

presence of both the official grader and a representative of the Provincial Department of Agriculture. The shipper was then notified and an advance payment made of 20 cents per pound, the balance being paid after wool was sold and full settlement received. The wool was immediately graded and packed in wool sacks. On each sack the weight, grade and Dominion emblem were stenciled by the grader.

The wool was open to inspection at all times, and large buyers all over the American Continent notified of the amount of wool offered for sale, average quality, and date when tenders would be received. Bids were received by closed tenders, and wool sold to the highest bidder. The sale was made on the basis of the grades as classified by the Dominion representative, who acted on behalf of both seller and buyer in this respect. Wool was sold for cash, f.o.b. Winnipeg, and a deposit of 5 per cent. of the purchase price was required of the purchaser at time of sale, and balance when shipment was made.

The expenses include printing, advertising, postage, draying, labor, insurance, loading and freight. After the sale was completed an estimate of these expenditures was arrived at and deducted from the price received for the wool.

Amount Sold.

This year we received in the neighborhood of 160,000 lbs. of wool, 154,000 lbs. of that amount being officially graded. The ungraded wool was sold locally for the best price available at that time. It was found this year that a deduction of 1 cent per lb. was barely sufficient to cover all expenses incurred. The following statement represents the number of pounds of the different grades of wool sold and prices received in each case:

Fine clothing.....	2,859 lbs. at 30c. per lb.
Fine medium combing.....	6,726 " " 33c. " "
Fine medium clothing.....	6,581 " " 30c. " "
Medium combing.....	57,230 " " 34c. " "
Medium clothing.....	11,642 " " 30c. " "
Low medium combing.....	37,400 " " 34c. " "
Coarse.....	1,639 " " 32c. " "
Lustré.....	15,542 " " 30c. " "
Gray and black.....	3,111 " " 22c. " "
Rejections.....	2,044 " " 24c. " "
Seedy and dead.....	2,471 " " 22c. " "
Locks and pieces.....	2,989 " " 22c. " "
Tags.....	1,280 " " 10 1/2c. " "
Mohair.....	120 " " 28c. " "

The balance required to make the total of 160,000 lbs. of wool represents the ungraded quantity sold by the Department.

One of the outstanding features in connection with the whole scheme is the number of small sheep owners who benefit by it. It is estimated that Manitoba has a thousand flockmasters and over half of their wool was marketed through our hands this season. By careful breeding, keeping the flock in a healthy condition, and the subsequent care in the handling of the wool clip in clean quarters, an increase of fully 5 cents per lb. could still be procured for the Manitoba wool crop.

The Movement in Quebec.

The co-operative grading and marketing of wool in Quebec in 1916 was thoroughly explained in "The Farmer's Advocate," August 3, so it is unnecessary to discuss it at any length at this time. It would be well, however, to recall that 169,839 pounds, or 23,010 fleeces, were handled in this way at an average price of 41.8 cents per pound. Nine different associations, serving as many counties or districts, have been organized to minister to the needs of the sheepmen in the purchase and sale of live stock, in the acquisition of shepherd's supplies, and, finally, in the marketing of their clip. This system differs somewhat from that adopted in the Prairie Provinces. The extension of its usefulness is largely responsible for the several associations which would probably become necessary in any province where an educational propaganda is being carried on, and buying and selling is the order of things throughout the fall and winter. One large organization, without branches, would, perhaps, experience some difficulty in making itself useful in all these lines, while it can assemble, grade and market the wool to good advantage. In order to illustrate the extent of the movement in Quebec and show what the growers received for their wool we are reproducing here a table, which is a part only of that contained in the issue of August 3, 1916.

Association	No. of members	Average price per lb. cents.
Pontiac.....	483	42.3
Compton.....	282	42.4
Richmond.....	167	41.7
Sherbrooke.....	133	42.3
D. of Bedford.....	153	41.5
Stanstead.....	125	42.3
D. of Beauharnois.....	113	41.1
Argenteuil.....	107	40.0
Megantic.....	49	42.5

In the classification, medium clothing, fine medium combing, and medium combing grades sold at 43 cents per pound; low medium combing at 42 cents, and coarse combing at 41 cents. Black and gray and rejections sold at 38 cents. Fifty-one per cent. of the wool sold for 43 cents a pound. It is also instructive to know in what percentages the good grades were

found in this quantity of wool. The percentage of the total will be found after each grade: medium clothing, 1.1; fine medium combing, .9; medium combing, 49.4; low medium combing, 34.5; coarse combing, 8.1; black and gray, 1.1; rejections, 5.

