

THE FARMER'S ADVOCATE & HOME MAGAZINE

THE LEADING AGRICULTURAL JOURNAL IN THE DOMINION.

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Prize Articles—New Offer.

In order to afford readers generally an opportunity to contribute to the columns of the FARMER'S ADVOCATE, thereby increasing its interest and value to all, we will give a prize of \$5 for the best, most practical, and most seasonable article received each month, the subject being left to the writer's choice. Articles should be written sufficiently "ahead of time" to enable readers to utilize the ideas contained the same season, and must reach us not later than the 15th of each month. Articles not awarded the prize, but of sufficient merit to use, will be paid for at the rate of ten cents per inch—our regular offer, as above.

Everyone interested in dairying should not only read, but study that instructive little book, "Dairying for Profit or the Poor Man's Cow," which may be obtained from the authoress, Mrs. E. M. Jones, Brockville, Ont. Price, 30 cents. Over 62,000 copies have been sold, and in order to further stimulate its circulation, we will give two copies to every old subscriber sending in his own name (renewal) and that of one new yearly subscriber accompanied by two dollars.

Timely Notes for December—No. 1. "FEEDING BY WEIGHT" AND "AD LIB."

We are told very often that an animal of a given weight requires so many pounds of food per cent. of its live weight to keep it up to a profitable point. The very reverse of this is often the case in practice. I am glad to see in your November 5th issue, on first column, second page, the advice from Missouri Experimental Station: "To feed animals as much as they can digest without injuring their health." It is just here that so many feeders err. I consider that if we give them what grain ration we consider sufficient to make a profitable gain, the quantity of straw and hay they can get away with is quite a secondary consideration. The condition of the droppings, the "bloom" on the skin, the "touch" of the skin, "dewy" nose, clear eye, alert look, will soon tell the experienced that the beast is thriving, even though he may not be as fat as the one in the next stall, who is, perhaps, really being kept at a loss. Again, I think we want, if only in a rough way, to keep an estimate of the cost of food and return from each animal. Now, I know perfectly well that a young grade cow that I am now fattening, though she looks well, is really being kept at a loss, while the ten-year-old along side her, though she eats twice as much hay and oat sheaves, is paying her board right along. The veteran will be kept in the ranks, while the young one will be killed, even if she only brings \$30; in this case the first loss is the least loss. Of course, those of us who have Babcock testers and scales, and facilities for determining exactly what each cow gives, can more readily spot out the dead beats. But my experience in feeding all kinds of animals is to give them all they will eat, so long as they show a thrifty condition.

A MAKE-SHIFT STABLE.

Being at a farm some distance away a few days ago, I got some wrinkles on cheap temporary stables which may be useful to some of your readers: Set three rows of posts nine feet long, two feet deep in the ground, leaving seven feet out, and seven feet apart in the row—the rows are eight feet apart. On top of these lay logs pinned to the posts with willow pins. Nail rails up all round, leaving doors and windows as required; put swinging shutters before windows for severe weather. Lay rails across top, put on six inches swamp hay or straw, then six inches of short manure, top off roof with straw. Now bank up with manure, which will freeze into a solid block and be impervious to wind and cold. You can partition off inside to suit your requirements, and you will have a cheap shelter that will do for this winter at least—be handy and convenient. The following plan shows the best arrangement I have seen yet, and to those who have been unfortunate enough to lose their buildings by prairie fires may be helpful.

SCIENCE OR PRACTICE, OR BOTH?

That there are none so ignorant as those who won't learn, so, like the Chinese who used to call all foreigners "outer barbarians," there are many of us who, because we have been successful in some branch of farming, are prejudiced against innovations. Is it not a fact that the well-read man, the man who has travelled, been to college, attends institutes, etc., is the first one to confess that he does not know it all? And is it not the man who keeps himself sedulously shut up at home who sees no use in taking a farm paper, nor any of these new-fangled ideas about farming. This is the man who still milks his cows for five months in the year, who sows grain indiscriminately year after year—wheat after barley, or barley, oats and wheat year in and year out—does not believe in summerfallowing, does not use bluestone because "it's a fraud on the farmer anyhow," uses a scrub bull because once upon a time he saw a poor calf from a pedigreed one, and so on, and so on. Still he amasses money, but what does he miss? Is there nothing in this world to live for but money? Is not intercourse with your fellows, reading, discussion of useful matters, etc., all pleasurable, and having a tendency to lift us out of the slough of self-esteem and prejudiced ignorance into which we are likely to fall? Go to, my friend! come out of your shell, give other folks credit for knowing something, get over to the institute meeting and learn something that you did not know.

