

THE FARMER'S ADVOCATE & HOME MAGAZINE

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We invite Farmers to write us on any agricultural topic. We are always pleased to receive practical articles. For such as we consider valuable we will pay ten cents per inch printed matter. Criticisms of Articles, Suggestions How to Improve the ADVOCATE, Descriptions of New Grains, Roots or Vegetables not generally known, Particulars of Experiments Tried, or Improved Methods of Cultivation are each and all welcome. Contributions sent us must not be furnished other papers until after they have appeared in our columns. Rejected matter will be returned on receipt of postage.

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Our Monthly Prize Essays.

CONDITIONS OF COMPETITION.

1.—No award will be made unless one essay at least comes up to the standard for publication.

2.—The essays will be judged by the ideas, arguments, conciseness and conformity with the subject, and not by the grammar, punctuation or spelling.

3.—Should any of the other essays contain valuable matter, not fully covered by the one awarded the first prize, or should any present different views of the same topic, and we consider such views meritorious, we will publish such essays in full, or extracts from them as we may deem best, and allow the writer ten cents per inch (one dollar per column) printed matter for as much of such articles as we publish. By this rule each writer who sends us valuable matter will receive remuneration for his labor, whether he be the winner of the first prize or not.

4.—We invite farmers to write us on any agricultural topic. We are always pleased to receive practical articles. For such as we consider valuable we will pay ten cents per inch (one dollar per column) printed matter. Criticisms of Articles, Suggestions How to Improve the ADVOCATE, Descriptions of New Grains, Roots or Vegetables not generally known, Particulars of Experiments Tried, or Improved Methods of Cultivation are each and all welcome. Contributions sent us must not be furnished other papers until after they have appeared in our columns. Rejected matter will be returned on receipt of postage.

5.—Replies to circulars and letters of enquiry sent from this office will not be paid for as provided by rule 4.

6.—No anonymous communications or enquiries will receive attention.

7.—Letters intended for publication should be written on one side of the paper only.

A prize of \$5 will be given for the best essay on the reasons why Arbor Day should be observed at Manitoba and the Northwest public schools, with suggestions for the programme of the day. Essay to be in this office by March 15th.

A prize of \$5 will be given for the best essay on the best and most profitable succulent food for stock in winter in Manitoba and N. W. T., giving methods of cultivation, handling, etc., and naming varieties. Essays to be in this office by April 15th.

FIRST PRIZE ESSAY.

The Method by Which the Manitoba and Northwest Farmer May Better His Condition and Home Life.

BY THOS. COPLAND, SASKATOON, SASK., N. W. T.

In considering this question, it is necessary to know the present condition and home life of the farmer before any system of improvement can be suggested. Unfortunately a large proportion of the farmers in this country are single men, who, of necessity, "keep bach," while many have had no previous experience or training on the farm, and are, therefore, more liable to make mistakes with their accompanying losses than the change of country and climate should effect. Let us deal with the bachelor first. It is a matter of general remark that married men get on better than single ones, and so far as the writer's experience during ten years in the Northwest goes, this is an indisputable fact. It is not to be wondered at, for but one man in ten is a good, economical housekeeper, and even if all were, the time occupied with cooking and other house duties is so much taken from the real work on the farm; while if any attempt is made to keep cows or hens, these are neglected for what is considered more important work, and neglect means loss. But the majority of bachelors make no such attempt, and the absence of milk, butter and eggs, not to speak of roast beef and roast chicken, of home production is a serious drawback on a farm. It should be here noticed that a few hens would live well on what otherwise would be wasted, or fed to a useless dog. (Unless a dog earns his living shoot him.) "Bachelors' hall" seldom gives a very pleasant idea of home life. Is it worthy of being called home at all? If the bachelors would only get married, it would do more to improve the condition and home life of the farmers than any one thing. It is a case where two would live cheaper than one, and there would be a fresh incentive to work, to have a better house, with more tasteful surroundings—in short to make a HOME. Nearly all the land in Manitoba and the Northwest is suitable for mixed farming, and though it would be folly to go into stock raising alone, it would be more suicidal for the farmer to stick to wheat growing and burning the straw.

We have now reached the point where our subject branches out, and it will take careful pruning to keep it within bounds. The whole method of improvement might be summed up in one phrase—"good farming," but a whole year of the ADVOCATE would not exhaust this subject. And here let us say that the novice, who has everything to learn, has a decided advantage over the experienced farmer who thinks he knows it all. The novice has nothing to unlearn, and if he is wise will take advantage of the brains and experience of others, follow good examples and avoid others' mistakes. There is a tendency to blame the circumstances rather than ourselves. "Good farming," then, means labor applied to the best advantage, considering the circumstances of the farmer, and the soil and climate of his location. It means industry, skill, economy, patience and perseverance. These include the following "don'ts":—

Don't sow too late in spring, or you may have to reap too late in harvest, to your sorrow and loss if a frost catches you.

Don't attempt more cultivation than you can do well.

Don't grow weeds. The first weed produces hundreds and thousands, and they all help to impoverish the land. They are robbers that reduce the number of bushels of grain or other crops, help to swell the bill for threshing, and give trouble to clean the grain or reduce its price far more than they make up in bulk. Keep the land clean by summerfallowing, plowing soon after, and harrowing frequently through the season to start all the weed seeds, and kill them when started. This adds to the fertility of the land, puts it in the best condition for early seeding, and gives the best chance for a big crop.

