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### GOSSIP

#### WORLD'S OUTPUT OF COAL

The world's output of coal during 1908 is computed at 1,068,000,000 tons, and its value is estimated at £409,500,000. Of this amount nearly 266,000,000 tons were produced in the United Kingdom. America tops the list with 377,250,000 tons, and Germany comes third with 215,286,000 tons. But while the output of Great Britain is less than the United States, the value of America's coal is only £109,305,000 compared with £119,599,000 for the United Kingdom. At home and abroad nearly 6,000,000 persons are employed in mining and quarrying. Of this total (5,819,120) nearly one-fifth, roughly speaking, are employed in the United Kingdom and more than one-third in the British Empire.

More than one-half of the people engaged in mining are employed getting coal, the figures for the more important coal-producing countries being:

United Kingdom	972,000
United States	690,000
Germany	667,000
France	195,000
Russia	165,000
Belgium	145,000
Austria	132,000
India	129,000

The total output of gold was 21 million ounces of £89,500,000 value, the British Empire supplying nearly 60 per cent, and the United States 22 per cent. In the case of iron the United States, with an output of over 16,000,000 tons, 10,000,000 less than the year before, was still considerably ahead of any country, the German Empire producing 6,750,000 tons, and Great Britain nearly 5,000,000 tons.

#### CO-OPERATION IN FARMING

Henry Wallace, of Wallace's Farmer, is undoubtedly foremost amongst American farm economists. In a recent issue of that paper the frequent failure of co-operation is discussed as follows:

For the last year or two we have been making a somewhat careful study of the subject of co-operation among farmers, and have been taking particular notice of the few efforts that have proved to be eminently successful. We have concluded that there are several conditions without which any great degree of success cannot be obtained.

First in importance is business capacity in the management. The degree of business capacity required will depend upon the amount of business to be conducted; but whether that be large or small, the business capacity must be commensurate with the magnitude of the business. In California we found co-operative enterprises which paid five thousand dollars and over for the services of the principal executive officers. This, of course, was in the great fruit-growers' associations, where property to the extent of millions of dollars was handled. In Colorado we found a similar co-operative concern. We found also the same excellent and well-paid business capacity.

When it comes down to conducting farm operations, co-operators are not always willing to pay the market price for ability of this character. When the grange stores were established, in the seventies, farmers were willing to pay a good farm wage for a man to move to town and conduct the business, but they were unwilling to pay the salary which a man of like ability in town demanded for conducting a business of like magnitude. A thousand dollars a year then looked like a very large sum for the management of a grange store. The farmer, no matter how skillful he might be in swapping horses, in feeding cattle or selling them, undertook a new business when he attempted to manage a store, and generally failed. What these granges should have done was to have gone into the market and hired the best storekeeper that could be found in the town or county, and then pay him more than any other merchant would give him. First secure an honest man, and then trust him.

It will be found that wherever co-operative enterprises succeed, the pa-

trons have learned to pull together; and wherever they have failed, one of the causes was that they were not accustomed to team work, and did not pull together. This is not surprising. The farmer in all time past has been an individualist. He has relied upon himself. He was obliged to do so. Accustomed to this, and rather inclined to distrust his neighbor, with whom he was perhaps not very well acquainted, it is not strange that farmers are slow in acquiring that confidence in each other and that ability to work to each other's hand, that recognition of leadership, which successful co-operation absolutely demands.

Farmers are more individualistic now than they were half a century ago. One man can now build a stable, if he is handy with tools; but one man could not build a barn then. He had to have a "raising." He had to call in his neighbors. He had to have a leader, and when the leader said, "Heave! O, heave!" every man had to heave, and thus raise the big beam up to the square. If one or two men failed, disaster might come to the whole neighborhood. There was team work then. The farmer has become more independent of his neighbor; hence does not recognize leadership so readily, and thus fails in one of the essentials of successful co-operation. Where men have confidence in each other, work together, pull together, and follow a leadership which they have themselves created, they can co-operate in almost anything.

We have never seen a successful co-operative movement where farmers failed to be loyal to that movement as such. They have been like all other persons, namely, more or less easily tempted by present immediate profits. To illustrate: When co-operative creameries were established, it was difficult to hold the patrons (there is the same difficulty now) if an outsider offered a cent or two more per pound for butterfat than the creamery can give. It was the same way with the elevator companies. The co-operative elevator companies were obliged to require the man who accepted this higher price from a rival elevator to turn over part of the increase to the co-operative. There is no one thing that so arouses the ire of the line companies as this regulation of the co-operatives, that the man who accepts a higher price shall pay a certain per cent. of the increase into the treasury of the co-operative.

No co-operative company can hope to succeed unless it is made up of men who cannot be tempted by a cent or two on a bushel of grain or pound of butterfat. On this point human nature, not merely rural, is "unco" weak. The larger corporations have found in the past that if they could offer lower prices to the buyer and higher prices to the seller, men would desert their co-operative company and weaken it to such an extent that it could not do business, and was forced to sell to the best bidder. Then after the co-operative had gone out of existence the other company would recoup its losses and much more, by putting up prices to the buyer and lowering prices to the seller.

No co-operative company in any line succeeds unless men are broad-minded enough to see something beyond the immediate present advantage. Unless the co-operators are willing to employ business ability and pay the market price for it, unless they are willing to follow the leaders of their own choosing and co-operate with them, whether they like them personally or not; unless they are willing to forego present and temporary advantage for the sake of future and more permanent advantage, it is scarcely worth while to engage in co-operative enterprises.

What is needed, therefore, in co-operation as in everything else, is that broader education which develops strong men who can take broad views of business as well as public questions. It has been an old saying ever since we can remember, that "farmers won't hang together." This has been largely true in the past, but in coming years we will have to co-operate much more than we have ever done in the past, and we must learn to work together, beginning our training with games in the school-yard where we play together, and play fair, and continuing it all through life in the larger game of life.