

wished to give in bedding and clothing, and we managed so much better by being organized. By having this timid little woman as a member of our club, we had learned to love her and felt more responsible for her welfare, and probably did more than we otherwise would have done.

We had a house cleaning day this spring, and gave the school building a general clean-up. Our next meeting is to quilt a beautiful patch-work quilt that we pieced for another sweet friend who was reared in the community and also lost her household goods by fire.

Of our 19 members all have telephones except one, also rural mail delivery. What community can beat us for up-to-date conveniences? Let every community have a United Club for the good of all. "United we stand, divided we fall."

MRS. J. Z. GREEN, Sec'y,
United Farm Women of Gilboa Community,
Marshallville, N. C.

THE PLEASANT VALLEY PLAN OF DIRECT MARKETING

The Inspiring Story of How a Few Determined Farm Women Found a Market for Their Goods

OUR church was in debt. Our pastor had persuaded us to make an effort to repair the building, and our building committee had put on a new roof and made other changes, before collecting funds necessary to pay for these improvements. About half the sum needed was easily raised, but the balance they could not get. "See what you women can do," suggested the building committee.

Our women met for deliberation. "Suppose we give an ice cream supper," proposed one. "Better organize first, so that it will be someone's business to take charge of the money we make," suggested another.

"If we only had a leader," we said with a sigh, as we had been saying and sighing for years.

Finally: "Lizzie, you will have to take the lead," the rest insisted.

"I can not meet with you regularly," I reminded them.

"We will come to you," they promised. It was in this way and in this spirit that our Pleasant Valley Ladies' Aid Society was organized July 16, 1909. Fourteen names were enrolled, ten members of our church, two dwellers in our neighborhood, and two city friends who were visiting us. So, at that first meeting, we linked church and community interests, and established connections between rural and urban life—a good beginning, as we realized later. We agreed to meet every week, and to pay monthly dues of 10 cents each. Then we planned an ice cream supper. Two weeks later we turned over \$25 to our building committee.

I can not in this paper give an account of the various activities that developed through our organized efforts to serve our church and community. With our help, the building committee finally paid the debt in full; but while we were discharging this obligation, regular collections were falling behind. The stewards were in straits, and our society was asked to assume the responsibility for conference collections—more constructive work for "the female of the species."

So we cultivated neighborliness, and studied our community's needs and resources from the woman's point of view. Naturally our desire to serve suggested: "Better butter and eggs for the markets, and better markets for the butter and eggs."

Four of us sold butter in Pulaski, 8 miles away, at 15 cents to 25 cents in winter, and 10 cents and 20 cents in summer. Most of our women sold their surplus butter to the peddlers at 8 cents to 15 cents the year round. In hot weather, women often made soap of their butter. Not a woman of us knew how to send her little pat of

LIGHTENING THE FARM WOMAN'S WORK

WE CAN greatly lessen the work in the house by doing away with the unnecessary part of it. For example, where there are no modern conveniences in the home, and where the water has to be brought from a well, have you ever taken the trouble to measure the distance from the well to the kitchen, and multiply that by two, and that by the number of trips the wife probably makes in a day, and that by the number of days in the year? You would probably be amazed at the number of miles she has traveled in the year, just to bring water to the house. You will then probably seriously consider whether you had not better put in a water system in the house, as well as for the live stock.

Is the house so planned that she can do the work which the wife or some one else must do, with the minimum of steps, the minimum of stooping, and the minimum of lifting? Is it not possible to run the washing machine by some kind of power; or is it possible to form a coöperative laundry in connection with your creamery? If the farmer is so situated that he can have electricity, why not an electric washing machine, an electric flat-iron, and a vacuum sweeper?

I know as well as a man can how wearying is some women's work. I know a good deal about the care of children, for I have had a good deal to do with them in my time. But even drudgery is better than no work at all, and no home. No amount of care of children in sickness and in health compares with the desolation of the childless home. I saw one childless woman the past summer, who, to put in her time, not only kept her house so immaculately clean that it was uncomfortable, but actually swept the street in front of her house every morning in the year! Work is often wearisome, but the weariness of it is nothing compared to the weariness of the man or woman who has nothing to do, no one to work for or to love.—Uncle Henry in Wallace's Farmer.

butter to market in good shape in summer.