"DOCKAGE" IN GRAIN.

In our local grain markets it is really wonderful to see how the dealers get over the farmers. Farmer A comes up with a load of good Red Fyfe, and he is told that his wheat grades No. 1 hard, and he will give him forty-two cents, but as it is a little dirty he must dock him four pounds. A goes home happy that he has No. 1 hard. B comes up with an inferior grade, but very clean; he gets No. 2 and forty cents. C, with a load of White Fyfe, also gets No. 2, forty cents, but is docked five pounds for "seeds." Now, only B gets the real value of his grain. The others get forty-two cents for sixty-four pounds, and forty cents for sixty-five pounds of wheat, not for sixty pounds, so in reality they are giving the buyer four and five pounds of wheat which they might just as well keep at home. Again, is not it a bit of a farce to take in Imperial, Red Fyfe, White Fyfe, Golden Drop, etc., and then give a grade for it? Do the standards enumerate all these different varieties? No wonder when the wheat reaches Port Arthur it is sometimes graded "rejected."

GENERAL.

Renew your subscription to the ADVOCATE. Get your firewood all cut up. Pull out round the bottoms of your haystacks a little before the snow becomes deep. A sharp hay knife used judiciously will save a lot of digging snow next February and March. "INVICTA."

Gambling in Food Supplies.

The greatest evil of the present day is the ease with which a number of the great monopolists control the different food supplies, in the production of which the agriculturists of this continent are so intensely interested.

Farmers may strive to their uttermost to produce large crops of grain, or, with equal enterprise, go extensively into feeding hogs or beef cattle, and just when these are ready for market the gambler gets in his little game, and it matters not if the product is short or plentiful, by endless scheming he manages to get more than his legitimate profit.

At one time men of moderate capital contrived to get a living by handling the produce of the soil, and grain-shipping and pork-packing was carried on by large numbers of men who, by bitter experience, have been forced to give way to a few larger monopolists, whose whole study is to manipulate markets so that they may turn to account the losses of others less fortunate. Hutchins runs a corner on wheat, Cudahy does the same on pork, somebody else tries his hand on corn, while the Big Four, at Chicago, control the beef and refrigerator meat business of a continent.

There is no greater evil to the trade generally than the running of corners; it has destroyed confidence in our markets, while the wide fluctuations caused by speculators in their endeavors to get produce below cost has killed out the smaller dealers.

Many, on account of their heavy investments, cannot draw out if they would, but it is safe to say that none relish the hourly changes in the value of their stocks on hand. In the earlier days, when there were no "corner" runners, there were fair profits for all and far less worry.

The world is large and the consumptive demand ever increasing, but such gross uncertainty reigns through fictitious values that no dealer knows where he stands.

"Phil" Armour gives his million toward an Institute of Technology, and others subscribe largely of their ill-gotten gains to charity, and the world looks on and applauds.

Statistics may show there is a short crop of hogs, good demand, unprecedentedly low stocks, but if these generous, noble-hearted gentlemen want your stock they will hammer prices down till you have not a dollar left and must let go. Then, when they have it all, to keep stocks low and avoid concentration, they will send large quantities abroad and sell it to foreigners at prices away below home quotations in order to keep the supply short and the market up. They know where almost every pound of stuff is, and just how much squeezing the holder can stand. When he is cleaned out and his pockets turned inside out, then they run it up and clean out the consumers, pausing occasionally to wipe out some of the producers who may have bought again some of the stuff they sold too cheaply.

Ordinarily gambling only hurts the gamblers and their families, but this constant gambling and the excessive fluctuation in the necessities of life reach every citizen with a family, and are making Americans more a nation of gamblers than traders. The gamblers control our produce. They must have it at rock bottom and sell it at the top notch. The producer and consumer are not a consideration to these jolly fellows, who meet together a few hours daily to play shuttlecock with our bread and bacon, and then give a million dollars of conscience money to charities.

Programme of Central Farmers' Institute Lectures for December.

Table listing lecturers and dates for December. Includes names like James Elder, Melita, Hartney, Souris, Glenboro, Minnedosa, Neopawa, Gladstone, S. A. Bedford, Bradwardine, P. la Prairie, Oak Point, Carman, Ningo, Killarney, Crystal City, R. Waugh, Douglas, Brandon, Niverville, Morris, G. H. Greig, Rapid City, Wawanesa, Belmont, Baldur, R. E. A. Leach, Elkhorn, Virden, Carman, St. Jean Baptiste.

For organization work the Secretary will visit the following: Boissevain, Dec. 13th; Deloraine, Dec. 14th; Manitou, Dec. 15th; Morden, Dec. 16th.