Marketing Grain Without Gambling on Prices.

"There is more gamble in a bushel of wheat than anything I know of," said a farmer who belongs to one of the co-operative growers' associations, "especially when it goes through the natural channel of trade, where a dozen men decide its destiny and price; men who never did a solitary thing to produce it, and to whom no one, farmer or consumer, owe a profit."

Canadian grain growers have been doing big things through co-operation. They have the world's greatest farmers' co-operative enterprise: the Grain Growers' Company, of Manitoba, and the Alberta Farmers' Co-operative Elevator Company joined hands after it was foreseen that they could do team work profitably, and formed the most powerful grain exchange, entirely in the hands of the farmers.

The company, now known as the United Grain Growers' Ltd., has more than thirty-five thousand shareholders, assets of $6,000,000, and a turnover last year of $100,000,000. It operates nearly four hundred grain elevators, two hundred and fifty flour warehouses, nearly two hundred coal sheds, two terminal elevators, two implement warehouses, and a large timber mill. It also owns a large timber tract which supplies lumber to the company's shareholders and other farmers in Canada. More than one thousand people are employed by this great farmers' concern.

These figures are more impressive when we remember that the idea has been working only eleven years. And of the fifteen million acres of wheat now in Western Canada, more than two-thirds will come under co-operative control, so that you can see these men have been ironing the wrinkles out of the grain growing business in Canada.

Winnipeg is the greatest primary grain exchange in the world. More than 275 000,000 bushels of wheat are handled each year. Railroads from the great wheat-growing sections connect with the large elevators. The Grain Dealers' Exchange was the first organization, but in due time the farmers discovered that they were neither receiving freight service nor prices they should. Low prices were paid at country points and there were many complaints of under-weighing and heavy dockage charges. Abuses grew until the farmers realized that salvation lay in organizing to handle their own products. They successfully organized three associations, in the three wheat-growing provinces.

Local associations were the initial organizations, later joining into large associations, the object being a combined plan of action. They learned how to get together, work together, and then how to stay together. The organization aimed to influence legislation to bring about improvement in marketing, grading, and transportation of grain. Another work was the promotion of advanced and improved methods of grain culture, seed selection, purchase of supplies, and distribution of products.

Up until the joining of hands, the Grain Growers' Company had the greatest success. It was organized with the idea of making a company which should obtain a seat on the Winnipeg Grain Exchange, and act as a commission agent for consignments of grain, either domestic or foreign. It did its first work in 1905 with some forty stockholders. It grew, and the following year a seat in the Grain Exchange was purchased for $2,500, and a line of credit established by the joint signatures of grain growers. Few things in conection with business farming are more interesting than the starting and growth of this association.

The organization started in debt from the very first, began with leaders without previous experience, but who had depended upon a middleman for all their sales. Heavy competition, ofttimes unfair, forced by organized interests, was waged against these grain growers, who had a big vision of better things. If there was any obstacle that the grain dealers failed to put in the way of these men, it was because they didn't think of it. But the old prophecy, "right rules might," came true in the case of the farmers.

The organization prospered, becoming the largest single factor in handling grain in the Winnipeg Exchange. The secret of its success lies in the very fact that its members hung loyally together in the face of discouragement. They faced ruin and defeat, but would not see it, and even advanced more money to save an organization that gave every evidence of not operating another day.

And the Winnipeg Grain Exchange, controlled by grain dealers, did not do much to make the grain growers joyous. It was strictly opposed to farmers' organizations. A month after the Grain Growers' Exchange started, a circular was issued, declaring their plan to pay what they termed a "patronage dividend." What they meant was that they would pay a fair rate of dividend to shareholders, and distribute surplus profits to growers in proportion to the amount of grain shipped by the grower. The Exchange objected, advising that it was against their rules, and took the seat in the house away from the farmers. This would have left the company without revenue, and would seem to bring about early ruin, as they depended upon their commission for their life.

