Co-Operative Farm Products Marketing

How It Is Done in Europe and May Be Done in America to the Profit of Both Farmer and Consumer

By MATHEW S. DUDGEON

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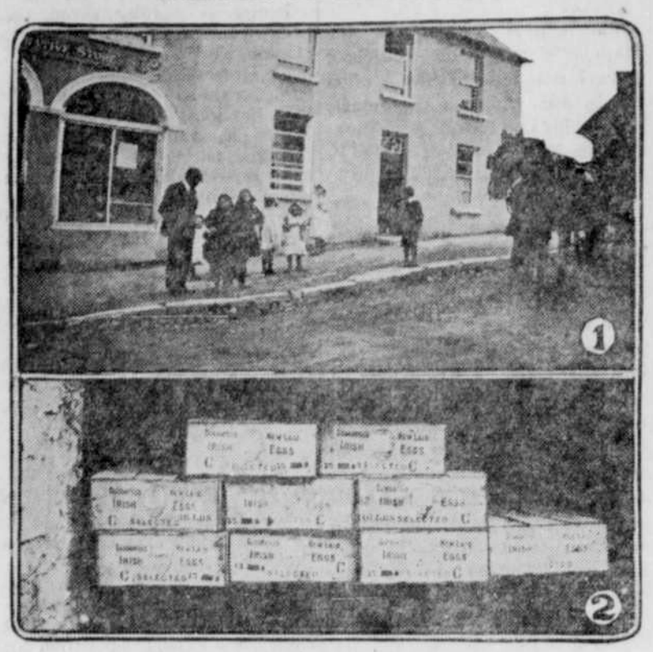
THE HEN TO THE RESCUE.



1—Where the Members Bring Their Co-operative Eggs.
2—Guaranteed New Laid Irish Eggs Selected.

Dunglow, County Donegal, Ireland.—This is the story of how the Irish hen scratches a living for the people of Dunglow out of the desolate bogs and hillsides of County Donegal. The hen could not do it so long as the farmers failed to market profitably the eggs she laid. She could not do it in America where the men who market the eggs get more of the selling price than does the farmer who owns the hens. The Donegal hen is a money maker for her Donegal owner because co-operative marketing has made eggs a profitable produce for the farmer.

Hens to the Rescue.

Throughout the more fertile parts of Ireland the American party continually saw evidences that co-operation played an important part in making possible the prosperity that was everywhere apparent. It was several times mentioned to us, however, that if we wanted to see what co-operation would do under most adverse conditions we must go to Dunglow, in County Donegal. So to Dunglow we came. The adverse conditions are here, yet the people are neither ragged nor starved. The children are as happy as American children and the first little girl that we saw in the community had a store doll in her arms. That means money from some source, for toys wait for the necessities of life. Inquiry soon revealed that the first source of income which is depended upon is the sale of eggs through the co-operative society conducted by a native boy, Paddy Gallagher. It is true that the soil is so poor and so thin that a living can not be dug from it. But the industrious hens are busily scratching away where the soil is too thin for hoe or spade or plow. Formerly no farm product brought good prices and prior to the organization of the co-operative society the local price for eggs was four to six cents less than the price quoted upon the nearest market at Strabone or Derry. Generally, too, this price was paid in trade at the store and there was never any certainty that the merchandise delivered was worth the prices charged. Egg raising was not profitable and the few eggs produced were merely an incidental by-product.

When the co-operative organization, "The Templecrone Co-operative Agricultural society," as it is called, was formed, however, there was a change. The farmers soon learned that if they furnished good eggs they got good prices. They were told how to pick out good layers; how to keep the eggs fresh and clean; how often to gather them; how frequently to bring them to market. They were instructed as to testing eggs and breeding egg layers. They bring in the eggs. The association does the rest.

Good Business Methods.

This is how they do it: Each week the agricultural wholesale society at Dublin sends to the local manager a forecast giving the figures that will be obtainable for eggs, butter, and poultry, and stating where there is likely to be a demand for eggs.

