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LONDON, ONTARIO, FEBRUARY 1, 1917.

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EDITORIAL.

Canada can do better.

The Canadian farmer can improve, but not by senseless city advice.

If you are a live-stock breeder you'll be interested in the breed association meetings held next week in Toronto.

There will not be much time to split wood next summer. Do it now, and pile it handy to the summer kitchen.

Next summer those who have been wont to kick about the hired man will be kicking about the man they haven't got.

Some keep hens; others have hens keep them. Lewis N. Clark is in the latter class. Read the article on his plant in this issue.

There is considerable "sniping" going on between the two political parties, and the so-called "truce" seems to be near ending in open hostilities.

Those who blame the Canadian farmer for making large profits know at least enough about the economics of agriculture in this country to stay out of the farming game.

All those who had prophesied an "open" winter beat a hasty retreat in January. So did the fellow who said, we never get any "old-fashioned" winters any more.

Selling the brood sow seems a simple matter, but when it becomes necessary to replace her it requires time, trouble and much money. The far-seeing breeder will keep his breeding stock.

We have always maintained that the bacon hog was the only hog for Canada to specialize in, but we contend just as strongly that the farmer who produces the high-grade product should be paid a premium for doing so.

We advise all readers to save this and the preceding three issues. Whip's articles giving in concise form the necessary information on the commoner horse and live-stock diseases are worth saving for future reference.

The farmer cannot be accused of letting perishable products freeze or rot in order to force prices up, and yet, someone recently allowed several cars of potatoes to freeze in an Eastern city, and, it was said, for the express purpose of forcing higher prices.

Who is the aggressor in this war? The answer is easy, Germany. Watch Holland, Denmark and Switzerland quiver with fear of violation of their neutrality. What country do they fear? Germany. No nation has feared that any of the Entente Allies would violate her rights. In this the evidence is against the Hun.

Exaggeration is the bane of many a life. Present things as they are not as your imagination may paint. Some time ago a Quebec correspondent sent in records for a flock of hens which showed that each hen had produced an egg for every one of the 365 days in the year and had six or seven to the good. A few of these hens would be worth a fortune this winter only most hens do much less than half as well, but many imaginations are more than half as fertile.

Legislation Necessary to Secure Grading of Live Stock.

In our issue of January 4 there appeared an article in which it was suggested that bacon be sold from the farms on a quality basis, that is, if a man produces a high-class bacon hog he should get for that hog a higher market price per pound than if he produces a thick-fat or medium-fat hog. If the producer is to be paid according to grade for his bacon, that bacon must be properly graded at the packing plants; and this is important. Canada should have, right now and for the future, a uniform grading system for the bacon produced in this country, and particularly is this grading system important for that portion of the product which is marketed abroad, chiefly in the Old Land. The future of our bacon trade depends largely upon the position Canadian bacon is able to hold on the Old Country market in competition with Irish and Danish bacon, both very carefully graded. We must have that market, and to get it, only a uniform, high-class grade can be safely sent across the sea.

Grading is essential to the success of Canada's bacon industry. It means selling on a quality basis, the fairest and most satisfactory basis to producer and consumer. If grading of bacon is good practice, why not grade all live stock and live-stock products and pay those who produce the article which conforms to the requirements of the best grades the best price. No greater step forward for the improvement of Canada's live stock could be conceived than the bringing into actual existence of a practical plan for ensuring standard market grades for Canada's live stock and certain live-stock products, such as bacon, wool, eggs, etc. Wool-grading and the co-operative handling of this product has made rapid strides during recent years, as outlined in special articles recently published in this paper. It is admitted by both producer and consumer that the fairest way to handle eggs is on the quality basis. And so all through. The only drawback at present in the way is the lack of authority and machinery to carry out a grading system for all the various classes of live stock and the numerous live-stock products. With a large number of packing plants and numerous abattoir and stock-yards companies, the buyers for whom show very little inclination to pay the producer a premium for the high-class product, and all with their own systems of packing and marketing, it is rather a difficult task, at first sight, to establish uniform grades. However, it does seem that the Government, through the Minister of Agriculture, acting on the advice of the Live Stock Commissioner and his staff, might do a good work and one of lasting value to the country if they would pass an Act defining the standard market grades of live stock and live-stock products.

