

Farmer's Advocate

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EDITORIAL

Is it not pretty nearly time for the executives of the live stock associations to deliberate on their winter program?

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It would appear to be advisable to so arrange matters that the Manitoba Grain Growers' convention and that held by the live-stock breeders will not clash, as last winter. Avoid all possible cause for friction!

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Colonel Hosmer of Virden, one of the advisory board, Manitoba Agricultural College, has promised a liberal prize for a competition in live stock judging, to attract the younger farmers of the district to the seed fair.

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The efforts of a Chicago live stock paper to exonerate any and all of the big packers from mistakes, or slack methods in preparing food products smells to heaven far more than hundreds of condemned pieces of meat.

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At the recent Birmingham Show every one of the forty-six bulls sold at or over roogs. had more or less Cruickshank blood in their veins, and the best group of five yearling bulls was declared to be "one more triumph to that excellent infusion of blood—the Bates with the Cruickshank."

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"I hardly think government hail insurance feasible; I did think so once, but after looking into the matter, I do not think so now. It would be a very hard matter to place a law on the statutes which would be just and fair to all."

—JAS. ARGUE, M.P.P.

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Before the greater part of the wheat is shipped, would it not be a step in advance to select enough of the most plump, best matured, unfrosted grain that is free from smut, for use in seeding next year, if such was not done at the time of threshing? Every impediment to increased yield that is removed now, means money in pocket this time next year.

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The smoking compartment of a pullman car often is the witness box where many a business man gives voice to his private opinion. A startling one recently heard was to the effect that—a man nowadays cannot afford to be independent in thought, speech or action. To what depths has public life descended when an utterance such as this is accepted in silence?

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The man who will feed steers is called a fool, because too often his labor and his grain have found an unsatisfactory return. Robbing the soil and hauling the fertility of the land to town in the form of grain may be all right for this generation. But there is a limit even to the productiveness of the virgin soil of our Western prairies. Shall the feeding of grain upon the land upon which it was grown be encouraged or shall it be driven out of our agriculture?

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One of our Old Country contemporaries urges the recasting of the methods of selecting meat inspectors and refers to the employment of plumbers for that purpose on the theory that such are supposed to be well up on joints. A Canadian meat inspection service is badly needed, the big drawback at present being the impossibility of securing properly trained men. It is to be hoped that with the reorganization of the Veterinary College at Toronto, that ample provision will be made for teaching this important subject.

The Dignity of Farming.

With the fall of the year there usually comes a general summing up, in all the newspapers and magazines, of the resources of the country—a sort of annual stock-taking, showing the profits, losses, and possibilities on hand for future development. In Canada, this stock-taking operation has, of late years, been a most satisfactory one, and returns for the present year are by no means behind the mark, but rather the other way.

We did not set out, however, to write a resume of the good things the old Dominion has spread on her board during the summer of 1906, but rather to comment on the important estimates which the public prints, both in Canada and the United States, are placing upon the vocation of farming, or, perhaps, one might more properly say, upon the results which tend to make agriculture the very first of all the industries a country can possess.

The Toronto *Globe*, for instance, while acknowledging the value of the wonderful silver mines at Cobalt, calls attention to the fact that upon the agricultural prospects of the district running from Cobalt northward along the White and Wahbi rivers, rather than upon the fascinating lure of the white metal, depends the real future greatness of that North Ontario region. "It rests with the Ontario Government," the article concludes, "to see that nothing is left undone to secure that this great country shall be filled as rapidly as practicable with a great industrial community, with agriculture for its greatest industry."

Turning at haphazard to United States publications, one finds in *Leslie's Weekly*—one of the expensive publications of the U. S., with a subscription list mainly composed of city readers—a series of most jubilant editorials, proudly headed, "Prosperity and Our Wonderful Crops." Not "Prosperity and Our Wonderful Manufactures," mark you, nor "Prosperity and Our Wonderful Mines," nor "Prosperity and Our Wonderful Cities," but "Prosperity and Our Wonderful Crops"—an indirect concession again that agriculture stands as the veritable base and pillar of a nation's well-being.

It is not necessary to multiply examples; they may be found in every publication in the land. The point is that all this dependence upon the farmer is but an unexpressed acknowledgment of the dignity of his calling and its tremendous importance in the economics of the world.

