

Farm and Dairy

AND

Rural Home

"The Farm," a paper for the farmer who milks cows."
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The Rural Publishing Company, Ltd.
PETERBORO AND TORONTO

"We did not intend to contradict and to confuse, nor to believe and take for granted, but to weigh and consider."—Bacon

Classification of Land

THE Ontario Department of Agriculture is making a survey of the waste lands of Old and New Ontario for the purpose of obtaining information regarding their possibilities for cattle and sheep ranching. This survey will reveal some interesting facts and it is good work so far as it goes. It is only a start, however, on the real problem, in which the Dominion Government should take the initiative. Our Federal authorities would not be going too far did they require that a thorough soil survey be made of all new districts before they are opened up for settlement. Canada owes it to the settler to ascertain for him the quality of the soil and its agricultural worth before he is permitted to take over a homestead.

In this we have a grand opportunity to learn from the past. In every province of Canada people have settled on land that is unsuitable for agriculture. In the Trent watershed, Ontario settlers have expended the energy of years on land that will never be anything more than patches of gravel and sand. In some sections of New Brunswick are farms that should never have been deforested, and even in the Prairie Provinces of the West are large areas, partially settled, which will never yield a decent living in return for the hardest of work.

Blunders such as these were excusable in the past. Their recurrence will be inexcusable. To permit settlement on land of questionable worth is little less than a national crime against the men whom we invite to our shores and against

our own citizens who migrate from the older settled parts of the country to the newer. A Dominion wide soil survey is in order. It is not necessary or desirable that all the land of Canada be surveyed at once, but as land is opened for settlement its soils should be classified. This would involve but little annual outlay and the almost irreparable blunders of the past would be avoided.

The Public School

IF you would know the real worth of a community, take a look at its public schools. If the schools are neglected, if the teachers are underpaid and the equipment necessary to efficient teaching is lacking, we are fairly safe in deciding that there is also something lacking in the spirit of the community itself. Or if, on the other hand, the interest of the ratepayers is evident in the character of their schools, the people may be labelled progressive, be the soil ever so poor and labor incomes at a minimum. The Country Gentleman puts the problem and its importance before rural citizens in the following words:

"In this age, when brains, training and well-directed effort are the great prerequisites for human success, it is the part of criminal neglect to let boys emerge from ragged schools with ragged minds to face a world that exacts action and training. It is just as hard to stand an empty bag on end as it is to make an empty-headed boy a success. Institutions alone can create a nation, and the public school is America's greatest institution. Make America greater by making its public schools better."

Of course it will take money. But well educated boys and girls are a greater asset to any community than are well improved farms and large bank accounts.

A National Asset

THE financing of the rural school is on a wrong basis. Perhaps this accounts in large measure for its admitted inefficiency. The rural taxpayer is paying more as an individual and as a percentage on his investment to the support of his district schools than is the city taxpayer whose children have the best of educational facilities from the primer class to the end of their high school career. As a rule, the farmer pays several times as much in school taxes as the city cousin—and gets less for his money.

Several factors contribute to this situation. In the cities there are more children in a given area. This, however, is a less important factor than it is usually considered. The two really important factors are these—the wealth of the country is concentrated in the cities and in proportion to population the number of children to be instructed is small.

It is a fact, admitted by all students of economics that city land and values are due in large measure to the farm business conducted through the cities. If you doubt this, consider what happens to city land values when crops are a failure and farm business decreases. The annual rentals on these land values are an indirect charge against the farmers' business and are paid for from the farmers' pockets in cold cash. These values, concentrated in cities, are taxed for the support of city schools, but contribute nothing to the upkeep of country schools. In a very real sense, a part of the farmer's income is contributed to support city schools with no compensating benefits.

A not inconsiderable percentage of every city's population is educated in the rural schools. In the past the brightest and best of the country's children have left their rural homes for urban callings. In many rural school sections as much as 50 per cent. of the children educated at the expense of the rural taxpayer, have gone, when

schooling days were over, to enrich the city and contribute to the support of their schools. Children educated in the city, on the other hand, in all but exceptional cases, stay in the city.

Our system of school financing is in need of reorganization. We must recognize that education is not a community asset, but a national one and, therefore, the support of our schools should not be so much a community obligation as a national obligation. The best suggestion that we have heard of equitably distributing the financial burden of education, is to impose a tax on provincial land values and pay practically all of the schools' expenses out of this provincial fund. In no other way can the city be made to contribute to rural education in proportion as it benefits from the expenditures of the rural taxpayer.

Cold Storage Eggs

THE Dominion Government, principally through its Food Controller, has been taking such a lively interest in many enterprises, previously considered as private business, that the holders of cold storage eggs are now along with a suggestion of their own. They would like to invoke a little government activity on their behalf. They desire that an advertising campaign should be conducted at Government expense to get people to substitute eggs for meat. Back of their suggestion is the fact that in the cold storages of Canada are an immense supply of eggs that are moving but slowly.

So far as we can see there is no reason why the Government should advertise the surplus stores of the cold storage man, than of the dry-goods merchant who is similarly over stocked. The cold storages, we presume, were filled with eggs in the expectation of a very strong demand. If the packers have miscalculated the market's stand to lose on their egg transactions, they should be as willing to meet the loss as they would be to pocket the profits had the market been up to expectations. Even as it is, however, no proof is offered that cold storage men stand to lose. It is more likely that expected profits are not going to be realized unless the home consumer can be induced to greatly increase his demands for eggs. At the present time, however, storage eggs are selling at what seems a reasonable advance in price over what the eggs cost the packers earlier in the season, and we would suggest that a reduction in price of a few cents a dozen, would be a very efficient method of increasing the home demand for storage eggs.

As a means of increasing the milk flow, the United States Food Administrator is urging warm drinking water for dairy stock. Warm water will save feed and benefit the milk flow. It saves feed because it does not draw on the vitality of the cow as does cold water. It helps the milk flow because a cow will not reach her maximum production unless she drinks water abundantly. She will not drink as much as she should if the water is ice cold.

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"THE man who can correctly answer the question, 'What is a fair price at which to place the cost of producing one hundred pounds of milk?' says Prof. E. H. Farrington, of the University of Wisconsin, should also be able to supply specific answers to two more interesting questions, namely: 'What does it cost to buy a suit of clothes?' and 'How much does a woman spend in a department store?' The professor could hardly have drawn a simile better fitted to bring out the absurdity of attempting to base milk prices on cost of production. As well base your wife's allowance on an answer to the last question."