Each day, on the other hand, the manager writes to the wholesale society telling just what he has on hand and what the prospects are for the next few days. Sometimes they use the telegraph. Then every few days the wholesale society writes or telegraphs definite directions as to where and when the eggs must be sent. The eggs, however, it should be noted, are not sent to Dublin, but are sent directly to the place where they are to be eaten. There is no complicated machinery, no red tape, no delay, no waste, no bad eggs and, best of all from the standpoint of the members, the price of eggs instead of being four to six cents below the figures quoted in the nearest city markets is now two to four cents higher than there. It is all simple and we see no reason why the entire plan cannot be used in any American village and the results duplicated.

Expert Knowledge Necessary.

The association did not rush into the egg business without preparation. Patrick Gallagher, the manager of the society, after he had made a beginning with the society, felt the need of more expert knowledge. He went to the Dunboe Co-operative society and here he gained a thorough knowledge of packing and dealing in eggs and poultry, and also learned co-operative bookkeeping and the general business methods followed by that society. Up to this time Mr. Gallagher had given his services to the society gratis. He was now employed at 75 cents per day. The society's eggs were now handled according to the most improved method, and a good market found for them, so that the society was able to compete on favorable terms with the local buyers. The result was that the price offered for eggs by the other buyers throughout the entire district immediately rose and all egg producers profited.

The association, after giving careful consideration of the question of buying eggs by weight, decided to give it a trial, being convinced that it is not only fair to those bringing in the larger eggs, but that it is the best, and in fact the only inducement to the rearing of an improved breed of fowl laying the larger eggs. Old customs die hard, and many of the members looked askance at the novel method of calculating the price of their goods. But on the whole it has found favor. There is already a marked improvement in the size of the eggs throughout the district and there is every reason to expect that the production of larger eggs in the district may cause eggs to become a much greater source of income in the future. The association has also supplied its poultry station with trap nests, so that members will be able to procure the eggs of the best laying strains. As an instance of what might be achieved in this direction, the society has received this year for 18-pound eggs the record price of 50 cents per dozen. Those eggs were, of course, picked from among a large quantity and sold when prices were highest; still it is a very striking example of what may be gained by a careful selection of layers. The fact that the Templecrone eggs gained third place at the Sheffield poultry exhibition held this year, and second place at the Bristol exhibition, shows that Mr. Gallagher is doing his part in building up a reputation for them.

Quality the Big Thing.

The fact must not be ignored, however, that the results are obtained not altogether by good business management in the marketing. Higher prices prevail not only because the eggs are sent promptly to a good market, but because the eggs are actually the eggs of the highest possible grade, and are sorted in such a way as to form an attractive and profitable article of commerce for the retail dealer who purchases from the marketing association. In other words it has been demonstrated that good marketing can only succeed where the eggs themselves are good. Quality is of primary importance.

The first point to be considered is the outward appearance of the eggs. Dirty or cracked eggs are always rejected. Rough shells constitute more or less of a defect since roughness may raise the suspicion that the egg is a pickled egg. New laid eggs have what might be called a rough finished gloss upon them, which cannot be duplicated or imitated in any way. The egg which has once been soiled is unmarketable. Any effort to remove the dirt removes also the gloss and produces an appearance that is inconsistent with the general idea of freshness.

Not only must the egg be of a good appearance, but it must be good throughout. The testing is by the now well known system of candling in a dark room. It is held up against a powerful light to reveal whether it is a fresh egg or one in which there has begun the process of deterioration. The co-operative associations, handling as they do so large a number, generally test their eggs in large trays, the trays often holding 120 eggs at a time. Dirty eggs, bad eggs, questionable eggs no longer appear. Because of care on the farmer's part they are no longer produced. Since the society buys by weight, which is after all a far more just measure than the count, the average egg is gradually growing bigger. If small eggs are produced they do not reach the market.

Co-operation Helps the Consumer.

