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The

# Farmer's Advocate

## and Home Magazine.

"PERSEVERE AND SUCCEED."

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### EDITORIAL.

#### Seed Time Coming.

Now is the time to plan operations for the approaching seed time. In part, these plans will depend upon preparatory work upon the land done last fall, hence they must now relate for the most part to the selection of seed and methods of seeding and cultivation. These are pre-eminently practical and important subjects. The greater the degree of intelligence applied to them the greater will be the measure of success, other things being equal, attending the operations of the farmer. Do we pay sufficient attention to the securing of seed grain, and screening it? What are the advantages of "changing seed," anyway? Is it to secure a better yielding variety or a variety of better quality? Is it with the idea of getting a better sample and proceeding upon the theory that like produces like? To what extent is the reproductive character of the grain dependent upon the soil or conditions under which it was grown? Prof. E. B. Voorhees, of the New Jersey Experiment Station, puts it thus:

"In making the change, seed should never be taken from good to poorer conditions, but rather from poor to good; that is, the seed from crops grown under good conditions of climate, soil and management will not retain their character so well when grown under conditions poorer in these respects, while the seeds from crops which flourish well under poor conditions are likely to not only retain their character, but improve when changed to good conditions."

What say our students of soil physics and seed experts to the foregoing? Does not the young grain plant receive its initial nourishment or start in life from the individual kernel of grain containing the germ which sprouts? Hence, the more well-developed and perfect the seed, the better for the little plant as it begins to draw nourishment from the soil itself. We cannot expect a vigorous plantlet from a weak or deficient kernel. Will not plump, well-developed kernels be grown under the "good conditions" referred to by Prof. Voorhees? But he advises "changing seed" by sowing in good conditions what was grown under poor conditions!

If crops are diminishing in yield and quality instead of improving, some careful thinking should be done as to the cause, and active measures taken to bring about a change. One of these may be a change of seed or variety, or both. A change of seed should be tried if there be no apparent cause for a declining yield, or when a better variety can be obtained than that which has been grown; or when the seed on hand is actually inferior in quality or diseased through the previous season being unfavorable to proper maturing. Changes should be tentative; that is, experimental, or on a small scale, and if advantages are apparent, then try it on a larger scale. If the fields and crops are becoming more infested with weeds, begin the work of improvement by sowing clean seed. Be especially careful with regard to grass and clover seeds. Do not purchase seeds or grain from farms not known to be clean. Take plenty of time during February and March to prepare all the grain required for the coming seeding.

#### Veterinary Inspection Progress.

At the time of taking office by the present Chief Veterinary Inspector, the "Farmer's Advocate" congratulated the agricultural public on the appointment of a man of scientific attainments and shrewd common sense to the position; as well also on the fact that the new officer was to have headquarters at Ottawa, and devote his entire time to the work, a necessity owing to the rapidly increasing work of the Health of Animals Division of the Department of Agriculture, and the growing value of our live-stock industry. The preview of the "Farmer's Advocate" has already been borne out by the results of the work of the last two years—a short time even in which to discover effective sweeping by a new broom. An intimate knowledge of the work justifies this reference to the work done and being done, a work which deserves the approbation of the agricultural community, but which is not as well known by the farmers as it deserves to be.

While advancement has been general throughout the branch, it will suffice at this time to indicate a few of the advantages accruing to the live-stock interests as a result of the appointment. Such are the lessening of the restrictions on the importation of pure-bred cattle from Great Britain; the less punitive method of treating the horse-owner so unfortunate as to have glanders in his stud, and also the insistence on more effectual work and thoroughness of quarantine in return for compensation to owners of cholera hogs.

The lessening of restrictions on cattle importations consists of a shortening of the quarantine period from three to two months, and the abandonment of attempting to use the tuberculin test in Great Britain, and, consequently, the doing away with the blacklisting of British herds, inaugurated by the U. S. Dept. of Agriculture, a move undoubtedly instituted as an extension of the high protection trade policy of that country.

The less expensive (to the owners) and yet none the less safe method of handling glanders is a step forward, which places the Canadian Dept. of Agriculture foremost in the world in up-to-date methods of stamping out this disease. Glanders has a latent as well as a visible form, the former discovered only by the use of mallein. Under the new regime, horses showing the visible form are at once destroyed as formerly, the latent cases are not. The latest scientific investigations show that the latents may be considered as non-infective centers, and while not permitted to be removed from the official ken, are yet allowed to live and do considerable work. The latent reactors to the mallein test are re-tested from time to time, and many of these cases cease to react and may be considered as improved in health. The new policy thus formulated by the Chief Inspector means the saving of hundreds of dollars to the horse industry without any sacrifice of safety to the health of man or animals. Under the old system of slaughter of reactors, whether latents or visibles, many a man has been financially crippled. We now get a maximum of safety at a minimum cost.

The regulations re hog cholera call for slaughter of all diseased hogs and their cohabitators by the veterinary inspectors, one-third their value being paid as compensation for diseased hogs, three-fourths for cohabitators slaughtered by the officers and found free of the disease. It is not hard to imagine how a complaisant officer might mistake diseased hogs for cohabitators free of the disease, with the

result that the farmer would view hog cholera as not too disastrous an occurrence. Things have changed, and claims for compensation show a decrease of contact hogs (cohabitators free of disease), and a consequent saving of the public funds, without any diminution in the effectiveness of the quarantine and stamping out of this serious menace to the swine industry. When we reflect that in a hog-cholera outbreak the compensation paid has amounted to over thirty thousand dollars, it is easy to see that the insistence on thorough post-mortems by the inspectors, and a consequent lessening in number of in-contact hogs, results in the saving of an amount of money far exceeding the salary of the Chief Inspector.

Such saving has resulted already in three ways: The lessening of money paid for compensation; the smaller waste of horseflesh, and consequent saving to the individual owner, besides the rendering easier of the importation of pure-bred stock. The country is to be congratulated on the fact that such tangible evidences can be seen in the short period that has elapsed since Mr. Rutherford's appointment.

#### Our Inferior Export Cattle.

Our English correspondent, in his letter in this issue of the "Farmer's Advocate," refers to the general mediocrity of Canadian export cattle, as compared with those going from the United States to the same market, selling for one to three cents more per pound than ours, and having in view the prominence given to the success of Canadian cattle shown at Chicago, is at a loss to understand why our exports are not of better quality. From his point of view our correspondent attributes this condition to our breeders having fallen into the same erroneous method as the majority of English breeders who aim at excellence in individual animals for the show-ring, to the detriment of commercial stock. Our own opinion is that the true cause of the general inferiority of beef cattle here, as in England and elsewhere, is the tardiness of the rank and file of farmers in availing themselves of the use of pure-bred bulls of a good type. A larger proportion of farmers in the Western States than in Canada make a specialty of raising and feeding cattle for beef, and they have the advantage of being able to raise cheaply great crops of Indian corn, on which their cattle are well finished and prepared to endure the exigencies of shipment without failing. The American dealers have the further advantage of a great home market for their second-class cattle, in supplying the large cities and towns of their own country. They have also a profitable outlet for their inferior stuff in their canning-factories, for be it understood that while more first-class cattle may be seen in the Chicago stock-yards than anywhere else in the world, there may also be seen there almost any day thousands of the meanest class of scrubs in existence anywhere. It is a case of the poor being always with us here and there and over the sea, and the principal cause is the one we have indicated, the slowness of so many farmers to improve the quality of their beef cattle by introducing good blood into their stock through the means of improved sires. The breeders of pure-bred stock have done their part in providing the means, and in many instances have received too little encouragement for their enterprise.