Don't grow smut. It is another robber, but it cannot stand treatment with bluestone (copper sulphate); therefore, don't fail to treat seed wheat before sowing, and you will have no smut, which means more wheat and better prices.

Don't stint the work on the root crops. See that the soil has been plowed deep and made mellow. If the season turns out dry, cultivate the surface shallow and often, oftener even than seems necessary to keep down weeds, and this will, to a great extent, take the place of rain by preventing evaporation and stimulating the roots.

Don't burn the straw. It is almost a crime to do so—sheer waste. It should all be converted into manure by some means and returned to the land. Feed it to horses, cattle or sheep, giving a little bran and roots with it if straw is only fodder, or oats are better than bran for sheep. Use the straw liberally to give the animals comfortable beds, and increase the manure pile, which applied to the land makes a difference between good paying crops and miserable failures. If it really must be burned to get it out of the way, spread it first where the ashes may do some good, but arrange as soon as possible to make proper use of it.

Don't run into debt. That is, live rigidly within your income, but though this precludes the buying of, say, a self binder, hoping that the next crop will pay for it when you do not know what kind of a crop you will have, it does not hinder the buying of one when you actually have the crop of sufficient

extent and quality to warrant the investment. Only be cautious and not put yourself in anyone's power by buying what you can do without.

Don't change too readily from one line of work to another. You can make a success in any direction your inclination leads, if you only persevere and give the necessary labor and skill. Fickleness is a bar to prosperity. And don't be in too great a hurry to get rich. Hurry leads to mistakes, and riches are not all there is worth living for.

Don't fail to have a good garden; it will pay better than any part of the farm, but will not bear utter neglect (?). The garden, with the cows and hens, should furnish all the living, except, perhaps, flour and a few groceries.

Thus we see that industry skilfully exerted, and economy regularly practised will in time improve the farmer's condition, but it cannot be accomplished at one jump. We must "learn to labor and wait."

Let us conclude with a few words on the improvement of home life. This can only be done by elevating the mind. The same things that give valuable suggestions for farm work, such as agricultural magazines, reports of experimental farms, and other magazines and papers, will help to brighten the home; but books should be added as liberally as means will allow—books which give companionship with the best and noblest of the human race. Lastly, make the wife's or mother's share not burdensome but light, so will the home be cheerful and the times pass happily and profitably.

Veterinary Questions.

[EDITOR.—In order to make our Veterinary Department more practicable and useful than ever, we propose, in future, to mail an answer to the enquirer as soon as possible, (but to enable us to do so it will be necessary for the writer to enclose stamped envelope), and publish the question and answer in the first issue, as usual, unless there is no general information to be gained by the nature of the question. We have decided to answer no questions in this column where the name of the writer is omitted, not for publication, when the writer desires to withhold, but in token of good faith.]

We have a young horse rising three years that, in September last, had an attack of inflammation on the kidneys and contraction of the muscles, from which he seemed to recover fairly well, but shortly after he fell in over the rump and hips, just like "sweeney" in the shoulder. About a month ago he showed a slight lameness in one of his hind legs, which has increased until the leg is now useless and the horse has to be put in slings. The lameness at first appeared to be in the stifle joint, but now the whole hip and hock is badly swollen, and the other hock has commenced to swell also. Have blistered the shrunken parts, and are bathing with hot water and rubbing liniment on the swollen parts. Is there any hope of recovery? What treatment would you prescribe? Kindly advise through the ADVOCATE.

CHARLES RULTON, Rockwood.

I am disposed to believe that instead of an attack of inflammation of the kidneys and contraction of the muscles which you mention, it was really a case of *azoturia*, a disease brought on by heavy feeding and insufficient exercise. The subsequent atrophy of the muscles of the hips is my principal reason for advancing this opinion. Your horse's present ailment is evidently of a rheumatic nature, caused by some morbid material in the system. Keep the bowels open by giving a bran mash morning and evening, made by boiling a teacupful of flaxseed in sufficient water to scald three or four quarts of bran. Continue this diet for one week, and then give a similar mash once a day for two or three weeks. Give three times a day for a week in mash or water, bicarbonate of potassium, two drachms; afterwards give, for one week, iodide of potassium, one drachm, morning and evening. Apply once a day to the swollen parts, soap liniment and tincture of opium, equal parts.

Questions Answered.

REPLY TO SUBSCRIBER.

In reply to your correspondent with regard to thin and thick cream obtained from different plans of cream separators, I would say:—On account of leaving a large surface exposed to the action of the air, producing evaporation and sometimes milk coagulation, the flat pans give thick cream. Deep setting in cold water and ice gives a thin cream, and, with the centrifugal, one can obtain thick or thin cream at will, but, with the last named method of cream separation, the rule is to get from 18 to 20 % of the milk in the shape of cream. The thickness of cream is not always a criterion of its richness in butter. It is not also advisable to churn very rich or thick cream. I prefer churning cream of average density, say 15 % of the milk in the cream.

S. M. BARRE.

The December crop report of the United States shows the wheat yield per acre slightly above the average, being 13.4 bushels per acre, and an average value of 62.4 cents per bushels. The aggregate crop is estimated at 500,000,000 bushels. The average yield per acre of oats is 24.4 bushels, and the average price 31.7 cents per bushel, and the total crop 661,035,000 bushels. In North Dakota the average price of wheat was 52c.; oats, 28c.; barley, 33c., and potatoes 40c.