The grain growers knew that they were face to face with a crisis. The Exchange was the only market for grain, and while the co-operative manager sought an eastern market, buyers plainly advised him that he must belong to the Winnipeg Exchange before he could be recognized. Did any farmers ever face more direct influence or more powerful influences against him enjoying just privileges? The grain growers' manager returned, called his aides together, and an appeal was made direct to the Manitoba Provincial Government, asking it to compel the Grain Exchange to reinstate the company's member. The influence of thousands of prosperous grain growers was sufficient. The legislature took the farmers' side and threatened to revoke the charter of the Exchange if it refused to recognize the farmers. Promising to abandon the "patronage dividend plan," the growers again became members in April, 1907.

A blessing in disguise was the failure to pay dividends as intended. If it had carried out its original plan, the Grain Growers' Company would no doubt have paid out all of its profits as dividends without building up a much needed reserve fund. At first the profits were generously divided. The first year there was a seven per cent. dividend; the second year forty per cent., and so on. While the original subscribers to the company paid in cash only $7.50 for shares, these are to-day valued at about $80 each. At the end of the third season, dividends paid were equal to the original amount paid for shares. Without co-operative effort, all these dividends would have gone with an increased amount into the hands of the middlemen and the growers would have been under the thumb of men who did not care about the future production of the wheat belt, save as it increased profits.

The growers appreciate that the life of the great grain industry depends entirely upon co-operative effort and they have never cashed their checks for their first dividend, but have them framed and hung in their parlors, and proudly point to them to all visitors, as a monument to the faith of a band of farmers, who built a great and profitable industry upon their faith in each other.

A powerful reserve fund was built up, which gives the farmers' co-operative company added power throughout the nation. The money taken from the earnings has enabled the company to enter into various activities, such as providing coal, lumber, and other supplies; buying fruit for members as well as operating grain elevators. In these activities the farmers were able to succeed, whereas other interests failed. The members appreciated that the success of their business depended upon holding together.

Before many months the Winnipeg Grain Exchange became alarmed at its lessened business and at the increased surplus of the Grain Growers' Exchange, every dollar of which represented the cash that the dealers had pocketed at the expense of the grain grower. In 1909 the Winnipeg dealers suspended operations on the commission basis. The co-operative organization transacts its business as a regular commission merchant for its members, except that all profits are returned to the farmers. It charges one cent per bushel on consigned wheat. The plan of the Grain Exchange was to put this new company out of business. Therefore, the Exchange offered to handle wheat at one-half a cent a bushel, calculating that the farmers would fall over each other in chasing a half-cent instead of sticking together. But these men were the regular kind. They were pioneer settlers, who had faced rascals, and could see a little further than a copper cent.

When approached with the offer to sell out their organization, the farmers promptly refused. They told the agents if they could do business at such a rate now, they must have been robbing them deliberately in former years, when they charged more. The dealers became discouraged, and disbanded, leaving the growers to enjoy prosperity unmolested.

The Grain Growers' Company started in 1906 with $25,000 subscribed, and $5,000 paid capital. In 1909 the capital subscribed was $188,950, while in 1911 it was $615,000, and at the opening of the war this had grown to $1,060 925, of which $771,409 had been paid in. Dividends and earned commission totaled nearly a quarter of a million dollars for the same year, all of which would have gone into the till of the middlemen without co-operative effort in force.

The end of government is the happiness of the people.

COLD-WEATHER PLAYS FOR LITTLE ONES

So many of our Canadian farm houses are situated in very rigorous climates that a good many mothers will not think the out-of-doors a possible playground in winter time. This is less true than they are apt to think. On almost any sunny day in winter, little children, if warmly dressed, will benefit far more by a brisk, romping, active half-hour's running and jumping than city babies do in their swathed, motionless outing in a baby carriage. And when really bad weather drives them in, as it should do very seldom, the country mother has a great advantage in space over the city one. For there is about a farm nearly always some corner, a woodshed, a corner of the barn, an attic, or an unused room where the little folks may romp and play actively. If necessary the sacred spare room is better used for this purpose than kept in idle emptiness. And all the varieties of handwork are resources for rainy days.