The mere passing of the Act would scarcely be enough. The carrying into effect of the system would be all important. It would be necessary for the Government to insist that stock-yards companies and abattoir companies comply with certain regulations which would necessarily have to be uniform for the Dominion. To make such an Act of greatest value, it would be necessary to have Government authority to regulate the marketing of live stock on a proper basis and in the working out of the plan a knowledge of the stocks on hand in the abattoirs and cold storages of the country would be essential to avoid the overstocking of the market at certain times and the resultant shortage in supply at others. This would mean a more uniform price to the producer and the consumer, with fewer chances of either being taken undue advantage of by those who know the inside of the market. By making the aggregate supplies on hand known periodically the Live Stock Branch would be in a position to put out market material of great value to the live-stock feeder.

It would be necessary that the stock-yards companies and abattoir companies co-operate. Inspection of their work throughout would be necessary and the Live Stock Branch should be given authority to carry this out. Products would have to be branded properly and inspected, and, as previously stated, a uniform set of rules would have to be laid down for all commission firms, stock yards and abattoir companies.

In the past, producers have had occasion to complain of alleged forcing down of prices by the packers, while the prices of the cured or dressed products remained practically the same. Proper control and inspection would reveal whether or not such allegations in the future were true, or better, would eliminate the cause for such. An unlimited amount of damage has been done the live-stock industry in the past by low prices and a rush of stock, including valuable breeding animals, to the market. Steady prices would avoid this, and proper control would ensure steadier prices. If necessary, some Government-owned abattoirs and stock yards might be acquired, but at any rate legislation leading toward the grading of all live stock and live-stock products, and giving the Minister of Agriculture power to carry out this grading through the Live Stock Branch, would seem a step in the right direction. It would be in the interests of the producers and the consumers and so in the best interests of the Dominion. Stock-yards companies and abattoir companies might object at first to allowing the Government to have the necessary intimate knowledge of their business, but they should have nothing to conceal. If they are afraid of what inspection will reveal that is all the more reason for inspection and control more in the interests of the people. Let us have grading and with it the necessary machinery to carry it out, even if it means that the people must own and operate their own stock yards and abattoirs. It is more than likely that legislation will not be heavy in this war session when all are desirous of putting all energy into the winning of the conflict, but an Act of this kind if the Government saw fit to bring it before the House would meet with the approval of producers and consumers—the bulk of the people of the Dominion.

Arrange Now to Change Work.

The summer months of 1917 will bring the farmers of Canada face to face with an unprecedented scarcity of labor and it will be more than ever necessary that they work together. Almost every public speaker who addresses an audience composed entirely, or even partly of farmers is, at this time, exhorting his hearers to produce more than ever before. Farm products are necessary to feed the people of the Allied countries and to ensure their safety through this war, but it is difficult to see how production can be increased very much with the present supply of available labor. In fact, it would seem that there is a danger of a falling off in the acreage of farm crops this year unless something is done by the farmers themselves to get in their crop and then harvest it securely. They cannot hire men and there are many jobs around the farm which necessitate at least two men to carry on. It would seem a good plan for those farmers living on certain concession lines to get together during the winter months and make some arrangements to work together next spring and summer. In every district there are certain farms which may be worked earlier in spring than certain other farms. Why not make arrangements for all hands to turn in and sow the land ready first and follow right on with the other when it is ready? Why not make arrangements for two or more farmers favorably located to change work in haying and harvest, and thus get over some of the difficulties caused by the shortage of available hired help? One man can cut and tie the crop but he cannot draw it in. If these problems were