

of \$26, the society reported, in 1924, current loans amounting to \$653,124 and gross profits of \$74,030. Interest at the rate of 7 p.c. was paid on \$5 shares. In view of the purpose for which the society was founded, it is of interest to examine the loans made during a particular year. In 1924, the greatest number of loans, 242, was for amounts between \$100 and \$300. Ten dollars was borrowed by 179 persons, from \$10 to \$25 by 188 persons and from \$25 to \$50 by 170 persons. Of the total 1,206 loans, 989 were for less than \$300. Until his death in 1921, Mr. Desjardins was manager of the society at Lévis, but he found time to travel up and down through the province, organizing banks in rural districts among farmers, in fishing villages and among miners at Thetford Mines and Black Lake. In 1923, the Quebec Statistical Year Book reported the existence of 113 co-operative banks in the province—an increase of 13 over the returns for 1920. The annual business exceeded \$11,000,000, on which profits realized amounted to \$354,804.

In 1906 a provincial law was enacted to govern the operation of the co-operative banks and in 1915 an amendment required annual reports to be submitted to the Provincial Secretary. Loans are made only to members holding shares of \$5 and must be repaid at fixed periods. A board of management has the general direction of each bank, but a committee on credit of at least three members passes on the loans requested by the members. A board of supervision of three members checks loans and audits accounts. All these services are given free of charge and aid in keeping the costs of operation at a low level. In 1914 operating expenses of the bank at Lévis were one-seventh of 1 p.c. of the business carried on during the year. Each bank is required to deposit at least 10 p.c. of its net profit in a reserve fund. Dividends on investments vary from $4\frac{1}{2}$ to 8 p.c. and interest on deposits from 3 to 4 p.c.

Co-operative banks of the Desjardins model have spread from Quebec to some of the neighbouring villages in Ontario, but they have been largely confined to the French-Canadian population.

In Alberta, Manitoba and Ontario, the legislatures have made efforts to establish co-operative systems for the extension of short-term loans to farmers, the two western provinces enacting laws governing the formation and operation of rural credit societies in 1917 and Ontario taking similar action in 1921.

The system in each of these provinces is a co-operative one, but unlike that in Quebec, it is directed and supported by the provincial government. Local credit societies are organized within limited districts and are required to have stock subscribed by a fixed number of farmers and a certain percentage paid up before business is commenced. Provision is made for government guarantee of loans and for municipal co-operation. Loans may only be made to members of the society for the purposes defined in the statute and the amount is limited. In each province provision is made for a reserve fund. The management of each society is vested in a board of 7 or 9 directors, of whom the members of the society, the municipality and the provincial government each nominate a fixed number.

The success of the co-operative banks in Quebec and the increasing need in the agricultural districts of other provinces for better credit facilities led to efforts to have the Dominion Parliament enact legislation giving legal status to co-operative credit societies. In 1907 a bill making special provision for the establishment of co-operative credit societies, as well as trading societies, was defeated by the Senate, after passing the House of Commons in 1906. Two similar bills failed to pass the House of Commons in later sessions. During the sessions of 1909-10 and 1910-11,