It is of course conceded that if there is a big supply of good food, food will be cheaper than when it is scarce and more people will be able to get it. If co-operation not only sends better eggs to the city, but sends them in double or triple the quantity then eggs will in the end be plentiful and cheaper. As a result the consumer will profit. This is particularly true if the eggs are, under co-operation, produced at less cost and with less waste.

It will be readily understood that if the farmer finds that egg producing is a profitable enterprise the quantity of eggs produced will vastly increase. Comprehensive figures for Ireland are difficult to obtain, but this has proved true in Denmark. In 1895, according to official figures, there was exported from Denmark something less than $2,000,000 worth of eggs. Fourteen years later, when co-operative marketing had demonstrated the profit that was in the business, there was exported in one year nearly $7,000,000 worth of eggs. Wolf states that while in 1893 the number of hens kept in Denmark was about 5,900,000, in 1911 the figure had reached the 12,000,000 mark. It is significant that while the number of hens had only a little more than doubled, the value of the yield had become nearly four-fold. This was largely the result of the fact that the improved conditions under which poultry was kept had greatly improved the laying ability of each hen. The same sort of thing is occurring everywhere in Continental Europe. In Germany, in France, in Belgium, in Italy, co-operative societies have undertaken the marketing of eggs with great profit to the farmer and with considerable satisfaction to the consumer.

Democratic Management.

All the offices of the concern are in the hands of officers elected by the members. It is a most democratic organization. Every man has one vote, no man has more. The member who markets eggs produced by a dozen hens has as many votes as he who owns a thousand layers. In Dunglow, and elsewhere as well, they consider this "one man one vote" plan essential. "The man should vote," they say, "not his money."

They pay a good price in cash for the eggs. And when the annual settlement comes there is always a dividend to investors. But those who have invested their money, much or little, get only five per cent. No society under the supervision of the Irish Agricultural Organization society is permitted to pay dividends upon shares in excess of that percentage. What is left is distributed to the members in proportion to the amount of eggs they have marketed through the co-operative society. It goes as an additional price paid for eggs.

These two principles are considered fundamental and essential; first, one man one vote; second, all profits in excess of a small dividend to investors must go to those who contributed to the profits by furnishing the product.

Why Not in America?

Why hasn't this sort of thing been done in America? It isn't because the American farmer and his wife do not need the money. They do. It isn't because there is no demand for good eggs. Eggs were never so much in demand and buyers are more particular than ever about quality. The strictly fresh eggs find buyers everywhere. The fact is there is no good reason why American farmers should not do business as intelligently as Irishmen. Some of them do, but not many. It takes no capital and can be done on a small scale.

Interview With Dr. McCarthy.

Dr. Charles McCarthy, who is looking over the Dunglow co-operative situation, has studied co-operation not only in Ireland, but in Italy, Germany, Belgium, Denmark and elsewhere. No one knows better than he conditions abroad and at home. He understands American rural conditions as few understand them. In his opinion co-operative organizations that exist in Dunglow will do just as well in Massachusetts or Minnesota as they do in Ireland. One thing, however, the farmer must learn and must learn thoroughly. That is, that simple co-operation will not make over a bad business man into a good business man nor will it make egg packing or any other farm industry profitable. Along with co-operation must come good business methods, good bookkeeping, good salesmanship, careful packing, full knowledge of the market.

BELOW THE STAIRS

What the Butler Heard Through the Broken Furnace Pipe in the Cellar.

By WILL A. PAGE.

Evans, the butler, was industriously reading the newspaper out loud. On the other side of the kitchen table, Mortimer, the coachman, was mending his whip.

"The daring robbers then bundled up their booty and decamped," the pompous butler read very loudly, "leaving the detective officers baffled without a clew. As there was no evidence that the doors had been forced or locks tampered with, the detectives were at first inclined to suspect the servants; but, as Mr. Walcott declared he had the utmost faith in them, the police were not allowed to search their rooms."

Mortimer, obvious of the newspaper item, did not reply when Evans stopped reading, as though expecting some comment.

"I say, Mortimer, old chap, that isn't such a bad haul, is it? The paper says they got away with $2,000 worth of silver."