The wool clip alone coming through these nine associations in the Province of Quebec was cashed for \$71,092.70. Four cents per fleece was found sufficient to cover expenses, and the members received from 7 to 12 cents per pound above the local price.

A Start in Nova Scotia.

In the county of Antigonish, N. S., this year, the Representative of the local Department of Agriculture had about 16,500 pounds of wool assembled and graded. In Guysborough County about 2,000 pounds were handled in the same way, and the entire quantity was sold for 41 1/2 cents per pound, including rejects. The range in price was between 38 and 44 cents. This is only a start in that Province, but the price received will surely advertise the system and insure its success.

THE FARM.

Consider the Hens.

BY PETER MCARTHUR.

Somewhere in his ponderous and reverberating volumes Gibbon remarks that it is not necessary to study a large community in order to observe in operation all the principles of government. I do not remember exactly where to locate the sage and sonorous sentences in which the great historian and philosopher unburdened himself of this weighty thought but I have given you the substance without his sesquipedalian verbiage. Also I am willing to go him one better and say that you can discover a lot of serviceable principles of government without leaving the farm, or even the barnyard. While gathering the eggs this afternoon I hit on a scheme for dealing with the trusts and mergers, that are pushing up the cost of living, that should settle that question once and forever. But perhaps you think there are no trusts and mergers with monopolies of all the necessities of life, and that the high cost of living is entirely due to the war and natural causes. If I believed the earnest denials of business men and financiers I would also doubt the existence of robber trusts and mergers but a short time ago I happened on a piece of evidence that convinced me of their existence more thoroughly than if the government had conducted a dozen investigations. I met an old friend from New York who happens to be the manager of a wholesale firm that sells supplies of various kinds to Canadian manufacturers. When I asked him if it was his intention to stay long in Canada he replied, "O no, it is not necessary. Over here in Canada you have a neat little trust or merger in every line of business that I deal with and I do not have to hustle all over the Dominion to see competing companies. Each merger has a purchasing agent who buys for everyone in his line and he is the only man I need to see, so it doesn't take me long to do my business." Do you need anything more convincing than that? If firms that are supposed to be competing have the same purchasing agent wouldn't it be absurd to think that they have no agreement about selling prices? After getting that bit of information I am not a bit convinced if business men I interview wax indignant when accused of being in a trust. It is all in vain that they answer my questions by saying "Tut, Tut!" and "Pish Tush" and likewise "How now!" The New Yorker's explanation revealed more to me in a minute than I could find out by investigating for months.

Now, being convinced that there are trusts, I want to know why we should not treat them as we do the hens—that is, take the eggs from their nests whenever we need them. We could leave them a nice nest-egg so that they would not change their nests, but we would take their profits for the public good. Come to think of it, I should not use the term "profits" when speaking of a merger or trust that has secured a monopoly. Its accumulations can only be described as "stealings" because they are taken from people who are as helpless before them as the man who is held up and robbed of his purse by a highwayman. Past experience in both the United States and Canada has shown that it is impossible to frame a law that will prevent combinations of this kind. Big Business has learned that combination pays better than competition with the result that we have to pay the highest possible price for the poorest possible service. But if the stolen profits of such combinations were properly taxed so that stealing would no longer pay they would quickly get back to a competitive basis. All that would be needed would be to extend the business tax that is at present levied by the government. The money that these corporations are now piling up has been stolen from the people and should be recovered for the use of the people, now that the expenses of the war threaten to become an intolerable burden. The trusts dare not evade the law by forcing prices higher, for that would make them prohibitive. Indeed there is at present a tendency to reduce prices in some lines because it has been found that the people were stopping buying and the people must continue to buy if the trusts are to get rich.

