

EDUCATION, COÖPERATION, LEGISLATION

(1) Education to Develop Power, (2) Coöperation to Multiply It, and (3) Legislation and Good Government to Promote Equal Rights and Human Progress—Plain Talk About Men, Measures and Movements Involved

By CLARENCE POE

Farming: Industry, Business, Profession

PEOPLE used to think of farming only as an industry. Lately they are coming to realize the truth that farming is really (1) an industry, (2) a business, (3) a profession.

An **industry** is an occupation requiring manual effort or labor.

A **business** is an occupation requiring knowledge of buying and selling—financial transactions.

A **profession** is an occupation requiring technical skill and knowledge—scientific training.

The trouble with us heretofore has been that we haven't laid enough emphasis on the two last-mentioned phases of agricultural effort. Too many of us have thought of farming as an occupation in which only muscular effort counted, the essentials to success being summed up by Josh Billings in the famous lines:

"He who by farming would git rich
Must rake and hoe and dig and sich
Work hard all day, sleep hard all nite,
Save every cent and not git tite."

The Real Nobility of Farming

FORTUNATELY, however, we are at last beginning to get a clearer understanding of the real situation. We are beginning to see that while farming is an **industry**—just as is digging coal in a mine, or cutting trees in a forest, or shoveling fuel into an engine, or keeping a piece of machinery going in a factory—yet farming is very much more than this. The miner, fireman, or factory operative has nothing to do with the **business** side of his industry; all the purchase of supplies and all the big tasks of selling the product profitably are foreign to him. Moreover, for the miner or factory operative there is absolutely nothing in his work to make it a **profession**. It does not call for scientific knowledge and training such as the successful farmer requires in greater or less degree in a dozen branches—the care and management of soils; the feeding and breeding of plants and animals; the effects of various processes of fertilization, cultivation, rotation; methods of combating plant and animal diseases, and a thousand other problems offering scope for knowledge of chemistry, biology, physiology, botany, and a dozen other sciences.

This is why farming is a nobler occupation, an occupation better calculated to develop ability, character, and all-round efficiency, than any other in which any great portion of the human race is engaged.

The Almighty gave man both brain and brawn, both mind and muscle, and it is to be doubted whether any occupation can develop the ideal man which does not call both into play. The great Russian philosopher, Tolstoi, was probably right in insisting that even a professional man should do enough manual labor to provide food for his body—or its muscular equivalent. And on the other hand, any occupation which is only a series of mechanical, muscular operations will result disastrously; one's mental powers failing to meet the challenge of problem after problem, fall into atrophy from disuse. Only recently a close student of the laborers in a certain great industry lamented to us the vacancy of mind characterizing the boys and girls, the work having nothing in it to call for the exercise of intelligence.

Some Questions to Ask Yourself

THE pity of it is, however, that in spite of the nobility with which the Almighty has ennobled agriculture by nature, yet the wrong sort of man, the wrong sort of farmer, may rob it of its nobility. He can probably blunder along somehow and keep soul and body together working at farming only as an **industry**—ignoring the scientific knowledge which exalts it into a **profession**, and ignoring the opportunities for commercial ability which make farming also a **business**.

Consequently, what we are after this week is to get every Progressive Farmer subscriber to stop and ask himself the following questions:

"Am I living up to my opportunities? Am I living up to the excellence of the calling wherewith I am called? While I am working diligently with my hands, as I should, am I bringing to bear on my business scientific and technical knowledge such as have made law and medicine honored as professions? And in the next place, am I bringing genuine business ability into play in my work? That is to say, do I seek not merely to save money and to make good bargains, but to adopt and utilize the modern, up-to-date progressive business methods that win profits for all lines of systematically-conducted city business?"

"In other words, am I developing my three-fold powers as (1) an industrial worker, (2) as a user of professional or scientific knowledge, and (3) as a business man?"

Suppose Each Factory Operative Marketed His Own Product

JUST in so far as any farmer seeks to acquire and use scientific knowledge about his work—whether through an agricultural college, through reliable farm papers and bulletins, or through institutes and demonstration agents—just in so far as that farmer making his work a profession and solving this phase of our problem.

What we wish especially to emphasize this week, however, is the importance of making the farmer a business man, especially in the matter of marketing.

What then is the first big fact the farmer must see and acknowledge if he is to win success as a business man? It is that if he is to market his products profitably he must sell them collectively or coöperatively.

What would happen if each operative in a cotton factory had to go out and sell separately and independently the little output of cloth woven by himself and his family?

What would happen if each individual laborer in a coal mine marketed the coal mined by him?

What would happen if each man who cuts trees in a forest had to market the lumber from the trees he cut?

What would happen if each employee of the American Tobacco Company sold independently the tobacco manufactured by him?

Organize a Marketing Association Now

WE CAN all imagine what the results would be if each individual laborer in all the enterprises just mentioned were called on to market the product of his own hands. We all understand how wasteful and unsatisfactory such a system would be and how necessary it is in all these enterprises to have what is virtually a "marketing association" to sell the product of a large group of individual laborers. Such a system secures (1) greater ability in marketing the product, and (2) better grading and handling of the product.

