expectations yet the older banks have likewise met with a continuous growth in deposits. This may seem strange, but it seems to indicate, says the Financial Age, that the farming community had been averse to depositing money in banks and has been hoarding it in different places. If the grange bank movement succeeds in coaxing these funds from their hiding places a benefit national in its character will be accomplished.

Massachusetts Auto Laws.

At the annual meeting of the Massachusetts state grange to be held at Pittsfield in December the automobile laws of the state will be up for discussion. Senator Morse of Belchertown, a member of the grange, believes that there is a great deal of misunderstanding between those who ride in autos and the farmers, and he proposes that the grange appoint a committee of ten or twelve to confer with a like committee from the State Automobile association and see if some form of law satisfactory to both can be drawn up, and if this can be done a petition will be presented to the Massachusetts legislature in January asking for legislation. Senator Morse thinks there should be no difficulty in getting a law enacted that will be satisfactory to both if the parties can unite in their views as to what should be done.

NATIONAL GRANGE.

Annual Address of Worthy Master Escheider—Total Assets of the Organization Now Amount to \$102,921. In his address to the national grange at its opening session in Hartford, Conn., on Nov. 13 National Master N. J. Escheider said that the membership of the grange throughout the country has made a net increase of 8 per cent for the past year, which is larger than for over thirty years past. The financial condition of the Order is good. The total assets of the national grange a year ago were \$94,071.44 and on Oct. 1, 1907, \$102,921.44, which is a net gain of \$8,249.50. Although the work of organization has been more than usually successful, the Order should be still further built up in the states of the central west.

Speaking of the importance of agriculture, the national master said that the whole total volume of the crops may be slightly less than the crops of 1906, but their cash farm value will be greater. The farm products in their original form or in the form of cattle, sheep, hogs and horses have overflowed the great granaries, clogged transportation facilities and brought gold from foreign countries. These facts warrant the statement that agriculture is not only the great industry of the country, but the most important in the nation's industrial prosperity. Agriculture prospers not because other industries prosper, but other industries prosper because agriculture prospers. The promotion of agriculture embodies the highest type of statesmanship. It is eminently proper to inquire the effect of all proposed public policies upon agriculture when under consideration in any legislative body.

On the subject of grange mutual life insurance the worthy master had this to say: "There has been a demand for several years for some form of fraternal life insurance within the organization to cover the national field as local companies cover certain states. Sound, reliable, full legal reserve life insurance furnished by a society and controlled by its own members, operated on the fraternal system, with the officers directly responsible to the members, is the foundation to build upon. What is wanted is the best at the cheapest price—not cheap life insurance, but good life insurance cheap." Concerning the publication of the national grange paper the speaker remarked that the executive committee had made arrangements for the publication of a weekly journal upon terms acceptable to the masters of the state granges. He emphasized the fact that its publication will not come in competition with agricultural papers. Its editorial policy will be dictated solely by a desire to promote the organization. It is to be the official organ of the grange.

Of the denatured alcohol law, which took effect Jan. 1, 1907, the national master said that the comparatively small consumption of denatured alcohol during the past six months had been chiefly due to the fact that our manufacturers were not ready to furnish the alcohol using apparatus, such as stores, lamps, etc. None being on sale in this country, there was no demand for the alcohol. The question of utilizing alcohol as a fuel for motor vehicles, boats and farm engines is engaging the attention of manufacturers, and it is believed that this alcohol will be made available for use as a motor fuel in the near future.

On federal aid for the improvement of public highways the speaker said that the grange had inaugurated a campaign of education having for its object the enactment of legislation by congress providing for a federal appropriation of \$50,000,000, to be divided into five annual appropriations of \$10,000,000 each, to be expended for the improvement of public highways. The legislative committee has given close attention to this work and believes that the time has arrived when the movement should be prosecuted vigorously with the view of securing legislation at the present session of congress.

On trusts and the tariff it was remarked that the present tariff rates on articles produced by trusts are much higher than is necessary to cover the difference in labor cost as between home and foreign manufacturers and that material reductions could be made on the duty of such articles and amply provide for liberal wages compared with the wages abroad. If these criticisms are well founded there would seem to be good reasons for legislation that will correct the evident defects on the present tariff schedules without injuriously affecting our agricultural or manufacturing industries. These facts can best be secured through a non-partisan tariff commission whose duty it shall be to examine carefully into all phases of the subject. This commission should include representatives of the agricultural, labor, manufacturing, transportation and commercial interests.

On the parcel post question the national master remarked that the postal reform had received a new impetus within the past few months, owing to the fact that it had a powerful advocate in the new postmaster general, Mr. Meyer, who had indicated what all intents and purposes is the grange plan and who is using his influence to arouse public interest in its support. He advised an active campaign in congress on this subject. The address also favored postal savings banks, currency reform and pure food legislation. Pennsylvania granges went to the national grange in special cars, starting from Harrisburg. They spent a night in New York on the way. The initial number of the national grange organ was a very creditable one. J. W. DARBOW.

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