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EDITORIAL.

THE BEEFSTEAK STEER.

Butchers and purveyors in these prosperous times complain of the difficulty, in towns and cities, of disposing of the plainer or cheaper portions of the beeves they cut up, especially in the summer months, nearly all their customers requiring steak, and the majority asking for the best cuts of the porterhouse or sirloin, while roasts and boiling parts go begging for buyers. One reason for this preference is doubtless the convenience of the use of gas in cooking, the shorter time, and consequent saving of expense in broiling a steak as compared with the longer time required to cook a roast or other part. Another reason is that by the use of gas less heat is disseminated in the house, a desirable condition in hot weather when the constant endeavor is to keep cool, or as nearly so as circumstances permit. But this preference is not limited to the summer season, and the principal reason for it is probably the general prosperity prevailing and the increasing extravagance of the urban population in their manner of living, a feature which forebodes no good, since many are believed to be living beyond their means, as wages are not increasing in proportion to the rise in rents and the general cost of living in cities, which keeps many people in perplexity in the endeavor to make ends meet, while not a few are compelled to give up the struggle and adapt themselves to more moderate circumstances. This growing demand for choice cuts, even at the advanced prices purveyors have been necessitated by the increasing discrimination of their customers to require, while it certainly is not in the interest of the common people, since, from the standpoint of economy and nutrition, the lower-priced portions of meat are cheaper and quite as wholesome, opens up the question whether the farmers, on whom all depend for the supply, should cater to the requirements of the times by producing the type of animal that will yield the largest proportion of weight of the highest-selling cuts. This has certainly been the tendency in the breeding of beef cattle in recent years, the endeavor to produce a maximum of weight in a minimum of superficies and with the least offal or waste. And this aim amply accounts for the attainment of the type of the modern Hereford, Aberdeen-Angus, Galloway and Scotch Shorthorn, with their roundness of contour, thickness of flesh on back and ribs, fineness of bone and lack of paunchiness, which has made them popular. The question necessarily arises, can we improve on this type and hold the favor of the cattle-raisers, while meeting the excessive demand for greater weight of choice cuts? Will the increasing demand for the dual-purpose cow produce in her progeny the steer that will fill the bill, or shall we, in the endeavor to kill two birds with one stone, land where we were three decades ago, with larger cattle, having heavier bones, thicker flesh, and a maximum proportion of the cheaper-selling portions of flesh, together with a mediocre milking class of cows, or can the two propensities of superior beef and milk production be successfully combined? These are questions which may well engage the attention and consideration of the men behind the cattle which are to supply the meat menu of the people in the years to come. And, as discussion often helps to wise conclusion, we invite the opinion of practical producers, in order that light may be thrown upon the problem forming the basis of this article.

A DEPARTURE IN AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION.

In the course of an editorial headed "The Cardinal Fault in Our School Systems," the Weekly Sun observes: "We are sincerely glad to note what is being done in the matter of appointing agricultural specialists to the staff of certain High Schools, but the work should begin lower down; it should have its origin in the public school."

That is right. The public school is the place to begin, although we incline to the opinion that the beginning should be made, not by another attempt at a formal introduction of agriculture into the curriculum, but by a general recasting of the whole course so as to make it bear on agriculture where possible, acquainting the pupils with a few fundamental agricultural truths and predisposing them toward farm life instead of setting their ambitions in the other direction. This could be done in several ways. More farm problems might be given in the arithmetic, such as calculating the relative value of cows giving certain quantities of milk of a certain fat percentage, etc. In the readers also the same principle might be applied. There is a lesson in the Ontario third reader on "Heat: Conduction and Radiation," which has probably disseminated more useful information than any other in the book. The principles therein enunciated are clear in our mind to-day. Now, if in a similar way the principles and value of the soil mulch in conserving moisture and aerating the soil could be discussed as lucidly and impressed as thoroughly, it would give the young reader a more intelligent comprehension of the principles underlying successful tillage than many experienced farmers have to-day. And so all the way through. A fundamental part of the process of this educational reform will necessarily be accomplished in the Normal Schools, where the staff of the public schools of the country receive their training in the principles and practice of teaching, to whom we must look to handle the modified curriculum.

