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We Welcome Practical Progressive Ideas

Trade increases the wealth and glory of a country; but its real strength and stamina are to be looked for among the cultivators of the land.—Lord Chatham.

Vol. XXXIV

FOR THE WEEK ENDING APRIL 22, 1915

No. 16

FARM AND DAIRY & RURAL HOME

The Story of Three Cooperative Farmers' Clubs
They now do an Annual Business of \$100,000 and 90% of the Farmers in Rawdon Township, Hastings Co., Ont., are Members. Their Success and How Achieved.

BY F. E. ELLIS, B.S.A., EDITOR FARM AND DAIRY

THE Cooperative Capital of Canada! Where is it? Rawdon township, in the county of Hastings, province of Ontario, can advance an excellent claim for the title. No less than 90 per cent. of the farmers in that township market their produce through their cooperative clubs and purchase staple supplies for their homes and farms through the same agencies. The cooperative business conducted in this township is a most effectual reply to the oft-repeated declaration that farmers will not and can not hold together. Pessimists who never expect to see real rural cooperation, should visit these enthusiastic Rawdon cooperators, as I did a few weeks ago, talk with the men, attend their meetings, and then realize that farmers not only can cooperate, but are cooperating now, and that very successfully.

Three years ago the farmers of Rawdon township did business in a manner that, at least, had the sanction of long usage. They sold their hogs to the local buyer, exchanged their eggs at local stores for trade, and on every bushel of grain purchased and on every ton of feed, the local feed merchant had first to get his liberal commission. To-day, through their three clubs—at Minto, Anson, and Springville—these farmers in 1914 did a cooperative business of approximately \$100,000; and it was profitable business for them. Here are a few actual transactions to illustrate the benefits of doing business the cooperative way.

Profits in Salt and Sugar

One of the purchases made last year by the Minto Farmers' Club was a carload of fine salt, costing them, laid down at the nearest railway station, \$6.40 a ton. Previously they had been accustomed to paying \$1.00 for a 250-pound bar-

rel, or \$11.20 a ton. A single shipment of sugar came to \$437. The best local quotation was \$475.

Shortly before my visit, a car of coal oil had been purchased, 40 barrels for the Minto Club and 30 barrels for the members of the Anson Club. This oil cost the members just 11 cts. a gallon. Locally they had been paying 18 cts. a gallon in five-gallon lots and 20 cts. a single gallon.

These are only a few of their purchases. Other items on their list of 1914 business were: Seed corn, \$150; coal, \$260; binder twine, \$8,000; metal roofing, \$1,100; clover seed, between \$600 and \$700; grain and mill feeds, \$8,000, and various smaller purchases too numerous to mention.

The purchase of seed corn is worthy of special

mention. It illustrates a secondary benefit of cooperative dealing. The corn purchased was got direct from the grower in South-western Ontario, and was the very best procurable. Of course, it was on the ear. Previously it had been the habit of the majority of these same farmers to buy their seed corn already shelled from the dealer; and all who are acquainted with the seed corn business know that growers sell only the poorest of their seed corn. Through the cooperative society, these Hastings county farmers got better seed corn than they would otherwise have planted.

Marketing End Most Important

Cooperative purchasing is the simplest form of cooperative business, and so long as a cooperative club or society limits itself to the purchasing of supplies, its sailing will be reasonably smooth. The greatest difficulties are always met with in cooperative marketing; and this has been the Rawdon experience. These clubs, however, have surmounted the initial difficulties and are now doing unusually well in finding a market for their produce. In fact, the selling end has superseded the purchasing end in importance. In the year 1914 live stock shipments alone totalled \$76,171 in value. In the month of January this year, shipments totalled \$6,750, and one shipment the first week of February brought \$1,826 into the pockets of these cooperating farmers. Their shipments are mostly of pigs, sheep, and calves. There are few beef cattle in this dairy district, or the cooperative live stock business would be even more important than it is.

Poultry shipments in 1914 aggregated \$1,826. The association owns its own shipping crates, and so are at liberty to ship wherever they can secure the best offer. A transaction of one week



The Home of One of the Cooperators, Mr. G. I. Bailey, of Rawdon Township, Hastings Co., Ont.



Shipping Day at Rawdon Station. A Group of Farmers Who Cooperate in Both Buying and Selling.