First we went to work to learn how to make better butter, working as individuals, neighbor talking with neighbor, exchanging ideas, using each other's butter when our cows failed in milk. We introduced butter making as a subject for study and discussions at society meetings, using Farmers' Bulletin 241 as our textbook. Realizing that no one of us knew it all, we worked and studied together, each giving and receiving suggestions, every one a leader and a follower, all advancing step by step, until we reached the city market with our own and our neighbor's better butter and eggs. It took time to work out our purpose, and not all of our neighbors would join us; but by the first of April, 1913, we had engagements in St. Louis, Nashville, Memphis, and Montgomery, and were shipping an average of 100 dozen eggs a week.

We worked out plans for shipping in the same spirit that we had established leadership in the beginning. "I could pack the butter and eggs, if someone could deliver the cases at the express office," I said.

"I could take them to the express office, if someone would keep my baby while I was gone," offered another.

"I will take care of the baby," promised her neighbor.

The tenant woman who offered her services to deliver the packages at the express office, two miles away, was strong of muscle. She owned a rattle-trap buggy, and a blind horse that was idle much of the time. When her buggy collapsed a few months later, another that had been set aside by its owner was donated to the butter and egg business. Each gave freely of what she had to offer—time, talent, training, physical strength, or material resources.

And so, because we had a worthwhile purpose, coöperative spirit, and composite leadership, we worked out our object lesson—no great achievement, but a suggestive example. This, in brief, is the story of the origin of our society, and the beginning of our direct marketing. We have never had any fixed plans, only a fixed purpose to serve our church and our community. Later, our purpose to serve extended to our customers. Our plans have varied to meet conditions at both ends of the line.

It is easy to pack and ship eggs; but until we learned about butter cartons, we did not know how we were going to send butter to our various customers that first summer. We were planning to break most of

our butter engagements, and ship all of the butter to the nearest city, using the refrigerator box mentioned in the bulletin.

While trying to find a refrigerator box, we found the paraffined butter carton; and the carton linked us up with customers far and near. (Our society used and distributed 15,000 of these useful little containers last year.) After realizing the possibilities of the paraffined butter carton, we procured rectangular butter moulds, and began to pack the butter in the top of the egg crates. Before the summer of 1913, we sent butter in tin buckets altogether. We still use buckets for small orders, but nearly every package we send out carries both eggs and butter. Every week last summer, I sent a St. Louis customer three dozen eggs and two pounds of butter packed together in a three-gallon tin bucket. Last winter the bucket carried butter, eggs, and sausage. The sausage was packed in parchment-lined butter cartons.

For orders calling for six to nine dozen eggs and four to eight pounds of butter, we use the Farmer's Friend egg case of twelve dozen capacity. But for large shipments to our distributors, we use the 30-dozen egg crates, buying them from local produce dealers. Here are returns from a shipment to Nashville, a distance of 71 miles:

24 dozen eggs at 40c	\$9.60
16 pounds butter at 35c	5.60
Total	\$15.20
Commission of 10 per cent	1.52
Express on package35
Express on empty crate10
	1.97
Net proceeds	\$13.33

The 16 pounds went in the top of the egg package. By leaving out two layer of eggs and standing the prints on end, the crate will carry 10 dozen eggs with 32 pounds of butter.

The city demand for our commodities was an eye-opener. We sold over \$2,000 worth of butter and eggs the first year. We had calls for chickens, turkeys, ducks, dried fruits, fruits for preserving, hams, sausage, cottage cheese, and cracklings—too big a business for our packers, not to mention the old buggy, and the blind horse.

Yes, there was rapid development at both ends of the line.

"If I thought you women could keep this thing going, I would buy another cow—a Jersey," said one of our farmers. And he bought a Jersey cow. His neighbors bought cows. One man bought a herd. Separators refrigerators and silos are coming into our valley.

ELIZABETH D. ABERNATHY,
Pulaski, Tenn.

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