

## 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

### Packing Houses or Coöperative Shipping Associations

FARMERS as a rule are more ready to take stock in some big so-called "coöperative" enterprise in some city than they are to join with neighbors in working out genuine coöperation right at home. And yet experience has shown that local coöperation is safest and most profitable, and that only through local coöperation do farmers develop the social qualities—comradeship, brotherhood, and ability to "pull together"—that are no less important than financial profits.

The tendency to go off after big things and neglect opportunities right at home is illustrated by a subject that deserves attention in this "Livestock Special" of The Progressive Farmer. We refer to the general interest over the South in the packing-house proposition, and the relatively little attention given to the fundamental matter of coöperative livestock shipping associations.

Dr. Butler has more than once warned Progressive Farmer readers against establishing packing plants where the four essentials to success are lacking, namely: (1) large capital; (2) an ample supply of livestock within reasonable distance; (3) good business management; and (4) favorable freight rates. Wallace's Farmer, published in the heart of the meat-growing section of the United States, takes the same view and warns Western farmers against investments in such new enterprises. We quote from its latest issue:

"A number of farmers' packing plants have been organized in the past. At the present time we do not happen to know of any which have achieved a material success. We do know of a number which have failed. Meat packing is a big business of itself. In addition to a costly plant, it requires a very heavy working capital, because cash must be paid for the animals purchased, and the product must be carried until it can be marketed. It also requires management of the highest order, because the profits depend upon the utmost economy of manufacture and the utilization of the by-products."

### Increasing Interest in Coöperative Livestock Marketing

WE BELIEVE the opinion of most experts in livestock subjects was voiced by Dr. Butler when he said in our issue of October 14:

"In those communities where packing houses have been built and failed, if one-half the money lost in these unsuccessful ventures had been devoted to organizing shipping clubs for local buying and shipping to markets already established, the results would have been infinitely better for the development of the livestock industry."

And while we have said that it is easier to arouse interest in some proposition where the farmer simply puts in his money and doesn't have to worry about really working with "the other fellow" at home, we must add that interest in coöperative marketing of livestock is increasing in gratifying fashion all over the South. Only a few days ago a farmer in our office was speaking enthusiastically of the good results he and his neighbors had obtained by shipping their hogs together in carload lots. In Mississippi and South Carolina, the extension forces seem to have been especially active in promoting coöperative marketing of livestock, and in South Carolina we hope that even the two new packing houses will succeed because so well dove-tailed in with other marketing plans by the extension forces of the state.

### Some Examples of Coöperative Hog Marketing

WE CAN probably best indicate how coöperative marketing works by giving some actual instances. Let us take two from Mississippi. In one case recently reported 15 farm-

ers brought in 79 hogs. Market Agent Patterson divided the hogs into three lots as follows: Class No. 1, 175 pounds and up; No. 2, 140 to 175 pounds; No. 3, 110 to 140 pounds. The three classes were indicated by different colored marking paint and otherwise separated, and brought the following prices, live weight: No. 1, 10½ cents; No. 2, 8 3-10 cents; No. 3, 8 cents. The report adds:

"When each farmer's hogs were weighed and classed at the shipping point, he was given a receipt for the number of pounds in each class delivered. A copy of this receipt was kept by the local bank, in whose name the shipment was made, and on the following Wednesday the farmer-shippers received pay for their hogs."

And our second story is even more explicit. Saturday, April 22, was "Hog Shipping Day" at Yazoo City, and Market Agent Patterson was there. Seventy farmers had started with their hogs the night before or early Saturday morning, and by the hour named, 103 wagons were drawn up with 425 hogs inside. The dispatch continues:

"These hogs were weighed Friday morning, classed according to quality and size, and each farmer given a receipt for the number of pounds of hogs, live weight, of each class, he brought. Four cars were shipped to Natchez and sold to the packing house at approximately the following prices net: Good heavy corn-finished hogs, 200 pounds and up, \$8.60 a hundredweight; medium corn-finished hogs, 150 to 200 pounds, \$8.35; light weights, corn-finished, 125 to 150 pounds, \$7.85. A car of feeders, 50 to 125 pounds, was sold to a stockman at 6½ to 7½ cents."

"Four days after the shipment was made the farmer-shippers received returns from their hogs and were well satisfied that the coöperative shipment was a thorough success. They could have sold to local buyers and carried the money home with them, but they chose to ship to Natchez and get a better price. Twelve cars of hogs have been shipped coöperatively from Yazoo City in the last three months and the industry promises to grow rapidly."

Of course, hog prices have advanced notably in recent months, and the prices given in the foregoing reports are not up to date. We include these old prices in our story simply to show the classifications observed.