"Bad haul?" queried Mortimer. "What are you talking about?"

"Talking about?" repeated Evans, disgustedly.

"Why, what else should I be talking about but the big robbery down the street at old man Walcott's house."

"Oh, I'm sorry. I didn't know you were reading anything of importance."

"I should say it was of importance. As the servants there are suspected, that naturally places us in an awkward position."

"What do you mean?"

"Aren't we all servants? And if one of the fashionable families takes up a fad, don't all the other fashionable families follow suit?"

"Nonsense, Evans. You're an old fool."

"I tell you," persisted Evans, "that if the Walcott servants are suspected of dishonesty, the servants of every fashionable family in the city will have to clear their characters."

"Why, we are well known to the missus. I have been with her six years, yet you dare—" and Mortimer rose flourishing his whip.

"I don't mean you," sneered Evans. It's Miss Charlotte who is more likely to be suspected."

Mortimer resisted the inclination to strike the fellow, though he was strongly tempted. The door bell sounded then. Evans, with a muttered imprecation, rushed to a small mirror hanging on the kitchen wall, primped himself and disappeared, bowing elaborately to Charlotte, the maid newly come to service, who happened to be entering the kitchen at that particular moment.

"Now, then, you stupid," broke in Charlotte, "you almost made me drop the chinaware."

Charlotte bowed, without speaking to Mortimer, who commenced to mend the whip with redpubled anxiety. She busied herself at the gas stove making chocolate, and neither spoke a word for several moments. Then Evans broke in hurriedly upon them.

"It's a detective," he cried, rushing across the room toward the door which led into the front basement, "I seen it on the card he sent up to the missus. 'A. L. Walker, Detective Headquarters,' that's what the card said." He opened the door into the basement.

"But what does he want?" inquired Charlotte.

"That's just what I'm going to find out. There's a furnace pipe in there that is loose, and it opens right under where the detective is sitting. I can hear every word." And he disappeared into the cellar.

"I'm afraid Mr. Evans is not troubled by scruples, Mr. Mortimer," said Charlotte, turning to the gas stove again. "I always thought butlers a bad lot."

"I'm glad you think so—" began Mortimer.

"Why, Mr. Mortimer, what do you mean?"

"Of course one can't be jealous of a butler," broke in Mortimer, dropping the whip.

"Jealous? Well, I like that." With a toss of the head.

"Perhaps I shouldn't say jealous," continued Mortimer abashed. "But, you see, I wanted to ask you—"

"Well?"

"If you'd spend your next evening out with me, unless you have some other engagement."

"Next week, on Thursday?" said Charlotte coquettishly. "No, I don't think I have anything on my card."

"Then I'll put you down for next Thursday, Miss Charlotte. Thanks!"

"Did you say it was for the grand opera, Mr. Mortimer?"

"No, Miss Charlotte. For the coachmen's ball."

"The coachmen's ball?" repeated Charlotte enthusiastically. "Oh, how jolly. I've always wanted to go to a coachman's ball. It's—it's rather exclusive, isn't it?"

"I should say so," answered Mortimer proudly. "Only those who drive for the west end families are eligible."

A sudden boiling over of the milk interrupted these pleasant anticipations of future happiness, and Mortimer was dispatched post haste to the dining room to secure some chocolate. Charlotte, left alone, reached for her handkerchief and found a letter in the pocket of her apron. Evidently she was deeply interested, for she read and reread the letter several times. Then she untied the handkerchief, disclosing a large diamond ring, and tried it on several fingers.

"Cracky! A diamond!" cried Evans, entering suddenly from the cellar. Charlotte hastily returned the ring to her pocket.

"It's my own," she declared, "it was given to me by a dear old lady who has just died."

"Stuff and nonsense," broke in the man roughly. "It's the diamond someone stole from the missus—I heard all about it through the stovepipe. The detective is looking for it now—he's going to search the house."

"But it's mine, I say—"

"Ah, your game is up, my girl. Give me the ring and I won't tell. Say you'll marry me—I can sell the diamond—"

"Let me go—you hurt me. Help! Let me go."