An ulterior point, and one that we should like to emphasize, is that the farmer should quietly, unassumingly recognize that importance. When the young men and women of the land fully come to recognize it, the drift toward it will be to a great extent stemmed. One of the greatest blocks to the agricultural development of any country—for agriculture, when compared with the possibilities, is still in its infancy—has so far been the sort of contempt with which many of its brightest young people have regarded it, a contempt sufficient to prevent enthusiastic study of or experiment with farming, or even that interest which can make the farm life as happy as any on earth. Possibly these young people, not yet come to years of judgment, have heard slighting allusions to the vocation, perhaps from the lips of the father who should stand as the very personification of the dignity of his calling, or from those of the mother who, instead of showing how perfect a lady the head of a farm home may be thoughtlessly plants in the hearts of her children a seed that will grow stealthily, and leave her, finally, a lonely woman, whose children have found a vocation which, in their estimation, they can "respect," in the far-away city. How common it is to hear this expression in the country, and from the very lips of farmers: "Oh, he's not good for anything but farming!" And the "he" in question probably is a shiftless lout whom a self-respecting son of the soil would never think of calling "farmer." Truckster, botch, he may be, but certainly not "farmer."

And let us just stop to interpolate that the young person who drifts into the city, unless possessed of unusual character, perception, and good sense, is not likely to gather there a better opinion of the means by which the old folk at home have made their living and amassed their bank account. "He looks like a farmer!" "A hayseed!" "That hat looks positively farmerish!"—these are the commonest of common expressions, uttered in a tone of contempt, by the lips of city young folk. Occasionally, too, one meets with far-seeing, character-reading specimen such as a young commercial traveller, whom we heard descanting the other night upon the "closeness" of farmers generally. "I tell you," he said, "they're hard as nails. They'll have money in the bank and won't draw it out to pay their bills; and they haven't head enough to see that they're losing ten per cent. by not paying cash down." The implication, of course, was that all farmers are close and hard, all farmers brainless. Evidently the Daniel came to judgment was quite sincere in his belief, just as those who criticise the dress and manners of country folk are quite sincere in thinking that all farmers are bores who are careless about their dress, never take a bath or clean their teeth or nails, and never by any mischance lose an opportunity of being green, or vulgar, or discourteous.

These young town people simply do not understand all that they are talking about, and fall into the mistake of judging all the country people by a few miserable, isolated specimens who have happened to catch their attention, never dreaming that to judge thus is as unjust as would be the judgment of a young farmer who put all citizens on the level of the drunken lout—a citizen, too—who carries the clothes which his wife washes to her customers and pockets the money. Nevertheless, the effect of such conversations on the ordinary, undeveloped young person from the country may readily be imagined.

Is it not, then, "up to" those engaged in farming to recognize to the full the dignity of the profession, and to act it, and look it, and speak it? The legislators of our land, men of action everywhere, who, by reason of years of public life, have come to put a rational balance on things continually recognize, ungrudgingly, the importance of and respect due to agriculture. Why, then, should not farmers themselves stand for it more firmly, and inculcate sensible ideas in regard to it in their children. And the history of farming bears witness that, just as soon as this point is reached, the business is certain to be pursued with a vigor, system and intelligence that makes it a more paying proposition, lending a substantial charm to all the other advantages with which it is invested.

Fewer Varieties and More Quality.

A visitor to the big shows of B. C. within the last year or so must have been amazed by the fruit exhibits there, especially of apples. A cursory inspection reveals these fruits as approaching perfection from the standpoints of coloring and size, but not quite as close up in the matter of flavor and shipping qualities. There would appear to be room for some first class educational work by Dominion and Provincial governments in this matter if the Coast province is to make good profits from her orchards. Judge Martin Burrell called the attention of Manager Keary to this important matter, and after discussing the subject pro and con it was decided that the commercial display should be limited to the varieties really valuable for commercial purposes. In the classes for apples fifty different varieties are called for, twenty varieties of pears, twenty-two of plums, ten of peaches, and grapes. We do not consider it advisable in prize lists to totally eliminate the bulk of the varieties, any more than we would the purely fancy fowl of rare breeds of live stock, but believe in keeping in mind the awakening of keen competition, and