Finally, we should like to urge every interested reader to write the United States Department of Agriculture, Washington, D. C., and ask for a free copy of Farmers' Bulletin No. 718, "Coöperative Livestock Shipping Associations." It gives invaluable information about every phase of this subject.

### Making a Community Famous for One Particular Breed

THERE is one other form of coöperation that should be emphasized in this "Livestock Special," and that is having the farmers of a community or county agree as nearly as possible on one breed of hogs, one breed of beef cattle, and one breed of dairy cattle. In many parts of South Carolina, county livestock associations have officially selected breeds in this way. Of course, it is easier to do this where the livestock industry is relatively new, and for this reason the subject cannot have attention too soon. In discussing this matter recently, the Breeders' Gazette said:

"In too many sections we have little herds of various breeds in close proximity, and none of them in position to lead a helping hand to the other by way of interchange of bulls, attracting buyers from a distance, discussing producing blood lines, or coöperating in reaching the fairs. As a result of this introduction of different breeds into a community, we have stockers almost as diverse in color as Joseph's coat, and somewhat different in form and feeding quality."

"Wisconsin has been foremost in the introduction of 'community breeding,' which merely means that one breed is adopted largely if not exclusively by the farmers in one section, and all work together for progress in one direction. Nearly a hundred breeding centers have

been established in that state, and the work promises to attain monumental proportions of usefulness. The partnership ownership of sires is perhaps one of the greatest advantages that inheres in such situations. With the dairy breeds it is essentially helpful in testing for advanced registry work that the cows of a community be largely of one breed. Sales are also much more readily made, as buyers will flock to a section where selections may be made from a number of herds of the same breed. . . .

"The crystallization of sentiment in a community around any of the standard breeds, and entrance upon the breeding of it with unanimity and zest, would work wonders in a short time."

### New "Order of Business" for Use in All Local Unions

FOLLOWING is the new "Order of Business" prepared by Mr. J. Z. Green and the writer and adopted by the National Farmers' Union for use by all Local Unions throughout the country from now on. If you are a member of a Local Union see that your president and secretary use this new form, and if you are a member of any other farmers' club you are welcome to use as many of the ideas here as you wish:

1. Roll call, song, prayer; reading minutes; applications for membership.
2. New or unfinished business.
3. Debate or discussion of subjects previously selected for this meeting.
4. What goods, supplies, or fertilizers might our members now buy or order coöperatively?
5. Does any member wish to buy anything another member has to sell? What farm products—crops, seeds, animals, meats, vegetables, fruits, poultry or dairy products—could we now sell coöperatively?
6. Do any members wish to join in coöperative purchase of implements or machinery?
7. Any plans or suggestions for helping neighborhood progress, schools, roads, social life, etc., or for helping anyone sick or in distress?
8. Is there any legislation for the farmer's help we should petition for, or send a committee to ask for, from Legislature, Congress or county authorities?
9. Announcement of subject for discussion at next meeting, and selection of subject and speakers for future discussions or debates.
10. What men should we invite as new members and what absentees from recent meetings should be reminded by letter or call?

Each Local Union is left free to select its own subjects for debates, and from the list given on page 23 of last week's Progressive Farmer, some queries that will excite everybody's interest may be chosen. We believe the debate feature will do much to quicken interest in those Local Unions where discussions are ordinarily one-sided.

### Credit Unions to Encourage Rural Thrift

WE ARE going to keep hammering away at the idea of getting our Southern farmer folk to save something now while prices are good. Let's not only try to save something ourselves but let's also try to influence the more thoughtless people in our neighborhood and encourage them to save something now that will keep them out of the clutch of "time prices" usury next year. The whole South, in fact, needs to become more thrifty—get a little more of this commendable New England virtue. As we pointed out last year, there are not merely more savings bank depositors in Massachusetts than in Virginia, West Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Florida, Alabama, Mississippi, Kentucky, Tennessee, Arkansas, and Louisiana—but actually five times as many savings bank depositors in Massachusetts as in all these twelve Southern states combined. This isn't creditable to us in the South.

And here comes up the question as to how we can best encourage thrift in the South. We doubt whether there is any better way than through the establishment of "credit unions" or farmers' coöperative banks. The plan in brief is to have the people of a farm community pool their savings and lend to worthy people in the community on safe security for productive purposes only. It may take a long time to secure the general establishment of such organizations in the South, but as old Thomas Jefferson said about the township system of government and public schools, we expect to keep fighting for the idea "as long as we have breath in our body."

What is the test of good manners? It is the being able to put up pleasantly with bad ones.—L. Gabriel.