When such schemes of taxation are suggested there is always an outcry about "confiscation" but

the prices we have to pay for some necessities amounts to a confiscation of our cash. It is time that these combinations were given a dose of their own medicine. Of course they would howl, from their slick legal departments to the last innocent investor, but it looks as if somebody would have to howl before the expenses of the war are met and it should not be the farmers and laboring men. They have enough to bear now. Another favorite argument against a taxation scheme of this kind is that it would discourage capital. "Tut, tut" and "Pish Tush" and likewise "How now!" Does it discourage the hens when we gather their eggs? Not at all! They keep right on laying. At various times in the past I have wrathfully compared the farmers to the hens because whenever they enjoy a little prosperity they begin to cackle over their nests and then some schemer comes along and robs them. And does that discourage the farmers? By no means! They keep right on producing. They must do it or starve. And it is just the same with capital. It must be used in productive work or it will soon be consumed. The trouble is that we have developed a foolish idea that capital must have enormous profits or it will refuse to work. Before the war there was an ocean of capital in Europe that was content with three per cent. while we allowed our scheming capitalists to pile up profits that in some cases reached one hundred and twenty-five per cent. This is not "loose talk," for such a case came out in the courts and is a matter of public record. I think we could tax the profits of Big Business in a way that would yield much revenue and relieve us from increasing tax burdens, without discouraging capital very much. And if the trusts didn't like the tax they could reduce the price of their products to the consumers and put business back on a sane and healthy basis. There are altogether too many fortunes being piled up in Canada in this time of public calamity and they are not all based on munition contracts either. Whenever I visit the cities nowadays I see a lot of nice, plump young broiler millionaires practising crowing at the expensive hotels and restaurants. They are just about ready for the taxation pan and they should be fried to a turn. Then if you want a flock of good "bred-to-lay" Barred Rocks, to gather eggs from, what is the matter with the Banker's Association? I think the department of finance would do well to consider the hens and our methods of dealing with them when the next Budget is under consideration.

The Lure of the Auction Sale.

EDITOR "THE FARMER'S ADVOCATE":

This is the season when the auctioneer's hammer resounds throughout the land—the fall sales are on. The farmer who was kept so busy during the summer that he couldn't find time for a day off, will manage, somehow, to be present at neighbor Brown's sale. "There might be a bargain or two worth picking up," he tells his wife by way of an excuse, for he knows that his cronies will be there and that an auction sale takes no second place to the corner grocery as a clearing house for matters of local interest.

Not many years ago the auction of Brown's chattels would have created an atmosphere not unlike that of a funeral. He may have been successful at the farm game and gathered together a sufficiently large bank balance to enable himself and his wife to enjoy a well-earned rest in some near-by town. But the breaking up of a home, the severing of associations endeared by long standing cast a sadness over the whole community. Thus the auction sale thereby made necessary was often, with many who attended, a matter of gloom and regrets rather than jollification and bargains.

However, I believe the modern auction has its proper place in the economy of things agricultural. Having been both a buyer and a seller I may claim some knowledge of the institution at both ends. Its chief claim for existence may be written down to the convenience afforded all parties concerned. Suppose that Jones wishes to build a new barn. His capital is tied up in stock of which he has a surplus. He sets aside a number of animals and advertizes them for sale on a certain date. Perhaps Smith, who lives across the road is understocked and wants these cattle. At the same time it is pretty safe to assume that there are, at least, several Smiths with similar wants living within the Jones territory. This brings in the element of competition—a very desirable ingredient of a business transaction whether in merchandise or farm stock. Most of us have had experience in trying to sell stock privately. Occasionally the outcome is satisfactory; more often, perhaps, it is disappointing. If one is in no immediate need of the cash, has plenty of stable-room and abundance of feed, then he can strike an attitude of independence. "I've told you my price, take her or leave her as you like," we say, and such an ultimatum sounds good to the farmer who is in a position to stick it out. Such a situation was delightfully sketched by the genial Peter McArthur several years ago in "The Farmer's Advocate," under the title: (I quote from memory) "The Sayings and Doings of Donald Ban." One wonders what Donald would do or say if he were forced to close a deal with some starvation buyer representing himself in the interests of a wealthy abattoir company.

But, of course, the auction sale is not a one-sided affair. It often happens that the buyer is able to make a more satisfactory purchase at a sale ring; not that he is likely to get something for nothing, or anywhere near it—he rarely does that, but he knows the Donald Ban type and has occasionally been held up by the shrewd old Scotchman whose chief delight

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