For, as the children advance beyond real babyhood and the mere need for constant romping and climbing and running like little animals, their instinctive desire to use their hands increases, and this is an instinct which should be encouraged in every possible way. Just as the wise mother sees to it that they are provided when badies with ample chance to roll and kick and tumble, so when they are older she is never more pleased than when they are doing something with their hands; she has all around her ample material for beginning this handiwork. A pan of beans or shelled corn, with a wide-mouthed bottle and a spoon, will keep a two or three-year-old happy and absorbed for a long time. A pack of cards to be shuffled or used to build houses is another "plaything" which does not need to be specially bought. A pan of bran and a handful of clothespins occupy even a baby of fourteen months as he pushes them into the closely packed bran and pulls them out. A big rag doll, the size of a small child, is easy to make and stuff with cotton. All children love a big doll of this sort, and delight to dress it and undress it in their own clothes. They learn in this way to handle buttons and button-holes, and to master the difficulties of shoes, and belts and sleeves. A new corn-cob pipe and a small bowl of soapsuds means harmless fun for the five-year-old, which is always watched with rapture by the littler ones.

And then there are blocks, which need not at all be bought from a store. A father with a plane and a saw can plane a couple of two-by-four sticks and in about half an hour make as many square or oblong blocks (2x4x6 inches is a good size) as any child needs to play with. These large blocks not only cost practically nothing, but are much better for the children to use than the smaller expensive kind that are sold; and the set will outlast a family of most strenuous children.

A collection of empty spools of different sizes is a treasure for the child of three who will rejoice in stringing them on a cord passed through a bodkin. When he is a little older and has learned skill in this exercise he may graduate to stringing buttons with a real needle and thread. On baking day a small lump of dough (made less sticky by working more flour into it) which can be rolled and played with on a bit of smooth board is great fun for little folks; and let the mother constantly remember that any fun which is secured by using the hands does not only make the child happy, but is of educational value.

On washing day a basin of soapy water and some bits of cloth to be washed out will fill many happy minutes. The oilcloth apron is as indispensable for this play as for the outdoor water play and for clay modeling. This last is perhaps the most eternally interesting of the indoor occupations for little children. If the clay is kept on a bit of oilcloth on a low table, it is not an untidy element in a kitchen.

A box of dried corn cobs can convert a free corner of the floor into a farm with log cabin house, rail fences and barns. Trees can be simulated by twigs stuck into bits of clay to hold them upright, and farm animals can be rudely fashioned out of clay, dusted over with domestic coloring material to make them realistic—flour for the sheep, cocoa for brown horses and cows, charcoal for black animals and then baked in the kitchen oven to make them hard.

A rag bag into which the children may dive and delve is a resource for rainy days, and if the mother is at hand to keep an eye on the process and tell what colors and materials are, to suggest matching those colors and stuffs which are identical and to make agreeable combinations with others, rag-bag hour is as educational as any exercise in a carefully run modern school. The country mother has here again a great advantage over many city mothers in that her work is always at home, and of a nature which allows her to supervise the children's play without giving up all her time to them.

Provision should be made in the case of little children for their desire to handle all sorts of objects; the desire which makes them enjoy so greatly a tumbling over of mother's workbasket. There is no need to let them upset that when there are in every country house such a vast number of other articles which are not hurt by baby hands—spoons, tin pans, boxes, tongs, clothes baskets and darning eggs. Furthermore instead of being told, "don't touch!" they should be encouraged to learn how neatly and competently to perform such ordinary operations as opening and shutting drawers and doors and boxes and gates, screwing the tops on cans, hanging up clothes and taking off rubbers.

INTERNATIONAL LESSON
JANUARY 12

Lesson II. Moses The Leader of Israel—Exodus 3: 1-4.
Golden Text. Heb. 3: 5.

3: 1-12 "Keeping the flock of Jethro.' The priest of Midian is also called Reuel in 2: 18, and probably, like the Sabaean priests and kings, had actually two names. "Horeb" was also called Sinai. It was a "mountain of God," that is, a sacred place where there was probably an ancient altar or sanctuary. Or it may have been so called by the historian because of the vision of God which came to Moses there, and because of the fearful signs and portents of the presence of God which accompanied the second visit of Moses to the mountain, as recorded in chap. 19. The traditional site of Horeb is in the heart of the peninsula, but some place it farther to the north and east. It was here also that Elijah had his vision when he fled from the anger of Jezebel (1 Kings 19).

