

1 GEORGE V, A. 1911

23. These rules may be amended at any regular or special meeting by a vote of the members present. Notice of any proposed amendment must be given each member by letter or otherwise at least five days previous to the meeting.

WHY CO-OPERATION IS NOT MORE SUCCESSFUL AMONG FARMERS.

The key to the great future success with our farmers lies in true systematic co-operation. It is just as necessary for farmers to join together for their mutual benefit as it is for any other body of people in the world, and nearly everybody else is working in co-operation with others of like occupation. It is necessary to organize, to have written by-laws, and to elect the most interested growers as officers of the organization. The best business manager obtainable should be engaged, the manager may not necessarily be one of the members.

It is regrettable that farmers' organizations up to the present time have not been more successful, and we must profit by the mistakes that have been made. There are several reasons why farmers' organizations have not been more successful, the chief of which I will explain to you.

(1) Because, as a class, farmers, up to the present time, have not learned the necessity of running their farms strictly upon business principles, as is customary for a business-man to run his business. The farmer's duty, as he sees it is to till the soil, grow and harvest the hay, grain and other products and take care of the stock, sell all above what he requires for his own use for cash, and with the cash purchase necessaries and try to put aside a little cash each year in the bank. Usually he does not keep any other book than the bank pass book furnished to him by the bank. Business men, as a class, do not run their business in this way. They have learned that it is necessary to keep books, and in these books to have accounts of every branch of their business, so that they are able to determine their profits in each department. Some farmers keep accurate books for their farm. Such ones find it a pleasure to do their farming in this business-like way and are good organizers of farmers' co-operative associations, and if members were all of this type as far as the membership is concerned it would without a doubt be quite satisfactory.

(2) We should as farmers try and educate ourselves as to business methods, and we will then learn that farm books are necessary to insure success.

(3) Jealousy on the part of individual members, generally caused by suspicion.

(4) Farmers are more self-supporting than any other occupation, and this has given them considerable independence, but they have been accustomed to managing their own affairs, and not paying large profits, salaries or commissions to any one if they know it, and what are considered large profits by the farmers are looked upon as small profits by the business man. Therefore, when farmers go into business co-operatively very often they look for a manager who will work for the least money rather than one of experience. I know of several instances where men have accepted positions of manager of an association at a lower rate of commission or salary than he knew he could afford to take, but in order to get a Fruit Growers' Association started he accepted the position to the detriment of both association and himself. The manager soon finds that the fruit business is not one of pleasure and when he demands more pay there is always some one in the association who is willing to do it at the same old price, which causes a change in the management. A manager's position is a hard one, far harder than that of a general in an army, as the general only has his own army to look after, but the manager of a Fruit Growers' Association has his own army to look after also the enemy, as some farmers rather erroneously term the apple buyer. A successful manager will get the growers and the apple buyers upon a better understanding of each other, and make it a pleasure for them to do business with each other to their mutual benefit. Apple buyers and growers are both working at the present time to their disadvantage by not working co-operatively with one another.