

About the Farm

One Man Reclaims a Country.

Denmark has made a national hero of Capt. Enrico Mylius Dalgas, the man who saved and remade the country by watering the desert and by planting the marshes and moors with trees. How it was done, Mr. Henry Goddard Leach has told in McClure's Magazine.

In the disastrous war of 1864, Prussia wrested from Denmark much valuable territory. The soldiers of Jutland, trudging over the black and barren heath, home to their untilled farms, encountered a thick-set figure in riding-boots that stalked across the moors, with a spade over his shoulder. On nearer approach, it proved to be young Captain Dalgas of the engineers, already a veteran of two wars.

When his late comrades in arms had returned his greeting with the discouraged complaint, "It is a bad, bad day for Denmark!" Captain Dalgas replied, "It is. But what has been lost without can be won within!" and he pointed earnestly toward the desolate heath that stretched to the horizon as unbroken as a desert. "In your time and in mine," he said, "we can turn that waste into forest and farms, and win back more than we ever lost to the Prussians."

The enthusiastic dream of the young engineer has been made to come true. Failing to get government aid, he formed the Danish Heath Society; he pumped water from distant rivers, and let it run over the heath; he introduced fertilizers, burned off the heather, persuaded farmers to convert the heath into plowland and pasturage, planted timber-producing trees, and went up and down the country addressing mass-meetings and schools. At last the government lent its aid.

The result of the work of Captain Dalgas is that a new Denmark greets the traveler to-day. These forty years have doubled and tripled the wealth of the Danish nation. Railroads and highways are cutting the heath; new buildings and towns are rising everywhere. Tree-planting gives work for the destitute; the moor is peopled by families; the valuation of certain townships has risen one thousand and five hundred per cent. And it is not the reclaimed land only that has been improved by the planting of forests, for the woods have softened the climate and increased the fertility of the whole peninsula of Jutland.

Agricultural Co-operation.

The cheese producers of Sheboygan county, Wisconsin, have given a practical demonstration of the benefits of co-operation, both in producing and in marketing. Wisconsin produces more than one-half of the cheese made in the United States, and Sheboygan is the banner cheese county of the state. The short and simple story of what co-operation has done for the farmers of Sheboygan county explains what co-operation is.

The farmers were selling their milk to the cheese factories, but were not getting what they thought was a fair price for their product. Some of the cheese factories were operated on the co-operative plan; that is, the farmers took their milk to the cheese factory owned by themselves and received the prevailing market price for it each month, and at the end of the year the profit on the cheese sold was divided among the farmers on the basis of the amount of milk delivered to the factory during the year. These co-operative cheese factories were not joint-stock companies, in which the profits were divided among the stockholders, or in which the stockholders controlled on the basis of the amount of stock they owned. They were organized on the basis of "one man one vote" regardless of how much stock was held by any one person. There had to be some capital stock, to be sure, and there had to be some return upon the stock. But the co-operative cheese factory was not

organized to make money on the capital invested in the cheese factory. Rather it was organized to pay a dividend upon the money which the stockholders had invested in cows. Therefore, the dividend paid upon the capital stock was confined to 6 per cent. And the surplus was divided among the farmers on the basis of the amount of milk delivered. In this way, every farmer received the full return upon the milk he brought to the factory. The man with one share of stock and twenty cows received a much larger return than the man with twenty shares of stock and one cow. That was co-operation. The policy of the cheese factory was decided upon the vote of all the stockholders, "one vote, and only one, for each man." The man with twenty shares of stock and one cow had no larger voice in the management than the man with one share of stock and twenty cows. That, too, was co-operation.

But, still the farmers of Sheboygan county were not satisfied. They were selling the cheese made in their co-operative factories to the wholesale dealers in Plymouth, who fixed the price at whatever they saw fit. And the price of cheese as fixed by these dealers was so low that even the co-operative factories could not pay a fair price for milk.

So the farmers took another step in co-operation. They organized the Sheboygan County Cheese Producers' Federation to market on the co-operative basis the cheese produced in the co-

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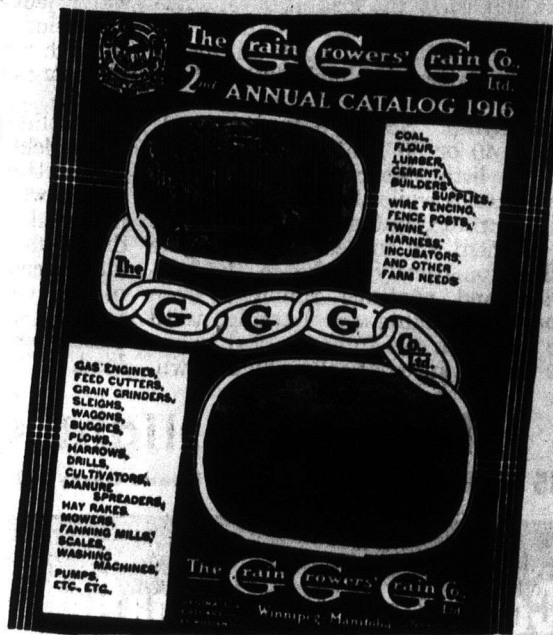
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