

The Farmer's Advocate and Home Magazine

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EDITORIAL.

The unprofitable hens should be discarded from the flock now.

Hog feed is scarce as well as high in price. The standard hog feed now on the market should help to relieve the situation.

The past weather has tested the water supply and the power which provides it. An unsatisfactory water supply is a great inconvenience.

This is the season of the year when the ice supply is appreciated. Up-to-date dairying is now impracticable without ice except in rare cases.

A large percentage of city dwellers have received their first lesson in farming, hoeing in their own gardens. Many of them could now do similar work on the farm.

It is more difficult to get a cow back to a normal flow of milk after she has once decreased than it is to maintain production with green feed, etc., during a dry spell.

It is plainly evident that potato seed should not be selected from the bin entirely, field selection and the destruction of all diseased plants in the seed patch is the only safe way.

With a large percentage of our Cabinet Ministers in England the people will begin to think over there that Canada is an easy country to govern. However, conditions are such here that Canadians think those ministers should be home.

The agriculturists of Eastern Canada are looking forward to the time when they will know the Hon. Mr. Crerar better than they do now, and when the Minister of Agriculture will enjoy the same popularity east of the Great Lakes as he does in the West.

At least one session of the District Representative Conferences should be devoted to an experience meeting when the men from all the counties could tell the Government what farmers are thinking and doing. This would be beneficial to all parties concerned.

The recognized ability of the dairy cow to use roughages economically has placed her in the forefront as a producer of food in war time. No effort should be spared to secure for her an abundant supply of good feed for the coming winter. Attention given now to the alfalfa, clover, corn and root crops will result in roughages of better quality with which to carry on the business of milk production.

The high prices being paid by consumers for fresh fruits so far this season do not mean that the fruit grower is getting rich on account of the war. Most of the fruits that are so high in price are very light crops and very high prices are necessary before the grower can even meet the cost of production. Moreover, it is doubtful if the grower gets, on the average, more than forty to fifty per cent. of the retail price.

The problems that must be faced and settled before either a Dominion or a Provincial Dairy Council can be formed are of such magnitude and importance that every dairyman and every breeder of pure-bred dairy stock should give them his serious consideration. Much that will be helpful can be accomplished at the annual meetings to be held next winter if those in whose interests the councils will work have previously given the matter some careful thought.

Live Stock Plans at Guelph.

Live stock men throughout Ontario, and even in other provinces, will no doubt be interested in the announcement, appearing elsewhere in this issue, made by Prof. Wade Toole, Head of the Animal Husbandry Department of the Ontario Agricultural College, concerning his plans laid for work at the Institution. The good work of the Animal Husbandry Department at the College, under the supervision of Prof. G. E. Day, has been recognized the world over, and Prof. Toole has a sound foundation, laid by his predecessor, upon which to build. Conditions, however, are constantly changing and the time appears ripe for the Department to branch out and widen its sphere of investigation and research along lines which were, perhaps, less worthy of attention in the past. This will necessitate the inclusion of a more complete representation of the various breeds in order to do justice to all classes of live stock, as well as to the students and visitors to the College farm. The O. A. C. is looked to for first-hand information, more now, perhaps, than ever before, owing to the critical situation arising out of the abnormal times through which we are passing. In the future, and especially after the war, the live stock industry will be such an important factor in the economics of this country that it should receive every possible consideration looking to the strength and stability of the same. All investigation, research or extension work requires funds with which to carry on, but the financial condition of the country demands that all expenditures be made carefully and wisely. Nevertheless, fairly generous appropriations are being made for agricultural advancement, and the Hon. Mr. Henry, the new Minister, would do well to consider seriously the needs of the Institution at Guelph, which has made for itself an enviable reputation and which we are all anxious should be maintained.

Hints to Fall Fair Directors.

It will not be long before the fall fair season will be upon us and agricultural societies will have passed through another set of experiences, and will have added another year to their already long and useful existence. There is great danger, however, that institutions or organizations of this kind may get into a rut and lose some of the fullness of their opportunity, unless the management in the persons of the Secretary and the Board of Directors are keenly alive to their responsibilities and the forces in the community which may be made to serve their useful purpose in bringing the yearly event to a successful conclusion.

