

Acts and in three provinces there have been extensive amendments or consolidations. Such legislation varies between provinces but in most cases interest on capital is limited and profits are required to be distributed to members on the basis of patronage. There is no Dominion co-operative Act but several farmers organizations have been incorporated under the Dominion Companies Act. Others have been incorporated by special Acts of the Dominion Parliament and provincial legislatures. Over 90 p.c. of the associations reporting are incorporated by one or other of these means but many have not achieved such status and are buying or shipping clubs or circles.

The Provincial Governments have set up machinery to further the cause of co-operation usually within their Departments of Agriculture and in connection with marketing. The Agricultural Economics Branch was established within the Dominion Department of Agriculture in 1929 and one phase of its work has been the study of the farmers' co-operative movement. Under joint agreements with the Provincial Governments, a survey of existing organizations was undertaken in 1931 and has been maintained annually since that date.

The number of associations reporting to the Economics Division has shown an increase in each of the seven years since the survey was started. The total business for the year increased from 1932-33 to a peak in 1936-37 of \$173,927,117. The total business for the year 1937-38 amounted to \$155,080,435, a decrease of \$18,846,682 from the previous year. In 1937 Saskatchewan suffered extremely from drought and the estimated value of grain handled by the Saskatchewan Co-operative Wheat Producers, Limited, dropped from \$56,000,000 in 1936-37 to \$15,000,000 in 1937-38, a decrease of \$41,000,000. Therefore, the business of other co-operatives increased by about \$22,000,000. A scrutiny of the results of individual associations reveals that this gain was quite widespread and that, in general, business was good.

In addition to the trading associations described above and for which statistics are given in Table 31, farmers are interested in other forms of co-operative activity.

A mutual fire insurance company was formed in Ontario as early as 1836 and several, still functioning as farmers' mutuals, were organized between 1850 and 1860. To-day there are about 350 such companies with net assets of over \$5,000,000 and insurance at risk amounting to over \$1,000,000,000. These have a long history of successful operation behind them.

Approximately 62,000 or 5 p.c. of the telephones in Canada are operated by rural co-operative companies in which there is a total investment of \$19,193,394.

Inspired by the example of Quebec, 6 other provinces have passed co-operative credit union legislation within recent years, and societies have been formed for the purpose of making credit available to members. A number of these have been formed in rural communities.

Societies have been formed by fishermen on both coasts for the purpose of canning and marketing fish and buying gear on the co-operative plan. As many of the members of these societies are also farmers, mention may well be made of this activity in a summary of agricultural co-operation. During 1937, 16 fishermen's co-operative societies in Nova Scotia with a membership of 760 did business amounting to \$251,114 and had on hand, at the end of the year, assets amounting to \$67,976.