

9 EDWARD VII., A. 1909

gated, the manager either exonerated or discharged, and work would have gone on with little or no interruption. As a matter of fact nothing was said publicly, but a great deal of gossip floated around privately and member after member dropped out until the association dissolved.

LEADERS ARE LACKING.

The petty jealousies of neighbours, the foolish reticence which some people think necessary in business matters, the suspicious attitude often mistaken for caution, together with weakness, stupidity and downright selfishness, make it difficult to secure any kind of cohesion in some neighbourhoods; but speaking generally it may be said that the people, though not as well prepared for co-operation as they should be, are ready for it, but the leaders are lacking. In many places, however, the leaders exist though in an embryonic condition, and all that is needed is a little assistance in organizing that will give an opportunity for these men to assume responsibility, when many of them would develop into excellent co-operative managers. The conditions in Ontario and in the Annapolis valley, Nova Scotia, are hopeful; in British Columbia the prospects look even brighter for the co-operative movement. The country is new there and fruit growing is being taken up by a class of men more than ordinarily intelligent. Educated men and men who have made a success in other lines of business, are taking up fruit growing in this province, with the result that the co-operative movement has a trained class of men for its basis, rendering unnecessary the preliminary educative process that is so burdensome in some parts of the older provinces.

CO-OPERATION SHOULD BE ENCOURAGED

I cannot too strongly commend this movement to this committee, and I sincerely trust that some way may be devised whereby the organization of these associations may go on more rapidly in the future than they have in the past. I have endeavoured to show the value of them, and I have also shown, I think, the many opportunities there are for more of them being established. The whole district from Kingston to Goderich in Ontario, all the fruit growing districts in British Columbia and the fruit growing district of Nova Scotia present opportunities for hundreds of these fruit associations.

It is the duty of everyone who has the shaping of public opinion to do his utmost to bring about these organizations. They differ from the ordinary trade combine in this, that while they possess all the economic value which the manufacturing and trade organizations have, they are practically incapable of working the evils that are sometimes the accompaniment of manufacturing and trade organizations. If you will recount the benefits which I have mentioned to you of these co-operations, you will find that none of these are at the expense of any other class of citizen. Even in the case which I cited where the basket manufacturers were obliged to reduce their price, it was in the end no real loss to the manufacturers, because when the basket manufacturers had accommodated themselves to the conditions of the co-operative associations, they found they could dispense with a very large amount of agents' fees; consequently, they are really getting more for their baskets now than they got before the co-operative associations were formed, although the fruit growers are getting their baskets so much cheaper and the consuming public are getting the benefits of these through better and cheaper fruit. This is equally true with regard to commercial fertilizers; but most of the benefits which I have mentioned are entirely apart from even this apparent diminution of profits accruing to any other class of the community. They are true economical gains. The better education that results in better fruit and more of it for the same investment of capital and skill; the lessening in the cost of operations as the result of doing it upon a large scale and with better imple-