

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 through clubs or circles.

The Provincial Governments have set up machinery to assist co-operative activity mainly 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 eight years since the survey was inaugurated. The annual volume of business increased from 1932-33 to a high point during the 1939 crop season. The total business transacted by farmers' co-operatives amounted to \$201,659,984, an increase of \$46,579,549 over the previous year. In 1938 the volume and quality of the grain crop in Western Canada showed considerable improvement over that of the 1937 season. The price per bushel showed a decline but, owing to increased volume, the estimated total value of the grain crop marketed co-operatively increased by \$31,000,000. The business of the Flue-Cured Tobacco Marketing Association of Ontario has been included in the summary for the first time this year. This is a co-operative bargaining association controlled by growers whose representatives annually negotiate a price with the tobacco manufacturers. After making allowance for the inclusion of the business of this association, amounting to \$16,000,000, and the increase in value of the grain marketed, the record indicates a slight gain in general business by other co-operatives in 1938-39 compared with the preceding year.

In addition to the trading associations described above and for which statistics are given in Table 32, 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 69,000 or 5 p.c. of the telephones in Canada are operated by rural co-operative companies in which there is a total investment of \$19,414,380.

Inspired by the example of Quebec, six 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.

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 1938, 17 fishermen's co-operative societies in Nova Scotia with a membership of 800 did business amounting to \$271,610 and had on hand, at the end of the year, assets amounting to \$92,075.