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EDITORIAL.

"A great while ago the world began, with,
heigh ho, the wind and the rain."

A Dominion conference of fruit-growers, and another of dairy experts, are promised for 1911.

It isn't a question of whether or not we can afford to take care of the orchard. We can't afford not to do it. Better neglect the oat field than the orchard—if it is worth keeping at all.

Since "The Farmer's Advocate" took up land in Westminster Township, things are on the move. An 85-acre farm in Halton, 3½ miles from Oakville, sold the other day for \$25,000, for dairying and fruit-growing.

When it takes five and six words, and thirty-five letters, to designate a mangel, someone should call a halt on the vocabulary of the seedsmen. The field-root catalogue will soon outdo the Holstein-Friesian Herdbook in length of names.

Every lover of nature and good farming should second the appeal of W. E. Saunders for protection and encouragement to our native birds. With more birds, we should have less trouble with insects, and they do not ask for 35-per-cent. protection, either—just to be let alone, and a bit of bush to live in.

According to the census of April, 1910, the population of the United States is given as 91,972,266, exclusive of Alaska and other non-contiguous territories. The population of the United States and all its possessions is about a hundred and one millions. The population per square mile of the United States, excluding the District of Columbia, is 30.9, as compared with 25.6 in 1900, and 21.2 in 1890.

There were probably more silos erected in Canada in 1910 than in any other one year, says Dairy Commissioner J. A. Ruddick, who is in a good position to judge. Steadily the logic of economy dislodges the prejudice expressed in such epithets as "pickled cornstalks" and "sauerkraut corn." Both beef-makers and dairymen are coming to recognize that, while they may make money without the silo, they can make more with it.

Three hundred and seventy-two questions were answered through "The Farmer's Advocate and Home Magazine" during March, as many as 84 replies being published in a single issue. In addition, quite a number were unavoidably held over for later publication, while several questions were answered by mail (see rule 9 in the standing announcement, printed on the second page of reading matter each issue). In addition, quite a number of inquirers were referred to the answers already given to questions similar to their own. The Questions and Answers Department, while valuable, is becoming a severe tax upon both space and time. We cheerfully attend to all inquiries of general interest, especially those touching new points, but would request our readers to exercise consideration, by refraining from asking unnecessary questions about points that have already been covered in general articles or in answer to other people's inquiries. Have mercy on a hard working staff.

An old farmer, now deceased, who never made much fuss about his work, but yet seemed to have the knack of getting it done in season, and who was steadily prosperous, did not believe in jumping from one thing to another. He remarked one day that a motto he had read long before was one of his principles of action. The words, as given in his North-of-England vernacular, were: "When everybody else is rinnin', you staund." There would be less complaint on the part of the pork-packers, and more money in Canadian farmers' pockets, if more of us acted on the same principle.

Chasing novelties among varieties of farm crops is poor business. Stick to the well-proven ones until experiment stations find better. Watch carefully the published results, note the experience of fellow farmers, and confine your experimenting pretty largely to the testing of the best well-known sorts. We believe farmers stand to gain much more by improving strains of good varieties than by consuming time in a dubious quest for phenomenal kinds. A little experimenting by each farmer is an excellent thing, but it may be done to best advantage in the light of the knowledge gleaned by men whose business it is to experiment for the community.

Commenting upon a recent editorial paragraph on this page, regarding the incongruity of an irresponsible Second Chamber, the Windsor Record Observes:

"The Farmer's Advocate" is right. The people who discuss senate reform are accustomed to reason in a circle. There can be little 'reform' short of extinction. Two elective, and, therefore, co-ordinate, houses are an absurdity, a paradox, and a needless multiplication of the machinery of legislation. Let there be one chamber, and shorter parliamentary terms, and the 'check' will be in the hands of the people, who, in theory, at least, are the rulers of this country. When legislators know that the people are watching them with intelligent judgment, they are not likely to be either 'hasty' or venal."

"The best laid plans o' mice and men gang aft a'glee," sings Burns. There is an error in the statement, however. The poor little mouse whose nest Burns had thrown out with the plow may not really have made plans; she had probably acted on instinct. But man, though he lacks instinct, is divinely gifted with the power of thought and imagination. The dog knows something of the difference between himself and his master. He looks up into his master's face with appealing eyes, eyes which are not only wishful for what he feels he lacks, but which are worshipful of the being whose powers he realizes are so far beyond his. Man's mind with ease reaches back over centuries and aeons uncounted, and with scarcely a moment's interval will leap forward and speculate what is to be after millenniums shall have passed. How despicable for a being so endowed to let his powers atrophy for lack of use. The practical application of the above should be evident to every farmer. The crops with which his fields shall wave the coming summer depend not so much on the number and quality of his teams and implements as on the plans he forms. The man who thinks is the man who does. If your plans for the season are not perfected, get your thinking cap on. Get busy.

Ontario Crop Improvement.

From his position as Experimentalist at the Ontario Agricultural College, and director of the work of the Ontario Agricultural and Experimental Union, Prof. Chas. A. Zavitz enjoys favorable opportunities of judging as to what progress is being made in the production of field crops, and the methods employed. Noting the fact that the prosperity of the people of the city, as well as country, depends largely upon the success of the latter, he observes that the agricultural prospects of Ontario were never better than at the present time. There is a distinct awakening in the business of the farm, not only by those engaged in it, but by professional men, many of whom are taking it up as an occupation or as a side issue. He also notes a tendency to smaller farms and a more intensive system. He sees encouragement in the fact that, while, for the ten years, from 1898 to 1907, inclusive, pasture and hay lands showed an increase, there has been a gradual decrease in the grass lands of the Province during the past two or three years. Land is too valuable for so much of it to be kept under grass. More can be made of it by growing other crops. During the first period named, the increase was, according to the Bureau of Industry returns, some 1,427,764 acres, but during the past two years the decrease was 225,577 acres. This is happily offset by an increase of 113,703 acres of corn, and increases of the acreage of potatoes, mangels and five classes of grain crops. And then, what is still more encouraging, is the fact that the yields per acre of leading crops are increasing from year to year. Three most extensively grown cereals have increased, on an average, about one-fifth for the past twelve years, compared with the twelve years previous, due to better methods of farming and the use of better varieties. The soil is not playing out, but improving in its fertility, and we are evidently at the dawning of finer opportunities than ever, with possibilities practically unlimited.

Farm Bookkeeping, Again.

Prompted by the interest taken in our recent discussion of farm bookkeeping, we return to the subject to advise every farmer-reader who is not already keeping his accounts in a more or less systematic manner to try it this year. Our aim in offering the prizes was to call forth actual experiences, and reports thereon. The response has left no room to doubt that the systematic keeping of farm accounts and records is practicable, profitable, and interesting.

The factors involved in carrying on the business of mixed farming may be as numerous and diverse as those of a large factory. Besides the cash, wages, personal and expense accounts, inseparable from almost every business, the farmer may keep accounts with every field, with every kind of crop, with every tree in his orchard, and with every cow in his dairy. Indeed, it was to accounts of these kinds that several correspondents referred when they testified to surprises experienced on finding out that factors supposed to be good payers were really unprofitable, while others, thought to be indifferent, were returning good dividends.

The farmer who feels entirely ignorant of the science of journalizing accounts can start with a combined cash and daybook, and from time to time make an inventory of his assets and liabilities. If he has boys, let them assist him in making, two or three times a year, or at least annually, a carefully-itemized statement of his