With the above changes should come school gardening, nature study, and, if possible, manual training and domestic science. A public-school course of study modelled according to the foregoing principles would be the best means of fitting a student for the Agricultural High School or the Agricultural College, but if he could not go on to these he would at least be in a fair way to become a student of agriculture on his own farm, and to make the most of agricultural literature, farmers' institutes and other agencies of progress.

As for the Agricultural High Schools, while we welcome them heartily as an evidence of the growing disposition to recognize the merits of vocational training—training that will touch and benefit the pupil by relating him to his environment—yet at the same time we deem it well not to encourage over-sanguine expectations. Extravagant hopes lead to disappointment and reaction. The new schools have our hearty sympathy and we bespeak for them and the agricultural teachers every support and encouragement from farmers in their respective vicinities. The farm boy attending one of these schools will no doubt find it greatly to his advantage to take the agricultural course rather than to spend precious time and money studying Latin and Greek classics, French, German, Algebra and Euclid.

We fear, however, that too much is being attempted. We are promised that the agricultural students in these High School classes, after two years' time, should be in a position to enter the Ontario Agricultural College and take up second-year work. They may do so, for the O. A. C. course is not difficult and young men with good education often take two years in one. But it is

a mistake to think that two years in an Agricultural High School will give one as good a training in agriculture as one year in the right kind of an Agricultural College. In the first place, facilities will be lacking for thorough, all-round work. In the second place the teachers will necessarily be to a large extent rehearsers, whereas at the Agricultural College each subject is in charge of an expert of many years' experience, who has, besides, in most instances, the great advantage of having carried on original investigation and experimental work. We believe it would have been better not to hold out the Agricultural High School course as a substitute for part of the Agricultural College course, but as simply a more thorough preparation for it than could be obtained in an ordinary High School. It takes time to acquire a good agricultural education—time, application, sound sense and expert tutoring. Those who think there is little to learn about agriculture haven't an inkling of its scope.

So we say success to the Agricultural High School, but let us not build up too glowing hopes, and let us remember that the new step is but a single one towards the necessary remodelling of our educational systems. This remodelling will require considerable time, but we have set our faces towards it and we will keep on.

A STUDY OF THE LABOR PROBLEM.

There are two sides to the farm-labor problem. There is the farmer's side and the hired man's side. The trouble is that each has insisted on looking at the situation from a one-sided point of view. Until this is changed, the problem will never be solved. Immigration will not solve it. Immigration may relieve it (from the employer's standpoint), but only, in most cases, by bringing about in the end conditions probably no better than it relieves. Immigration may, to a limited extent, be advisable as a temporary expedient, but will never prove a permanent remedy. It is to be feared that some Canadian farmers, in common with other employers, have been over-anxious to avail themselves of the expedient, and have failed to get down to a philosophic study of the problem.

There was a time when labor for the soil was abundant, servile and cheap. That was in a dark period of the world's history. Going back farther, there was a time when Egyptian kings constructed monumental pyramids by commanding the services of subjects little better than slaves. Those were great times for the ruling classes. The idea of democracy is foreign to it. Since the time of Christ, the tendency of civilization has been to raise the position of the lower classes, to make the chances of life as nearly as may be equal for all. The tendency has been counteracted by many adverse influences, such as tariffs, which tax the many to enrich the few, and unjust assessment systems, which discourage and hamper enterprise by taxing improvements; by a society which looks down on the man or woman who does manual labor; by various sinister influences, from which the Church itself has not been free, and, perhaps, most of all, by the benighted and bucolic mind of the masses, which could do little to help themselves, and required ages of education to reach point where they were ready to be helped upward. But, despite all these drawbacks, the church, school, platform and press of civilized countries have tended, by broadening the individual's outlook and stirring humanitarian impulses, and by educating the average citizen, towards an ultimate betterment of the laborer's position.

Hand in hand with these agencies, came invention, which, by increasing the productiveness of labor and intellectualizing a part of it, has given