The fall fair is essentially educational, both agriculturally and socially, and the wise director or secretary will ever bear this fact in mind. The social influence comes primarily from the opportunity afforded the people of the community to mix with one another under congenial circumstances and to see that this opportunity is utilized, fair boards must provide such attractions as will bring the crowds and make the occasion pleasant. Too much reliance is placed on horse racing by many fair boards, and even more regrettable are the cheap variety shows, blazoned over the countryside by flaming posters of questionable taste and less inviting character. Too little attention is given to the securing of good quality attractions and many fairs are attended from a desire to meet other people, rather than with the expectation of spending an enjoyable day among the exhibits and special features provided.

The educational value of the fair is neglected to an even greater extent perhaps. Prize lists in some cases are scarcely ever revised and, as they stand, involve the spending of much money uselessly. A strong, active secretary backed by a Board of Directors, representative of the best men in the community, could, do much to influence the farming practice of the locality by main-

taining an up-to-date prize list. Useless varieties of grain, or fruit crops, could in many cases be dispensed with and substantial prizes offered for the better varieties with the extra money thus secured. Valuable assistance could be rendered in the much needed standardization of varieties by an emphasis in the prize list upon those varieties whose suitability for the soil of the district is well known and which are among the varieties recommended, in preference to those of less meritorious character.

The younger men should be encouraged to lend their enthusiasm and virile strength to the cause of the fall fair, and, once interested, they will bring with them new ideas and a decided success for the fair. A very frequent and glaring fault with many fairs is the lack of suitable accommodation about the judging ring. Indeed, sometimes there is no ring at all and the judge and his classes are shoved out of the way in one corner, supported by a mere handful of on-lookers, while the crowd watches the racing and loses the value of one of the best educative features. The fair is an opportunity for progressive competition and social development that places great responsibility upon the management. Now is the time to plan earnestly and conscientiously for its success in every department.

The Trials of the Potato Grower.

Members of the older generation who are continuing their years of usefulness on the farm often view with bewilderment the great multiplicity of pests and scourges that beset the potato crop. Comparatively speaking, those were happy days before the Colorado potato beetle became an unwelcome summer visitor, bringing with him his nefarious habits which branded him with loathsomeness along the entire trail leading from his original home in the South. Another pest, the flea-beetle, does less damage perhaps and he is so small that his depredations are committed before he is noticed; consequently this little varmint "gets away" with considerable bad work without adorning his name with the disrepute which it deserves. Then there are the early and late blight which formerly destroyed crops in seasons favorable to their spread, but we put the destruction down as an act of Providence and hoped that such visitations would not recur. Departments of agriculture in the various Provinces at last made certain discoveries and recommended that the potato beetle be banqueted on Paris green, but the equipment for applying it in the early days was not up-to-date so the grower was frequently obliged to leave his bed in the quiet dawn, even before the cock crew, in order to serve the fine green powder ere the wind came up and blew it into a neighboring field. We were then told that Bordeaux mixture would prevent the blight and this necessitated some very disagreeable labor, but with all these we were able to control the scourges already named. As the years go by, however, diseases multiply and a grower must have the knowledge of a plant pathologist to be able to identify the numerous diseases and combat them successfully. Scab, leaf roll, black-leg, curly dwarf, mosaic, fusarium wilt and rhizoctonia are a few of the maladies we hear reported this year, but there is an occasional mention of canker, warts and other minor troubles. The disappointing feature of the present situation is that infection in some of the diseases mentioned is carried in the seed, and prevention must be carried out through rigid field selection. At present, however, the Provincial Government has a large area of potatoes in New Ontario under its supervision, in order that a considerable supply of disease-free seed may be produced and distributed throughout the Province. If the growers attack this disease problem in the proper spirit there need be little fear that the industry will suffer to any alarming extent, but neglect or indifference may lead to serious consequences.