

(6) New business.

(7) Closing.

25—These rules may be amended at any regular meeting, notice thereof having been given in writing, signed by some member at a previous regular meeting.

As soon as we were properly organized we engaged Howard Christie as manager, and had him canvass for more shares and visit Winnipeg to make arrangements with the wholesale firms. On returning, he reported that we would have to open a store in order to buy from the wholesalers.

Store Opened

We then rented a small store which was vacant for \$15 per month, taking a lease for a year, and we opened for business on May 28. We pay cash on receiving goods and checking invoice. We sell for cash or take produce. This latter has been one of our problems, because some of the local stores started paying more for butter and eggs than they could be sold for when shipped to Winnipeg, but when the Farmers' Mar-

ket is properly established there, this difficulty will be overcome. Our manager is bonded, and all checks are countersigned by the president. Our board of directors meet every two weeks and keep in close touch with the business.

Two of our directors and many of our shareholders belong to the Salem branch of The Grain Growers. Officers of this branch, before we were organized here, approached some of the merchants in Portage and asked that a discount for cash be allowed to all purchasers showing a Grain Growers' membership ticket, but they were refused, various reasons being given, chief of which was that "the farmers would not stick together."

A Growing Stock

Just before completing the Society's organization, we had ordered from the Central Association, in Winnipeg, 46 boxes of evaporated apples, which cost us \$3.25 per 50 lb box laid down at Oakville. These were sold to the members at cost, and were very superior to what were being sold locally at from 12½ to 14 cents per pound. Since we

started the store we have handled 20 more boxes of these apples, two cars of flour and feed, a carload of winter apples and a car of salt.

We began by keeping a small stock of groceries and gradually worked up until now we keep practically everything in this line that is in demand on the farm. We also handle a few lines of hardware, such as bolts, nails, etc., some harness parts, dry goods, such as overalls, shirts, mitts, etc., some crockery and a few boots and shoes.

A Co-operative Bakery

The store which we rented had a bake oven in connection, and late in August we hired a baker and began the manufacture of bread, pastry, etc., which proved a great boon to the busy women on the farm, because we were able to sell nineteen loaves for a dollar, as against seventeen sold by the other stores shipping in from Portage. We now have besides the farm trade almost the entire village trade, and we ship out to Portage, Eli and Benard. We do the catering for any Grain Growers' ban-

quets or entertainments, thus allowing the farm women to enjoy these without extra work.

We now have 101 shareholders holding 295 shares, with \$1,900 paid up capital. Our sales up to December 31 amounted to \$8,800, and after taking out organization and all other expenses, including equipment, we will pay 8 per cent. on capital. We will not be able to pay a dividend on purchases this year, owing to many of our shareholders who did not really understand the principles of co-operation being drawn away by reduced prices elsewhere. But we are gradually educating them, and they will soon be all dealing with us and getting the profits on their own business. Toward this end we are working to get every shareholder to take The Guide, and are sending for the "Canadian Co-operator" for each member.

The dividend is all a question of the amount of business we do. It costs a certain amount to run our store, and anything over that will of course go back to the people furnishing the busi-

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Co-operative Societies' Reports

In making a report of the Alexandra Co-operative Association Limited, of Blackfoot, Alberta, I may say that although this Association is registered under "The Co-operative Associations Act," the enthusiasm always necessary in launching a movement of this kind was generated at a joint meeting called by one of our local U. F. A. Unions. In drafting the by-laws, great care was taken to ensure absolutely co-operative principles, and to make it so easy to join that no person who is in sympathy with the movement need keep out for financial reasons.

Being a new Association, and this report being only for the month of January, our trading has naturally been small, and consists of two cars of coal purchased at \$4.55 per ton F.O.B. this station, and sold at \$5.50 per ton to our patrons. As this commodity was being sold locally at from \$6 to \$7, and the actual cost of handling the co-operative coal was less than 30 cents per ton, this resulted in a gross saving to the members of from \$1.20 to \$1.70 per ton.