"The angel of the Lord." Several times in the Old Testament Jehovah is represented by an angel. See Exod. 14: 19; Gen. 21: 17; 31: 11. In Exod. 23: 20-23 Jehovah says "My name is in him." The angel is the manifestation of God. He is God's agent of revelation. He speaks as though his voice were the voice of God. The experience of Moses, however we may understand it, was unquestionably a very real and profound experience. A bramble bush on the mountain side glowed in the sunlight as if touched by flame. Awe-stricken, Moses drew near, then was reverently conscious of the presence of God. In the depth of his soul a voice sounded. It was God, his father's God, who spoke and called him from the quiet of the wilderness to high service.

"Who am I that I should go?" Moses still makes excuse. He is no longer a young man, and it is harder for an old man to take up a new task than it is for a man in his youth. The all-sufficient answer of God is, "Certainly I will be with thee." Age, timidity, lack of eloquence or of wisdom, is no longer an adequate excuse. Helpless without, with God a man may adventure all things. The answer to Moses' excuse, that he is unable for, or unsuited to, the task, is the answer of an all-conquering and unconquerable faith.

"This shall be the token." The sign which shall be finally convincing to Moses is that he shall lead Israel to this same sacred mountain, and that he with them shall offer sacrifice and worship there. This, therefore, is the request which he makes to Pharaoh when he returns to Egypt, that he will permit the Hebrews to go into the wilderness to sacrifice to their God (3: 18). And this seems to furnish a reason why, instead of taking the straight road to Palestine, Moses led the Israelites by a circuitous and difficult route through the rugged valleys of the peninsula.

3: 13-4: 17. Four difficulties present themselves to the mind of Moses and each is in turn removed. God promises to be with him. He reveals Himself by a new name, he receives power to work signs which shall be convincing, and he is promised the help of his brother Aaron. Moses fears his own weakness, his lack of the power of eloquent speech, and that the people will not believe him, or will not believe that it is indeed their fathers' God who sent him. But now, without further excuse, impelled by the divine voice that will not be silent, he gives unwilling consent. And having consented he acts with promptness, with courage, and with resolution. If ever again he falters in his great task he is reminded of the experiences of this vision and of the assured promises of his God.

Grow Roses.

Everyone should celebrate the renewal of peace by planting Roses, they will grow anywhere in Canada if a little attention is given them; curiously while Roses imported from our Allies, and neutral countries bloom for a season or two, it is the Roses of England, that flourish and bloom from year to year. British Roses in British soil.

Then Things Looked Blue.

A wife whose husband is on active service presented him with a bouncing baby boy, when the war looked good for a long time. She wrote to ask him when he should get leave, and also when the war would be over. His reply was as follows:

"Dear Lucy,—I don't know when I shall get leave or when the war will be over, but if the baby should be called up before I get leave, give him a parcel to bring out to me. Your loving husband, BILL."

Poultry

Poultry keepers, who find the most profitable markets for eggs and dressed poultry, understand breeding and feeding problems as well as the marketing end of the business. They know that in producing uniform products that will command top prices the well-bred flock has the advantage. The egg trade will pay for what it wants, and that is invariably eggs of the same shape, size and color, and dressed poultry of a uniform color of skin and shanks. It is almost a hopeless proceeding for one to undertake to furnish high-class customers with eggs and dressed poultry unless one has a knowledge of the principles of breeding and feeding to standardize the products of the farm flock. Farmers, as well as commercial poultry keepers, should be quick to catch the trend of the demand and set themselves right to meet it.

The market rules the kind of products we must furnish. We may protest all we may, but when the trade prefers white eggs and dressed birds with white skin and pinkish white shanks, the man who has them to sell gets the highest prices for his products. Occasionally there are times when uniformity of products does not command the premium it deserves, but even then the mixed products are discriminated against. It is no use to deceive ourselves with the idea that we can succeed in getting high prices for mixed products that do not meet the demand of the trade. So long as the profits come most cheaply and promptly from well-bred flocks that produce uniform products it is useless to breed and feed mongrels.

Standardizing the flock not only increases the value of the eggs and dressed poultry, but it opens up other profitable markets for the products of the flock. It is easy to see that there are more ways of marketing standardized products than there are mixed ones. The poultry keeper with a well-bred flock of Wyandottes or Plymouth Rocks, can sell his eggs and dressed poultry in the market at higher prices, a few eggs for settings at higher prices, baby chicks for breeders, young stock for market and for breeders, old stock for market and for breeders. Another man with a mixed flock has opportunity to sell eggs for food only, and young and old stock for market. The advantages in marketing the products of the standardized flock are sufficient inducement to warrant every poultry keeper in ridding his premises of every mongrel bird.

