

The Farmer's Advocate

and Home Magazine

PERSEVERE
AND
SUCCEED

REGISTERED IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE COPYRIGHT ACT OF 1875

ESTABLISHED
1866

VOL. XLVIII.

LONDON, ONTARIO, FEBRUARY 13, 1913.

No. 1064

EDITORIAL.

December and January passed Western Ontario without making any ice thick enough to store, except on a few still ponds. What was it Kipping called us?

Nova Scotia, too, has a stallion-enrollment law. But this was not a case where Ontario had led. She merely followed the Western Provinces, and quite a way behind, at that.

The Annapolis Valley is destined to supply the export apples of the world, says President S. C. Parker, of the Nova Scotia Fruit Growers' Association. That's ginger. Who says Nova Scotia is asleep? She is not so, by any means, in the matter of fruit growing, but wide-awake, up-to-date fruit culture, and latterly in marketing as well.

"No name," "No address," "Not on at—," are the several memoranda still decorating quite a few enquiries turned over to the Editorial Department from day to day. The waste-paper basket is emptied every morning, and there is nearly always room for these questions from persons who do not comply with the rules. See nonpareil notice at head of second page of reading matter each issue and avoid disappointment.

Just for the satisfaction of it, keep track of the number of loads of building material, tile, fencing, and other stuff handled during any given year when you happen to be engaged in improvement work; also, keep track of the amount of time spent by man and team at such labor. You will be surprised to find how much value can be commuted into capital improvement in this way. If hired, this teaming would cost cold cash. Is one's own labor not worth as much as what is hired?

When an animal is fit for the block, it generally pays to sell it without much delay. An experiment at Ottawa detailed in the last Experimental-farm report enforces this point. A bunch of Shorthorn steers, dropped in June 1909, were practically ready for the butcher in the spring of 1911, but were held as "kept over" steers. The expected result was that, although sold at a high figure, there was a net loss for the kept-over year of \$2.76 each. Sold the previous spring, they would have made a reasonable profit.

Will some one please give a good reason why we should not have a Board of Bank Inspection composed of a few men of the calibre of our Railway Commissioners and invested with a similar scope of power and authority? They need not be auditors at all, but would employ the services of auditors, just as the Railway Commission has its experts. The prime requisites of the Commissioners themselves would be high principle, calibre, astuteness and backbone, with quite a wide latitude of free-ranging authority. More than audit is necessary. We want effective inspection by men with a mental grip of the whole banking situation. What say our readers?

Your Member and Your Interests.

The innocuous character of the amendments so far incorporated in the Bill revising the Bank Act, indicates that the money interests still have strong friends at Ottawa. One encouraging fact, however, is the position taken by the rural members, indicating that Mr. McArthur's articles in "The Farmer's Advocate" have taken effect. A recent Ottawa despatch stated that letters had been pouring in from constituents to representatives of both political complexions calling upon them to take part in the battle for more stringent control. One government member was said to have received 163 letters demanding a stand for government inspection and better protection for depositors. If the general public fully appreciated the influence of these personal letters to members, there would be ten times more of them. Your member is at Ottawa to represent you. See that he knows your mind, and squares up to the battles in your behalf.

The despatch referred to added that the bankers have not been idle, and parliamentarians were being besieged on both sides. Who will finally win? The bankers, of course, unless public opinion makes it so hot for the members that they dare not fail in their duty. Write your member and keep after him. Demand compulsory government inspection, as well as efficient audit, and if you have views about further security for deposits, taxation of note issues and bank mergers, state them. Who is running this country anyway?

The Agricultural Committee at Ottawa.

The Dominion Parliamentary Committee on Agriculture and Colonization for '12-'13 is composed of 98 members, 15 of whom are farmers. John A. Sexsmith, the chairman, is a very earnest and able representative of the farmer. He has long been connected with the East Peterboro Farmers' Institute and in the Township Council. The functions of this committee in the past have largely been in calling officers of the Department of Agriculture or Immigration and conducting a meeting not at all dissimilar to an ordinary Farmers' Institute meeting. The audience (quorum) is annually gathered by the secretary, who parades the halls for that purpose, and the questions asked by certain of the members would sometimes be worth reproducing at a regular meeting of farmers for the sake of the amusement.

Why cannot the committee take up and endeavor to solve some of the real problems of the farmer? It is the privilege of the committee to call and hear evidence and suggestions from farmers' representatives in any part of Canada.

Farmers' organizations might be asked to select representatives to give evidence before the committee on a wide variety of matters which the committee would be potent to deal with in recommendations to Parliament, such as the farm-labor problem, the gap between the farmer and the consumer, the fruit industry, the sheep industry, the need for or effect of legislation respecting insect and fungous pests, seeds, dairying, fruit-packing, contagious diseases of animals, etc., etc.

True, the farmer's voice is frequently presented in the form of a petition or resolution from an organization, but the petition too quickly finds its way to a pigeon-hole. Perhaps the wise

employment of the committee in this direction would awaken a more live interest among farmers as to the workings of their principal governing body, and even stimulate a very proper ambition on the part of some of them to increase the proportion of farmers in the Commons.

Develop Local Talent.

Both close and casual observers have been struck with the fact that the rural districts, having lost their original social institutions, such as the work bee, the spelling match and the singing school, have failed to develop good substitutes, and in their stead have been aping city forms of entertainment, securing, as might be expected, a very inferior grade of such attractions. The fact might as well be faced that the limited resources and audiences of the country will never be able to compete successfully with the city in obtaining the services of professional entertainers. When we want to hear a first-class lecture, enjoy a first-class concert, or witness a first-class play, we must make up our minds to visit the considerable centres of population, where it pays to book these. The third-rate imitations usually available in the country are seldom worth while. Better a good event once a year than half a dozen disappointments.

Does this mean that no worthy entertainment is possible in the rural sections? Surely not. We believe Peter McArthur struck the keynote when he urged development of local talent. We were the more impressed by the suggestion because it coincides with the receipt by the editor of a personal letter from a new settlement in the Peace River section, five hundred miles from the nearest theatre or lecture hall. Forced to rely upon its own resources, this community of three or four hundred scattered settlers has devised its own means of amusement and edification. Its annual fall fair is unpretentious, but possesses all the interest and friendly rivalry of a purely local competition. Games of baseball and football are organized, and an Annual Sports' Day is held, which everybody attends and in which nearly every family competes. Entertainments are gotten up entirely by local talent, the amount of which is surprising, as it would be in any neighborhood where there was something to draw it out. And so on. Visitors to this settlement, which began only four years ago, report that one could scarcely realize he was five hundred miles beyond the nearest city. Necessity for self-reliance has been the making of this community from a social point of view, as it would be of other neighborhoods.

We shall never have satisfactory social conditions in the country until we cease imitating city institutions and develop some of our own. The old-fashioned singing school, for instance, is well worth reviving. Alike as a means of culture and social enjoyment, it was excellent. We are not sure but that participation in a live singing class is preferable to mere attendance at the very best concert. Certainly it is ahead of the second or third-class programs, of which even the towns have so many.

We need, first, of all, a new outlook upon this question of rural society; then original leadership and country life will take on a new interest and opportunity for personal culture that will never be the case so long as rural society is a cheap and skimpy pattern of the town. The motto should be: "Develop local talent."