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# The Farmer's Advocate and Home Magazine

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LONDON, ONTARIO, MAY 29, 1919.

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## EDITORIAL.

Increase the acreage of corn and roots.

Has no one any "pull" with the weather man?

This spring bears a striking resemblance to that of 1916.

What have the prophets to say regarding weather in June?

If the wool is not yet disposed of keep it in a dry place until marketed.

Potatoes might be grown on some of the unseeded fields if the soil is suitable.

A wet spring always gives the weeds a start, and they will require a hard season's fighting.

As a general thing clover meadows are not good, but old meadows give promise of a fair crop.

Corn planted even as late as the first week in June will give a crop of silage quality in a favorable season.

Germany and her allies are beginning to realize that "war is hell," and more especially so for the losing side.

If farmers' organizations join hands with labor unions will they be expected to put on a sympathetic strike?

Up to the middle of May 25,000 lbs. of wool had been received at the Winter Fair Building, Guelph, to be graded and sold.

Are you reading our Ottawa report? Some weeks there is not much of importance to comment on, but that is not our fault.

Sometimes it is expedient to "mud-in" the seed, and those who worked the land before it was in the best tith this year were not unlucky.

It is said that even in the darkest days of war there is always something ludicrous to laugh at; here in Canada we had fair price committees.

Give the teacher some help in slicking up the school grounds and starting the garden. This is a splendid way to give expression to a community spirit.

Enlarge on the area to be sown to roots. Young stock can be carried through the winter in excellent condition with plenty of roots and dry roughage.

It has been a good spring for transplanting trees and shrubs. Have you made the best of the bad weather and improved the appearance of the farm and dwelling?

Those who planted fall wheat are not sorry; the stand is good this spring and, with the exception of patches which have been drowned out lately, the fields promise a good harvest.

There is a splendid demand for dairy products, but even at the price they fetch a poor cow will not pay her way. Weed out the slackers and put good ones in their places.

## The Seat of the Trouble.

The general and serious unrest which has been the subject of paramount importance in Canada during the past two or three weeks is the result of bad administration throughout a period of many years, both in Canada and abroad. Naturally enough the uprising occurred in the country where the administration was worst, namely Russia, and from there the ripples have spread with remarkable speed until the most democratic peoples of the world find themselves more or less perturbed by the vibrations on the sea of discontent.

At one time Canada, like all new countries, was strictly agricultural, and her small population was engaged in the peaceful pursuit of extracting wealth from the soil in exchange for the hard and honest labor expended on the land. As time went on and our numbers grew we attracted world-wide attention owing to the volume of our product. Canada became known as the "granary of the world," and even at the present time this Dominion is universally spoken of as an "agricultural country." This conception is based, we believe, on the enormity of our possibilities and the wonderful achievements of the remaining stalwarts who have been loath to abandon the plow for the more attractive but illusory pursuits incident to urban life. Agriculture is our basic industry, no doubt, and our broad, undeveloped acres may entitle us to still proclaim Canada as an agricultural country. Nevertheless, the distribution of our population is fast altering the appearance of the landscape and the very complexion of our national life. The Census of 1891 revealed a population of slightly less than five million, 70 per cent. of which was rural. By 1901 Canada was the home of five and a third million people, but 62 per cent. only were found to be rural. The last Census, or that of 1911, showed a total population of 7,204,838, but the percentage of rural people dropped to 54. This trend cityward has been obviously accelerated during the last decade, but Senator G. D. Robertson, who is also Minister of Labor, made a statement in the "Upper House" on May 15 which is surprising, but at the same time illustrative of present-day conditions. Speaking in regard to the shortage of foodstuffs, Senator Robertson said:

"Canada is an agricultural country; and, with approximately 37 per cent. of our population engaged in agriculture, what can we expect? Many men are to-day unemployed and desiring employment in their particular trade or calling, in many lines of industry the market for which has entirely disappeared, hoping that new markets will be created or found whereby they may continue to live in urban centres and work at their chosen calling, believing that after the war prices will decrease and they will soon be back to pre-war conditions. I think it is right that these men should be warned not to expect immediate relief in the direction in which they are looking."

In the foregoing paragraph the Minister of Labor has sized up the situation and suggested a remedy. During the last two decades there has been a scramble for employment other than on the farm. The patronage system was worked to death in order to find a berth for many tired beings. Government jobs, however, menial and unremunerative have been sought after with wonderful ingenuity. Employment in towns and cities has been accepted so long as it provided the bare necessities of life. People would not work on the land so long as they could keep the wolf away from the door of their urban dwelling.

We have now a top-heavy structure with an unreasonable majority of our population alienated from the land. By joining hands labor has secured ever increasing wage concessions, but this simply means enhanced production costs in every line (including farm products); and a higher cost of living. When manufacturers or merchants raise wages it is the buying public who suffer, and thus labor has, like the man

mired in the quicksand, only got in deeper by trying to get out.

The war has, of course, hastened the evil day. Money flowed freely in high places. Plants working on war orders drew labor from far and wide, and left the country still more destitute.

We shall have to perform a complete "right-about-face" and make it possible for those engaged in agriculture to be thrifty and prosperous. Farming must be made attractive. It will not alleviate the situation by bringing in immigrants to settle on the land if those already there are not induced to remain. No volume of admonition or cajolery will populate the vast stretches of good agricultural lands, or more thickly inhabit the settled districts of older Canada. There must be returns from labor expended on the land. The product of the soil must find a remunerative market that will leave a profit over and above the cost of production so that rural people may improve their surroundings, have home conveniences, better educational facilities and an all-round fuller life. With these things possible rural life will be brighter, the rural population will constitute a larger percentage of the whole, and discontent will be less common. Our Government has a great responsibility on their shoulders at this time. We can never get anywhere in an agricultural country with only 37 per cent. of the population engaged in farming. The Government should turn their attention to the seat of the trouble, which will be found in the country, not in the city.

## Another Fair Price Committee Breaks Out.

The fair price committees with which the Government decorated the towns and cities of this country have been silent for a considerable time, but one broke out recently in the city of Guelph and proclaimed to the world:

1. That the fair price for potatoes should not be more than \$1.25 per bag.
2. That 40 cents is a good price for butter.
3. Fresh eggs should not exceed 30 cents per dozen during the month of May.
4. That the present price of meat is too high considering the quantity in storage.

These fair price committees were, no doubt, conceived in good faith, but in common street parlance they have been nothing more than a "joke." In the majority of cases they were composed of business men, or retired citizens with little to do, and instead of investigating prices of commodities regarding which they might be expected to know something, they have attempted to vindicate their existence as a committee and curry local favor by pronouncing on the value of farm products. As a rule, these committees have shown a lamentable ignorance concerning the cost of production and the world-wide demand for foodstuffs produced on the land. The only power they have is to investigate, but without doing even that they issue a statement which is usually so far from correct that it is ludicrous.

One would expect such a committee before making a statement to take into account the cost of hay, grain, millfeeds and labor. This would give some cue to the cost of production. On the other hand, demand ought to be studied, and in regard to butter they would find some enlightening information in a report issued by the United States Bureau of Markets, which says: "The production of butter in Denmark in the calendar year 1914 amounted to 257,400,000 pounds. For the twelve months from October, 1917, to October, 1918, the production was only 130,900,000 pounds; of this quantity 92,400,000 pounds were absorbed by the home market, leaving only 38,500,000 pounds for export."

"In 1912 the daily average amount of butter reaching Paris was 121,000 pounds. During the first week of