

My View of the Small Farm Proposition

(Continued from page 3.)

that we can neither buy nor sell to good advantage. The big farmer can buy a car load of feed when prices are low and feed 30 or 40 head of steers, or carry along a bunch of pigs. Marketing time comes, and he has something to offer. He can attract buyers and this insures competition. The milk he has to haul to the station makes a load. The car of potatoes, a car load of hay, a car load of fat steers or hogs, does away with the expense of retailing small loads to a nearby town or market. Undoubtedly the big farm has all the advantages when it comes to buying and selling. They buy in bulk, haul larger loads and produce in larger quantities.

Outlook for the Farm Boy.

Scarcely a day goes by without us hearing something about the city attracting our farm boys. One reason is that the old farm hasn't any prospect in it for the farm boy. He wants to get out of the little rut. His perspective is broader than that of his father. The little farm and all the little details are too small and narrow. The small farm might keep several boys busy, but they would be about as well off in the fall as they were in the spring. American boys demand big things—the 20 or 50-acre corn field, the herd of stock, the 20-acre hay field; and who can blame them. The boy problem will solve itself on the large farm.

Conclusions and Answer.

The general trend of things is toward greater acreage. The Western settler with 160 acres of land is after 320 acres. The Eastern man is cutting down man labor and adding larger machinery. In general our perspective is broader. The small farm does not offer the opportunities that the big one does as a business proposition. Too much of the capital is tied up in non-productive investments such as barns and houses. The balance will be large in proportion to the receipts. The small farm does not offer the opportunity to the farm boy.

One course lies open to the small farmer, where he can overcome many of his difficulties. This is by cooperating with his neighbors. He can reduce his machinery bill by clubbing with three or four farmers. He can do away with much of the trucking by taking turns hauling the milk. One team can collect the weekly egg output and so on. A group of farmers can buy a car load of feed and divide it up and in many ways sundry problems can be solved. The balance in favor of the large farm still maintains. Conditions as they are at present foster rather than discourage the increase in acreage. My answer to the problem is strongly in favor of the large farm, up to the stage where machinery and equipment will not have to be duplicated. Leave the small farm to the market gardener, the specialist, or the horticulturalist.

Cooperative Wool Sales

EDITOR, Farm and Dairy:—With reference to your comment on the Cooperative wool sales, I would say that whether "Canadian farmers will be content to sell their wool through the old channels" will depend somewhat upon the success of this first attempt. As yet, however, those who took the chance know nothing of the results. The weights and shrinkage in grading, docking, and the trend of market until such time as money is received will have a great deal to do with the success of this venture. I, as one of the shippers, think that the shippers should have

had the first information regarding the sale.

The complaint has always been made about farm cooperative associations, that the farmers will not keep quiet about their own business, but here the Secretary of the Association before any returns have been made or accounts audited, like a boy with a new toy, runs off to the papers with a pat "me on the back, what a good boy am I!"—appeal.

Again I cannot agree with your advice that the Department officials should divorce themselves from wool marketing. On the contrary I claim this should only be the beginning. Farmers who are spending all their time producing the greatest yields at the lowest cost have no time to study markets and if they do, the producing end suffers. In no large business does the same man make an implement or other commodity and then go out and sell it. A farmers' cooperative association can do nothing with profiteering at its other end. We have a very successful club here, handling \$80,000 worth of live stock, but still all we can do is to beat the local stock dealer out of his 15 and 20 cents a hundred commission. The market manipulators still work the market, down a dollar this week, if they think there will be a rush and up \$2 next week because they know the farmer will be afraid to sell, then down next because they know that if the stock is ready it will have to be brought out. The more the Government, through its officials, takes charge of marketing, the easier it will be for them to step in and prevent the excessive profit made by the handlers of produce.

I do not consider this paternalism, but simply the looking after our business by the men whom we have elected to handle the country's business. Until this war came, however, such a sordid thought as to whether their constituents had enough bread and butter never entered their minds.

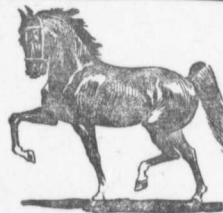
No. To my mind, the farmer should not have to worry about the selling of his produce. He should be able to load it on the cars, either small lots or in cooperation with his neighbors in carload lots and rest assured that he would get his proportionate share of the value of his products.

The only place that this can be done that I know of is in the markets department of New York City, where a farmer can ship a barrel of apples, or carload of single chickens, or a thous-

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and bushels of potatoes, or a dozen carloads, and the city will sell them and make returns.

No, we want no less government supervision of produce selling, but more as the food combines are much too large for even farmers cooperative associations to handle, and we sometimes think that at present they are stronger than the government.—G. T. Marsh, Grey Co., Ont.

The cooperative principle is for each member to provide, if possible, sufficient

capital to finance his own trade with the society. It is therefore necessary to get a large number of members with moderate investment prepared to do business with the society rather than that the capital should be subscribed from a comparatively few, from whom the necessary volume of business cannot be expected. The profit is made on the trade, not on capital, and if the latter is fully subscribed by each member taking one share only, it will be more likely to ensure success for a cooperative association from the start.

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