U.F.A. and Co-operation

While the Association is not officially connected with the U.F.A., most of its shareholders, being U.F.A. members, are heartily in sympathy with that organization, and consequently favorably disposed to its official organ, The Guide, and I would say here, that what the co-operative movement requires more than anything else in the West is organization, and I believe The Guide could be of particular service in this matter, by devoting sufficient space week by week to co-operation, to act as the Western official organ of the movement, which would, in its turn, induce those wholesale firms who are not opposed to supplying co-operative stores to advertise in the paper, and this would help to solve a great difficulty which most co-operators have to face, viz., that of securing supplies, especially groceries and dry goods.

It is to be noted that while the energy needed in starting a Co-operative Association is so great that the business of the local U.F.A. may be temporarily neglected, the tendency is decidedly toward popularizing the U.F.A. move-

Below will be found reports received from the officials of four of the pioneer Co-operative Societies of Western Canada. These societies, it will be observed, are either incorporated under the Co-operative Associations Acts of Manitoba or Alberta or are in process of incorporation. In each case a fixed rate of interest will be paid on capital and surplus profits will be distributed according to patronage. These societies, like that of Oakville, which is described on the preceding page, are starting out with true co-operative principles and ideals and on their success the future of co-operation in Western Canada largely depends. Their progress will be watched with anxious interest by co-operators in many lands, and also, we have no doubt, by those who are opposed to the movement. They will be successful if the societies are faithful to true co-operative principles and the members are true to their societies.

ment, and will, in the long run, prove advantageous to that organization.

Regarding the advantages secured by non-members, our by-laws call for everything to be sold at market price, and all profits are returned to shareholders in proportion to their patronage, which makes it necessary to become a member in order to secure the advantages of the Association. All our business, both buying and selling, is conducted on a spot cash basis, and as every person handling money or goods is bonded, serious losses are almost impossible.

In conclusion I would like to say that

the co-operative movement has now reached such proportions that I believe the time is ripe to start a Co-operative Wholesale Association, so that we need not depend for our supplies on private traders, who do not seem to realize that they have about as much power to stop the co-operative movement, as Canute had to stem the tide.

F. B. SULMAN,
Blackfoot P.O., Alta. Secretary.

REGENT CO-OPERATIVE EXCHANGE

Bidford G.G.A. organized in the Bid-

ford schoolhouse in December, 1912, and secured, during the first year, twenty-five paid up members. During March, 1913, acting in conjunction with Deloraine G.G.A., seed corn was ordered co-operatively, and a saving thereby made of about 40 cents per bushel.

About May 1, following the above method, evaporated apples were secured to the extent of fifteen 50-pound boxes. The cost was 6½ cents per pound, or about 4 or 5 cents below current retail prices. During July, binder twine was secured, and a saving effected of about 2 cents per pound. About one-half the members took advantage of this arrangement.

Other proposals of co-operative buying of commodities were brought forward at different times; for example, a carload of apples in October, but all failed to materialize. When it was realized that the responsibility and risk rested on a very few, it was deemed too great a venture.

Now, to those who gave the matter a reasonable amount of consideration, it was obvious that while the proposition was sound in principle, in practice it proved inadequate. We were securing but an insignificant proportion of our necessities by co-operative methods, and on those we did secure, besides the responsibility, a lonely few had to give freely of their time and means. We seemed as one building a structure without a foundation, we had no modus operandi. We lacked a basis of operation. But, in the meantime, the idea of establishing a co-operative trading company having a limited subscribed capital was being discussed and steadily gaining strength.

At the annual meeting held on December 29, 1913, a townsite, having been located five miles from Bidford on the Boissevain-Lauder line, the name of the association was changed to Regent, and it was moved and adopted as follows: "That we organize a co-operative association, to be known as the Regent Co-operative Exchange Limited." A board of twelve provisional directors was nominated, and public meetings were held in West Hall school on January 2, and in Wapaha school on January 9,



The above is the new elevator, warehouse and feed mill, purchased by The Grain Growers' Grain Company at New Westminster, B.C., in October last. It is one of the most complete plants of its kind in Western Canada, and is doing a big and growing business with the poultry and dairymen of the Fraser Valley and Vancouver Island. The mill has a grinding capacity of 100 tons per day, and will make a splendid outlet for oats and barley and the lower grades of wheat, for Alberta farmers who can ship to it via the C.P.R. This plant is being operated under the name of The Grain Growers' B. C. Agency Ltd.