# FARM AND DAIRY

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## The Rural Publishing Company, Limited PETERBORO, ONT.

"Read not to contradict and to confute, nor to believe and take for granted, but to weigh and con-sider."—Bacon.

# A Live Stock Market's Policy

HE press recently announced that Hon. Martin Burrell was about to initiate a comprehensive markets propaganda in the Live Stock Branch of this Department. An outline of the scheme is now before us. It involves the organization of an "Intelligence System," which shall provide for (a) statistics of animal population and production; (b) information regarding the home market; (c) information regard-ing the markets; and (d) distribution of the infe collected to the producer. The scheme al des the organization of farmers for cooperative action in the sale of poultry and live stock products, the promotion of the sale according to grade and the cooperation of all interests in the development of the live stock trade. This markets policy will be administered under the immediate direction of Mr. H. S Arkell, and the present organization of the branch will be made use of to the fullest extent.

The feature of this policy that will redound most largely to the benefit of producers, will be the collection and dissemination of marketing information. This information is essential to intelligent marketing. In the past the big packing houses and commission firms have had their own intelligence systems, and this has given them a decided advantage over the producers who have had to sell "in the dark." The business of the individual farmer has been and is too small for him to finance such an information bureau as it is now proposed to establish in connection with the Live Stock Branch. It is true that in the case of the grain growers of the West and the fruit growers of Nova Scotia, the producers themselves have established, through their cooperative societies as efficient intelligence bureaus as those possessed by private corporations. The live stock interests, however, have never been so organized as to

make such intelligent marketing possible, and the Minister's present scheme has in it the possibilities of great good to the industry. At present, however, the system is only in its formative stages, and its value as a Government activity has yet to be demonstrated

#### Where the Dollar Goes

I NVESTIGATION'S conducted by a New York state commission a few years ago led to the announcement that of each dollar paid by the consumer for food products, the farmer receives only thirty-five cents. Consumers hailed this announcement as a full and complete explanation of the high cost of living. Farmers used it as an explanation of why they could not make bank interest on their investment or compete with city employers in paying wages to labor. Growing out of the discussion that followed the publication of results by this commission, the formation of consumers' leagues was greatly accelerated; consumers were determined to get their share of that intervening sixty-five cents. Farmers' cooperative societies were instituted for the same purpose. Middlemen generally came in for violent abuse.

The chase after that sixty-five cents is now beginning to lose its impetus. Both producers and consumers are beginning to find that such a wide spread as sixty-five cents rules only on products that are highly perishable or very costly in distribution. Consumers' leagues have found that to give members the same service as the middlemen are doing, they must charge approximately the same prices. Farmers have found the direct road to the consumer beset with many obstacles. Great benefits have been derived from cooperation and greater benefits will accrue in the future, but our best-informed rural cooperators do not now talk of eliminating all middlemen.

On the whole, the revelations of the New York commission, and others since appointed, have been productive of some good-and more harm. The most unfortunate result has been the detraction of public attention from the real evils that are making the problem of getting a living more difficult for both producers and consumers. The monopolization of all natural resourcesland, mines, water powers, forests, etc.-the giving of valuable franchises to public service corporations with no commensurate return and the building up of tariff walls, are all greater evils than the so-called exactions of the middlemen. In fact, a large part of the toll which the middleman is obliged to take, finds its way into the pockets of landlords and other holders of special privilege. Commissions of the future, appointed to inquire into the high cost of living, must delve deeper than commissions in the past have done if their work would be of any permanent value.

#### Crops or Weeds

W EEDS, when grown in competition with crops, are able in many cases to remove more plant food from the soil than the crop planted in the regular way. Just how serious is this drain of weeds on plant fertility, has been made very plain by recent investigations at the North Dakota Experimental Station. In one instance, the weeds contained one-sixth more nitrogen and one-third more phosphoric acid than the wheat amongst which they grew. In another case, the weeds extracted-twice as much nitrogen and two and one-half times as much phosphoric acid from the soil as the wheat with which they were competing. Weeds grown among oats contained ten-elevenths as much nitrogen and five-sixths as much phosphoric acid as the oats.

These investigations make it very clear why crops and weeds cannot thrive side by side. They only serve, however, to verify what every good farmer has always known. One of our farmer friends, who is an excellent manager, once remarked to us in the course of a discussion that "he never saw a good mangel and a good lamb's quarters growing side by side; the lamb's quarters were in the centre of a hill of potatoes, the tubers from that hill were in variably poor and small."

Thus do carefully conducted investigations and the observations of practical men combine to show the necessity of fighting weeds year in and year out. Incidentally we might remark that the greatest single measure that can be adopted in the battle with weeds is a short systematic crop rotation with a clean hoe crop at regular intervals.

#### Selecting Our Neighbors

HE choice of a farm involves more than a consideration of soil, climate, markets, buildings and fences. When we buy a farm to live on we adopt a community to live in. There an many instances on record of farms selling for less than their economic value because of disagreeable neighbors. We know, too, of people who have refused to sell when they received a good offer because the "neighbors are so nice."

The neighborhood factor is one that should never be forgotten when we think of making a change. We men may be able to get alors without neighbors, but to the women of the family a certain amount of society is a necessity. Community life, as represented in the church and in organizations, the Women's Institute, or just plain "neighboring" means much to the farm woman and if she is denied such social intercourse she is certain to be discontented; and discontent is contagious. We may well be as careful in se lecting our neighbors as in selecting our soil.

### An Age of Big Business

N Ontario farmer with a load of hogs to sel wrote a big packing concern for a quotation on his ten hogs. In reply, he received a counteous letter refferring him to their local buyer. In a neighboring township a farmers club has been selling hogs to the same packer direct; but they make their shipments by the carload.

Milling companies refuse to deal directly with individual grain growers, but are glad to open business relations with those same identical individuals when they organize themselves into a elevator company of grain growers association. This is an age of Big Business. Time is money to the manager of a big concern. He buys a carload of hogs or a trainfoad of grain in less time than his father dickered over the purchase of a half-dozen hogs or a few sacks of wheat If farmers desire to eliminate the local buve and the profits that he must make in order to live, and do business directly with the big packers or the big millers, then they must be able to sell to the big business man in the quantities in which he deals Similarly, in buying goods the manufacturer and big wholesaler will not deal with individual farmers, but in almost all cases they welcome the trade of organized farmers who order in large quantities. If we would deal with Big Business, we must do it in a big business way. We must ship our grain i 10,000-bushel lots, our hogs in carload lots, egg by the dozen crates, apples by the boatload, and so on through all the list of our products. The present cooperative movement among farmers is an endeavor to do farm business in a Big Busi

I am satisfied that all human beings are titled to the essentials of life, that is to say, it water, to air, and to land. -Robert G. Ingersoll Farmers Doi

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