"Perhaps you'll be good enough to oblige the lady," said Mortimer, striding down to Evans and giving him a twist on the collar. "Be off with you."

Evans withdrew to one side, angrily. "I'm going to tell the detective," he cried roughly. "Then we'll see whose turn it will be."

The man rushed out of the kitchen angrily. Charlotte flushed red. "What is he going to tell the detective?" asked Mortimer.

"He—he—thinks I have stolen this diamond," she answered, showing the ring.

"My god! where did you get that ring?" cried Mortimer, "and he says you stole it? Quick—give it to me before the detective comes. I'll say I took it."

"But it's mine—really—"

"Then what does he mean? Ah, I know you wouldn't steal a ring, Miss Charlotte—you wouldn't steal anything more than you've already stolen—my heart—but if I can help you, only say the word.'"

Evans entered a few minutes later at an unfortunate moment. He was decidedly gloomy.

"Fine joke, you people may call this, making game of a man," he muttered, crossing to the cellar door.

"The detective—you told him?" eagerly asked Mortimer.

"Yes, I told him. I goes upstairs and tells the missus and the detective, just as he is about to leave, that her maid says as she stole the diamond ring and is waiting in the kitchen to be arrested. At that the detective and the missus commence to laugh, and the deteck he says: 'Guilty conscience, my lady. Watch that maid. Some day she'll steal preserves.' And he goes out laughing. And then the missus turns to me and says: 'Evans, the detective found my ring under the hall rug, where it had fallen.' 'All right, ma'am,' says I, backing out, for I saw something was wrong.

"'While on the subject, Evans,' continued the missus, 'perhaps you will explain just how you learned I had lost a diamond ring. I never told you.' And so I was caught and the best I could do was to say that one of the furnace pipes was loose, and I happened to be in the cellar by accident. Now the missus has given me orders to fix that furnace pipe."

And he gloomily plunged into the cellar.

"So you really believe I had stolen the ring?" said Charlotte.

"Not once. I was prepared to swear I had stolen it, because I love you."

A terrific crash from the cellar interrupted them again at a critical moment.

"What's that?" cried Charlotte.

"I think the furnace pipe must have fallen on Evans," answered Mortimer, cheerily, taking her in his arms.

"Poor Evans," murmured Charlotte. "And we'll use my diamond ring as an engagement ring. We must save money now, you know."

Women in Business.

The extent to which women are leaving home to enter the business world is shown by the following figures for the United States. There are:

239,077 stenographers.
327,635 teachers and professors.
481,159 in various trades.
770,055 engaged in agricultural pursuits.
7,300 physicians and surgeon.
7,395 clergy.
2,195 journalists.
1,037 architects, designers, and draughtsmen.
1,010 lawyers.
429,497 women in various professions.

Unexplored Arctic Circle.

Away up under the Arctic circle there are probably tribes, Indian and Eskimo, whose very existence is unknown, and here also roam vast herds of the grandest game to be found on the face of the globe, and, if reports are to be credited, many new and strange beasts.

To penetrate into these unmapped lands calls for grit and stamina of the highest order. The pioneer must be prepared to face hardships and perils as great as those of arctic and antarctic adventurers.

Playing for Safety.

"Your daughter plays nothing but classical music."

"Yes," replied Mrs. Cumrox. "It is better so. If she plays only classics we can't be sure whether what annoys us is her performance or the composition itself."

Drawing the Distinction.

"You are an orator," said the boss, critically; "but you're no politician."

"What's the difference?"

"An orator uses figures of speech; but when a politician uses figures he puts a dollar mark in front of 'em."