Well, then, the question arises, isn't it just as necessary for individual farmers to get out of the habit of every man marketing his own product? Isn't it just as necessary for them to organize so as to get the benefits (1) of having marketing experts, and (2) of having products graded and handled in accordance with the most modern commercial methods?

This does not mean at all that the farmer would lose the business ability required in his occupation, and surrender this side of his work to others, as hired laborers in other industries have to do. What it means is that farmers would pool or combine their business ability, the coöperative associations, in fact, offering opportunities for the exercise of a much higher order of business enterprise than is offered by the individual farmer's marketing problems.

Right now before crops are planted farmers everywhere ought to mature plans for marketing this year's products more wisely than ever before. And if you, Brother Subscriber, if you can't get fifty or a hundred farmers to unite with you in forming a marketing association, resolve to start out anyhow by doing your marketing this year in coöperation with a dozen or even a half dozen kinsfolk, friends, and neighbors. The idea will grow.

Success Through Coöperative Selling

BEFORE us as we write, for example, are a bunch of letters and clippings showing how the idea of coöperative marketing is spreading. From Kleberg County, Texas, County Demonstration Agent Kloppenburg writes of success in having farmers sell hogs together:

"In September last I sent a circular letter to every farmer in the county asking them to notify me whenever they have hogs ready for market. I make a memorandum of these notices and whenever I have 90 hogs on my list, I notify the farmers to bring them in on a certain day. A day before shipment I telegraph to Fort Worth and Houston for prices. The hogs are weighed before loading and the amount of money received for the shipment is divided by the total weight in Kingsville and Riviera, thus finding the amount due to each

individual shipper. I make a statement showing the number of hogs, their weights, and the net returns due to each farmer, attach the draft from the packing house and turn all papers over to the banker for settlement. This has given entire satisfaction to all concerned."

Commendable enterprise in marketing plans is shown by Cumberland County, N. C., farmers as is shown by this dispatch from Fayetteville, March 5th:

"Preliminary steps toward the formation of a farmers' coöperative marketing association were taken today when a number of the most progressive men in the county met here. An organization committee was named, composed of eighteen hustling farmers and truckers, to canvass the county and enroll the farmers."

The Mississippi Extension Service contributes this gratifying piece of news:

"Coöperative marketing in Mississippi is rapidly assuming large proportions. Since July 1, 1915, a total of 77 coöperative clubs and associations have been organized. Coöperation and organization is making it possible for the small farmer to find a market for produce which formerly could not be sold, since large quantities could not be obtained. Coöperative creameries in Mississippi last year distributed half a million dollars to the farmers of this state. The coöperative sale of sweet potatoes has increased to three or four hundred cars from 25 to 30 points in South Mississippi while this season 200 cars are being stored in kilns and 200 to 300 cars will be canned. From 15 to 20 points in Mississippi cars of Irish potatoes are being shipped. Coöperative clubs for selling hay, molasses, peanuts, oats, corn, peas, cattle, hogs, poultry, and other farm products are being organized in all parts of the state."

Better Grading, Packing and Advertising

BETTER grading of products is one of the good results of marketing associations, and on this point the Charlotte Observer reports:

"It is estimated conservatively that the installation of the cotton grader's office here resulted in an increase in price of \$1 per bale for each sample submitted and sold upon the Charlotte market."

On this point of cotton grading, too, a Progressive Farmer reader in a long-staple section says one cotton-buying firm on his market is said to have made \$44,000 on 5,000 bales of long staple. He adds: "I shipped five bales 40 miles from my local market and cleared \$26 after paying freight."

Other good illustrations of the need for marketing reforms are given in a clipping now before us from the Carthage News, as follows: One farmer recently went into Carthage with a dozen eggs for two neighbors. The clean dozen brought 30 cents; the soiled dozen only 25—a loss of 16⅔ per cent due to poor handling. Good butter brings 25 cents in Carthage, but poor butter only 15 cents—a loss of 40 per cent in price. Furthermore, Western corn, properly sacked, weighed and graded, brings a good price, but local farmers loading up a lot of mixed-graded ear corn in bulk find a poor sale for it. And so on and so on.

In every line of farm produce the same principle applies; **profits are to be had only by selling in quantities, and grading and packing to suit market requirements.** Recently a farmer asked one of our newspaper friends in Washington, D. C., to find him a market for some fat hens, and the newspaper man sought out a big city dealer, but with no success. "I cannot handle Southern chickens," said the merchant. "The people down there do not know how to prepare them for the market. I buy all my hens in New Jersey. I have to pay more but what I get suits my select trade."

On the other hand, as our newspaper friend went on to point out, farmers' marketing associations from this farmer's own section are breaking into the Washington market—selling creamery butter, apples properly packed and graded, and eggs dated and guaranteed. These associations are learning, as an individual is not likely to learn, how to grade and market. They are also learning how to advertise—learning that printer's ink pays the farmer with something to sell just as it pays the city man with something to sell. Mr. J. Z. Green's article in our March 4 issue telling "How Coöperative Advertising Sold 10,000 Pounds of Butter" for farmers in his neighborhood is a case in point.

Let us reiterate in conclusion that it is up to our farmers to realize that they are at once laborers, business men, and professional men, and that as business men they must realize that the old system of each man selling his own product is almost as unprofitable in agriculture as in manufacturing. Everywhere farmers should get busy now organizing marketing associations to handle all this year's products.