

schooner also? According to the present line of reasoning that would apparently be the next logical step, if the economic conditions got worse.

These difficulties are largely consequences of the depressed condition of the dried fish trade for which our whole industry is largely organised. To the outsider a revival of the export trade seems likely if this country will use the same weapons as its competitors, (i.e. use trade treaties to help, rather than

hinder the industry and use transport and export subsidies as foreign competitors do). If the dried fish trade recovered, pressure would be released from the fresh fish trade, and that branch of the industry could squarely face the quality test, and devise methods to ensure grading comparable to other foodstuffs. The potentialities of that trade are great, but cannot be envisaged even, so long as present conditions persist.

The Education of Consumers

BY FRANCES HALL

THE challenge of consumer problems has been recognized in both Canada and the United States. The steps taken in the two countries to meet it have been somewhat different, but the basic issues involved are essentially the same and each has much to gain from an acquaintance with the experience of the other. It is to Canada that we in the United States must look for leadership in two of the most important phases of the work. Not only has the Canadian government pioneered in grade labeling, but it has been helpful in setting up the cooperative project in Nova Scotia which is revealing to the world its possibilities for the low income groups. These we recognize as contributions of outstanding importance. In the United States progress is being made with the establishment of consumer cooperatives and the demand for consumer standards is becoming ever more articulate, but in neither case has the progress been as notable as in Canada. Along certain other lines, however, the consumer movement here has made advances that are highly significant. There follows the story of its development.

One might say that there are four concepts of consumer education. The

first can be called buymanship. This means spending our incomes to obtain the maximum value in each particular purchase. It is here that we try to give to consumers all that information which will help them to do their shopping efficiently. Testing bureaus, courses in commodity problems, "guinea-pig" books, all contribute a share. Above this, there is the level of personal management. This concept includes the methods of budgeting, of home management for the broader development of personal and family living, or wise choice-making, not only in use of money, but also of time and energy. The third concept is that of consumer economics. Added to the idea of consumers as individuals developed in earlier concepts is the idea of consumers as members of society, their position in the economic order, and the possibility of improving that position by means of group or government action. This level of consumer education embraces the operation of the economic system as a whole and the reaction of individuals and families to it, as well as their dependence on it. The final concept is still broader and includes what may be called consumer cultivation, that is, the development in consumers of their capacities to enjoy the resources available to them. By including this concept, it becomes possible

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for us to view all education and all life from the consumer point of view in an effort to develop the maximum capacity for well-being and to derive the greatest satisfactions from life.

Most people today are ready to accept the third of these concepts. The idea that buymanship alone should be the content of consumer education has been outgrown. And this new field, like the chambered nautilus of Oliver Wendell Holmes', has grown and expanded from its former shell until it is more inclusive, nobler and vaster than before. Those working in the consumer field today realize the necessity of teaching good buymanship and definitely accord it a place of importance. They know, however, that a consumer needs not only to develop wise buying habits for himself, but also to consider the repercussions of his actions upon the economic order of which he is a part—questions such as the development of chain stores, the need for protective legislation, the rise of consumer cooperatives.

The strength of the movement springs from many sources. First, consider the schools. We find in the United States that more young people are being educated in the schools than ever before, that 65% of those between 14 and 17 are enrolled in secondary schools. They demand practical education of immediate value to them in their daily living. If children do learn by facing real problems and solving them, then the increasing tendency to put into practice what is taught in the classroom has a definite bearing on consumer education.

The study of consumption economics has been taken up by one division after another until today we find it taught in a variety of different fields in the secondary schools. Many educators feel that the most effective way of educating for wise consumership is not to teach specific courses in the subject but to come at the problems in the particular fields where they will be met after school life. Hence, we find problems of food buying in home economics, testing of commodities in general science; problems in meter reading in arithmetic; and labor pro-

blems in social studies. The Institute for Consumer Education at Stephens College, Columbia, Missouri, established "to advance the best interests of consumers as a class, and through them, the best interests of consumers as a whole," is attempting to set up a program to promote action on the part of consumers. This one-year-old fledgling is developing popular literature on consumer problems, organizing a library, promoting a yearly national conference, and publishing a monthly newsletter giving up-to-date consumer information.

Closely connected with schools, but deserving special mention of its own, is the new literature being developed to deal with the economics of consumption. During the month of May, 1939, three new books in the field came from the press. The years, 1937-39, according to Dr. Benjamin R. Andrews of Teachers College, Columbia University, "will be remembered as the time of the great flood—the flood of new and important literature in consumer education." From January, 1937, to the first of May, 1939, six new books had appeared dealing directly with consumption economics. Another indication that the consumer movement is beginning to take hold is the enthusiastic response given the first National Conference on Consumer Education held this April at Stephens College. Five hundred and forty-four people came from thirty-one different states to take part in this three-day gathering which considered the "next steps in consumer education." Consumer leaders in attendance realized for the first time the potential strength of the movement and the broad interest already manifested in it.

In the United States, the consumer movement has been given a great boost by the consumer services of the government. Thirty-two government agencies offer services of one kind or another to the citizens. Chief among these are the Consumers' Council of the Agricultural Adjustment Administration and the Consumers' Council of the National Bituminous Coal Commission. The work of the former consists specifically of

advice, research, and publicity. A bi-monthly publication—Consumers' Guide—is distributed free to all who write for it. The Consumers' Council of the National Bituminous Coal Commission, "the agency most directly charged with watching prices on the consumers' behalf," represents the public at hearings before the commission and carries on independent research projects on behalf of consumers.