SUCCESS WITH CLO

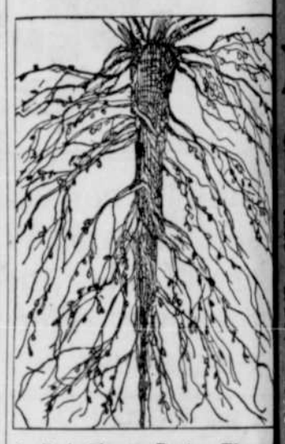
WORTHY OF MORE GENE GROWTH BY OUR FARMER

Crop Should Not Be Looked U Cure for All Ills of Soil, but an Important Factor i Renovation of the Land.

Clover has been grown with success in practically every sta the Union. Its beneficial actio the soil, its period of usefulnes wide range of nurse crops with it can be grown, and its excellen a hay and pasture crop, all se commend it to a place in our ping system and prove it wor more general growth by our fa Complaints of worn-out soils, and unprofitable crops, do not from farmers who have made an important factor in the cr system.

Clover should not be looked as a cure for all the ills of th but as an important factor i renovation and in maintaining creasing the supply of vegetable ter in the soil. Clover belongs class of plants that, with the a bacterial growth on their have the power of absorbing the gen of the air and leaving it soil for the use of succeeding The clover plant has a large system that leaves a consid amount of vegetable matter i soil. This decaying vegetable proves beneficial, in times of d in holding soil moisture. It assists in keeping light soils "washing" and "blowing," and soils from "baking."

The clover roots grow quite d penetrating the subsoil and br it up; so that, when they are de the soil suitable for crop gro made deeper and the drainage i improved. Results of exper



A Red Clover Root. These Roots Open Up the Subso Add Vegetable Matter. Not ules on Roots. These Are C by Nitrogen-Gathering Ba Which Enable Clover Pla Take Nitrogen From the A Add It to the Soil.

show that, in continuous wheat ing, the sowing of six poun clover seed every spring wi wheat, and plowing under the in the fall, has given an avera nual increase, during a period years, of nearly 2.6 bushels pe Still better results have been ed where clover is used in fo five year rotations in combi with grain, cultivated crops a use of farm manures. On heav clover should be grown in fo five year rotations, while on soils, and soils badly in need o table matter, it may be more ficially grown in a three-year ro

In growing clover, it is a ma wisdom to sow only the best o Do not sow the seed until it ha given a germination test. Th easily be made by means o plates and a cotton cloth. Ta eral folds of a small piece of cloth; thoroughly wet this and between the folds a known (several hundred) of the seeds planted. Place this on one pla cover with another plate, bott up. See that the cloth is kept not wet, and at the end of five days, determine the percent germination. Seed of poor will not germinate at all; o should, it will at least give plants that may not survive th son or the following winter. Th should be free from weed se other adulterations. Buy se from reliable sources, and so possible, use home-grown seed it is of strong vitality and purity.

Sowing Clover.

Clover should not be sown t ly; yet it is desirable to sow ciently deep so that it will blow out nor dry out easil amount of seed per acre w slightly with the method o It is believed that in general sow too little, rather than too seed. When sown separately it be at the rate of six to ten for red and mammoth, four to alsike, three to four for white.

Cold Wind Harmful.

A bitter cold wind blowin horse's breast does much pe harm, encouraging rheumatis ness and like ailments.

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5 Wom Avoid Operat

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1. Hodgdon, Me.—"I had pains in bo I could scarcely straighten up at was so nervous I could not sleep, and any better until I submitted to an opera Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compou woman."—Mrs. Hayward Sowers, Hod

2. Charlotte, N. C.—"I was in bad pains in both sides and was very which the doctor said was a tumor, and I had an operation. A friend advised ham's Vegetable Compound, and I gladly fine health."—Mrs. Rosa Sims, 16 Winor

3. Hanover, Pa.—"The doctor advise husband got me Lydia E. Pinkham' experienced great relief in a short time. and can do a hard day's work and not 196 Stock St., Hanover, Pa.

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5. Cleveland, Ohio.—"I was very irr my side pained me so that I expect ration. Doctors said they knew of n would help me. I took Lydia E. Pinkh table Compound and I became regula from pain. I am thankful for such a cine and will always give it the highest Mrs. C. H. Griffith, 7305 Madison Av., Cl

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