To obtain a flock of vigorous hens, uniform in color of skin and shanks, capable of producing a maximum number of eggs of the same shape, size and color, the farmer has only to purchase a breeding pen of birds of some particular strain of any one of the general purposes Canadian breeds. One strain of the breed selected for its ability to produce eggs and dressed poultry should be chosen for each flock, and that flock should never be contaminated by mixing with any other strain or breed of fowls. All the fowls of one particular strain will lay eggs that will be very much alike in size and color; when dressed for market the fowls will be alike, and no poultry products command a better price in the market than fowls of uniform color of skin and shanks, and eggs of the same size, shape and color. Thus by standardizing his flock the poultry keeper will increase the efficiency and profit-earning powers at least twenty-five per cent. and at the same time provide his customers with the highest quality of poultry and eggs.

Crocheted Ruching.

Take a piece of linen tape thirteen or fourteen inches long and some No. 60 thread. Fasten the thread at one end of the tape. Make a chain of 4, catch into the tap with I double crochet near where the thread was fastened, chain 2, 1 double crocket just the distance from the first double crochet that the 2 chain will reach without drawing the tape, and continue to the end of the tape. Chain 1, turn, 1 single crochet under 2 chain, chain 2; 1 single crochet under the same chain; repeat to the end of the tape and fasten the thread.

This makes a serviceable and inexpensive ruching; it can be washed many times.

Why the Editor Left Town.

It was because the following items appeared in his paper:

"Mrs. Thomas W. Johnson read an article for the women's club entitled, 'Personal Devils.' Seventeen were present."

"Mr. John Crouse shipped a carload of hogs to Toronto one day last week. Three of his neighbors went in with him to make up the load.

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How to Prepare Furs for the Market.

Wrong methods of skinning, stretching and drying pelts causes the loss of thousands of dollars to trappers every year. The right methods to follow are just as easy if you know them—and here they are:

Skinning methods are of two kinds "casing" and "open." Casing means peeling the skin off whole. Open means ripping the skin down the belly.

Animals which should be cased are the following: Mink, marten, weasel opossum, fox, fisher, skunk, civet muskrat, wild cat, otter, lynx, wolf and wolverine. Open skinning should be used with coon, badger, beaver bear and cougar.

The following skins, before they become too dry, should be turned fur side out for shipping: Fox, lynx, fisher, wolf, marten, wolverine and wild cat. Leave the others, which are cased, pelt side out.

To case a skin, cut from the root of the tail down the inside of each hind leg to the foot. Then pull the skin carefully over the body and head. The tail should be skinned and the bone removed, except for muskrat and opossum. These two can be cut off as they are worthless. Skinning is made easier by suspending the carcass from something, doing this by means of a strong cord tied around the hind legs. Draw the skin from the front legs. Cut off the ears—downward toward the head. Cut the skin loose about the nose and eyes.

In using the open method, cut from point of jaw to vent, also down back hind legs and inside of front legs. Lynx, mountain lion, bear—which are valuable for rugs or mounting—should be skinned on the legs clear to the toes, leaving the claws attached. Smaller animals, valuable only as furs, may have the legs cut off.

Be sure to clean every bit of flesh and fat from the skins, using extreme care to avoid cutting.

Steel stretchers, which can be had in just the right shape for different skins, give the best results. If you do not use these, and do not know from experience the shape and size to make board stretchers, by all means write to one of the big fur houses for information. Improper stretching may make skins almost valueless.

When the skins are on the stretchers, put them in a cool, dry place—never in the sun or near the fire. Dry them just enough to prevent shrinking and wrinkling. If you find that a skin has become too dry to turn, soften a little with a damp cloth. But be sure to let the dampened spots dry out before shipping.

Do not use patented preparations for curing—just the natural drying.

This matter of preparing skins is extremely important and it will mean many more dollars in your pocket to secure some trapping book which goes into full detail about it. Or, as suggested, write to a fur house for information. They are interested in getting furs in perfect condition and will be glad to tell you how.

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