A further point to substantiate the contention that the consumer education movement is becoming powerful is the fact that business groups, surprised at the spread of interest in this field, have undertaken to study carefully current developments. Forward-looking retailers are cognizant of the power of the movement and are realizing that they can profit by acknowledging it. A group of them, with certain consumer groups, established the National Consumer Retailer Council to provide a meeting place in which both consumers and retailers could consider their mutual problems. Others, such as Sears, Roebuck Company, and the Kroger Food Foundation, have set up testing laboratories which test each of their products advertised for consumer use. Several women's magazines have developed Consumer Divisions, and more than one puts its seal of approval on the commodities advertised in its pages. The Better Business Bureaus whose function is to promote fair and honest business relations also do good service for the consumers of the United States. Frauds and shady deals are revealed under their powerful searchlight, giving aid to the honest business man and incidentally to the unenlightened consumer.

Many business men are anxious to get together with consumer groups to work out problems to their mutual advantage. Consumers and producers can certainly work together in some of their efforts to gain maximum satisfactions. It is also true, that there finally comes a point where the producer and the consumer can no longer walk the same path. Dr. Stacy May, in talking before the National Conference on Consumer Education in April said, "It is no more logical

to urge that consumers should depend upon producers or distributors or advertisers to protect consumer interests than it would be to insist that those groups should give up their organizations and depend upon organized consumers for protection. "Insofar as we depend upon private enterprise, there must be a balanced registration of conflicting interests."

It seems logical now to ask, "Why has such a movement taken place? Who started it? Is there a need for it?" Many people say that it is just a flash-in-the-pan movement, a toy of which the women's clubs will tire before many years are past. But this underestimates its intensity and depth. Its inception goes back to that time when mass production began to take the place of the simple handicrafts of an earlier day. The home ceased to be the center of production activity; the factory became the typical working place. Producing and consuming were no longer closely related parts of a comparatively simple activity. And, in being separated, consumption became more definitely the *end* of economic endeavor. One worked and earned in order to consume.

New problems arose. The process of selection became a difficult one. Hundreds of brands were on the shelves to be chosen from. Each person worked to produce for others and to consume what others in their turn were producing. As the consumer specialized in one form of production, he found his job of consumption more difficult because his ignorance of all other products was greater. The first move towards a solution to this problem came in 1927 with the publication of a book by Stuart Chase and F. J. Schlink, *Your Money's Worth*. A consumer group organized to help its members make good choices and to protect itself from fraud grew out of the interest stirred up by this best seller.

The depression brought an impetus to this budding movement. Up until 1930, the people of the United States with their wages, high in comparison to many other countries, and with their vast resources attached relatively little importance to

personal planning or thrift. The sudden crisis of 1929 and the continued downward trend that followed woke Americans up to the fact that the curve of the nation's growth was no longer going up, that it was beginning to flatten out a little, and that the future would never again look so glowing. Getting one's money's worth suddenly seemed of tremendous importance.

One final point will make clear our need for the movement. All consumers have money to budget. Because of shortened hours of work and the wide variety of claims on leisure, there has come the revelation that consumers have time and energy to budget, too. Using time wisely so as to obtain maximum satisfactions is a hard job, one that takes concentration and planning. And there are also today increasing opportunities to make choices—not nearly so

much between a good that is wanted and one that is not wanted, but between two goods, both of which are wanted. The former would be easy; the second takes deliberate and careful study.

Economics textbooks expound the theory of consumer sovereignty. This is the idea that the consumer guides production, that he is perfectly sure to be able to obtain the object he wants and not what someone wants him to have, because in a market of perfect competition, the producer not making what is desired finds it unprofitable to produce. Every person has a vote every time he makes a purchase. Although consumer sovereignty does not work perfectly in practice as the theory would indicate it should, because of the economic control exercised today, the consumer movement, which is gathering momentum in America, seems to offer the greatest hope that some day it may.

Distribution of Agriculture in New Brunswick

By D. F. PUTNAM

THE study of New Brunswick agriculture presented here is to be considered as a companion to the writer's article on Nova Scotian agriculture which appeared in a recent issue of this publication.¹ Like its fellow, it is an attempt to present census data in such a way as to portray graphically the regional differences within the province. Census figures for the province are tabulated on the basis of the civil parish and, as an excellent map showing these divisions has been published by the New Brunswick Department of Lands and Mines (1927), the data can be plotted readily.

The physical features of the province are shown diagrammatically in Figure 1.

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1. Vol. II, p. 114.

New Brunswick is closely related to the region of the Appalachian foldings. The central part of the province is a highland area consisting of ancient worn-down folds in which Precambrian and older Paleozoic rocks are exposed. In addition there are large areas underlain by intrusive granites. This area is practically all more than 1000' above sea level, much of it above 1500', while the highest point, Mt. Carleton reaches an elevation of 2700'. The north western part is a plateau developed upon calcareous rocks of Silurian age, with a general elevation of about 1000'. The larger rivers have deeply entrenched themselves in these upland areas. The central and eastern portion of the province is a lowland with very few points above 500', mostly underlain by Carboniferous sandstones. The southern part, bordering the Bay of Fundy is an upland region in which the