

Co-Operation

What Four Young Farmers Accomplished by Working Together in Co-Operative Marketing.

The co-operative spirit is an active one that is making great strides among farmers everywhere, which is a hopeful sign. Nowhere in this country, perhaps, have co-operative associations been fraught with more success than in the State of Minnesota. This may be partly due to the energy of the farmers themselves in this State, and partly to the fact that they are largely descendants of old country dairymen, who lived and worked among co-operative associations for many years, and whose descendants, therefore, take as naturally to the co-operative idea as a duck to water.

It may be interesting to some of those concerned in the marketing of eggs and poultry products to learn that there is a co-operative association in Dassel, Minn., which has been most successful in selling eggs on the co-operative plan. This organization was founded by four young men of the town, but it must not be presumed they had an easy task in the beginning. The whole of the first year was spent mainly in educational work. One of the first things undertaken was to interest the people of the community in better roads and they succeeded in getting into service ten or a dozen split log drags. Later they took up co-operative testing of their cows for tuberculosis and for milk production. Through the club's efforts about 400 cows were tuberculin tested. Then a testing association was started and it has been conducted up to the present time with unqualified success.

As one thing follows another, so the Dassel Corporation found that the results of the testing aroused an interest in better methods of feeding. Two of the most enthusiastic workers for the club reported that the returns from their herd from April 1, 1908, to April 1, 1909, was 229 pounds of butter fat per cow, while this last year produced 249 pounds of butter fat per cow. Figured down, for every dollar's worth of feed fed they got \$2.08 the former year and \$2.31 the latter year, in spite of the fact that there was increase of from 10 to 20 per cent in the prices of the various feeds. These young farmers give credit for this forward stride to their organization.

It was not long before the poultry end of farming began to receive attention by the members of this society. The thrifty and enterprising young men behind it went right to work pushing the co-operative idea ahead of them. They soon gained the confidence and co-operation of a large part of the farmers about Dassel and in the winter of 1909-1910 they took up a plan to find a better way of marketing eggs. This resulted in the formation of the Dassel Egg Producing Association in connection with the farmers' club.

This association is a strictly co-operative one, its sole object being to place a product on the market that is guaranteed to reach the consumer strictly fresh, as well as to be of uniform color, shape and size, and thereby to secure a higher price for the eggs sold. All eggs sold by the association are guaranteed to be not over seven days old, and if found otherwise, they must be replaced by the producer.

The eggs must be put in cartons every egg must be stamped with the name of the association and the producer's number; the eggs in the cartons must be of uniform color, shape and size. Each member signs a contract and promises to follow the requirements of the association.

When this egg-producing association was started it had sixty members, but there are now eighty. During the first eight months 22,000 dozen eggs were handled by the association, it paying for these \$4,840, or 22 cents per dozen.

At the regular market price the same eggs would have brought approximately \$3,300, or 17 cents per dozen, a difference of \$1,540, which divided among seventy patrons gives \$22 for each. So each member has received \$22 during the eight months for going to the small expense and trouble of placing a better quality of eggs on the market.

All this time these young men were studying the conditions on their own farms and on the farms about them. They were taking an active part in improving the live stock and methods of keeping the same in the community. They were improving their poultry and methods of marketing their poultry products. They were working out improved systems of rotations for their farms. They were breeding corn and small grains. As a result of these activities they reached a point early in 1911 where they felt they could no longer operate under the loose system of their original farmers' club. They felt the need of a strong business organization, so they formed what is known as the Farmers' Corporation of Dassel, with a capital stock of \$50,000. They have in this corporation four

active departments. They are continuing their cow-testing work and their egg-marketing work; they have taken up stock shipping and the selling of their pure-bred seed grains.

In their stock shipping department they employ a manager who has sole charge of the shipping of all the live stock for the members of the corporation. They have a carefully worked out system of accounting, and have provided for the manager's commission, a sinking fund and other necessary items. Mr. K. Johnson, the secretary of the corporation, states in reporting the results of their live stock shipping department this last fall that though it was commenced only last spring it certainly has given the best of satisfaction during the time of its existence, with all indications that it will continue so to do.

Several of the men interested in the corporation, as stated above, have been breeding corn and growing pure-bred seed grains, and this fall organized a department for disposing of these products in the best possible manner. They have rented a warehouse, installed the necessary cleaning machinery, and are now prepared to sell first-class highly bred seed grains and seed corn and get for the producers of these products the prices usually charged by the seedsmen and save the great waste of handling these products in the usual manner.

What these young men have accomplished at Dassel may be accomplished by any thoroughly progressive, wide-awake men in almost any agricultural community if they are willing to set aside their prejudices and work together.—H. C. Ayer, in Farm Life.

NEW YORK'S SHAME.

Never before in the history of the country has a delegation been assailed on the floor of a convention like Mr. Bryan assailed the ninety delegates from the most populous and powerful State in the Union at Baltimore the other day. And the convention yelled with delight at every blistering sentence that fell from the speaker's lips. There the ninety men sat silent and glum, because they knew they were the creatures of one man and that man an ex-bar-keeper. Everybody knows that Tammany Hall is as corrupt an organization as there is upon the face of the earth. They know no shame but heretofore they have escaped the castigation they deserved long ago because the leaders were afraid of their power. This is the first time that they have ever received what is coming to them. But it will not be the last. Tammany met its Waterloo at Baltimore. Its tremendous influence in the political life of the nation is over. All that was needed was for some great leader to give expression to the general feeling about the boss-ridden institution in New York City that made treachery and falsehood its trademark. This Bryan did in clear and ringing words, and the great auditorium thundered with the applause of the delegates. William Jennings Bryan has made many mistakes. His judgment is the poorest in the world, but his courage and candor are most refreshing, and he has rendered no finer service in all his brilliant career than when he tore the mask from the grinning and hideous face of Tammany Hall.—Charity and Children.

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