

THE FARMER'S ADVOCATE AND HOME MAGAZINE.

THE LEADING AGRICULTURAL JOURNAL
IN THE DOMINION.

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JOHN WELD, MANAGER.

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JOHN A. TROTTER.

Peterboro Co., Ont.

ment and feeding of orchard soils. When it is borne in mind that growers have allied with them, in their contest against insect and other pests, one of the most distinguished groups of entomologists (headed by Prof. John H. Comstock) and plant pathologists in the world to-day, the conclusion is foregone that there will be no retrogression. In new plantings, the greatest increases are in peach orchards, for which extensive areas are singularly well adapted. The fascination of peach-growing is very great, but if we except the Niagara and Lake Erie peach districts of the Province of Ontario, and perhaps a few other sections, Canadians will probably be well advised in concentrating a large share of their attention upon the apple, where it may be grown in such abundance and perfection, and is subject to fewer hazards than grapes or peaches.

In a previous issue of "The Farmer's Advocate" (Jan. 5th) some account was given of the remarkable attention paid by agricultural leaders in the State to improving the poultry industry, notably in the direction of egg-production, and which the opportunities are equally good in Canada.

As never before, attention is being focused through the agency of the State Agricultural College, upon the problems of crop and soil improvement by means of the use of lime, growth of clover and alfalfa, and the development of better

yielding and rust resisting strains of timothy, 200 having been selected from 10,000 individual plants tested. Already some of the best are producing twice the average yield of all the plants tested. New York has the largest acreage under hay of any State in the Union. There are crops deserving of greater encouragement than timothy, but it is bound to be grown in large quantities for horses and other stock. A distinct service will have been rendered State agriculture if at least one-quarter could be added to the 6,000,000 tons annually grown, or if that tonnage could be grown on a greatly-reduced acreage. The results of experimental and demonstration work with alfalfa on sterile hill lands has been decidedly encouraging, and also the use of lime in correcting soil acidity and setting free plant food. It has been demonstrated that, to secure alfalfa crops on Dunkirk clay loam, a common type of soil over about one-third of the State, the land needs to be well manured the season of sowing, dressed with lime, and inoculated by means of soil from an old alfalfa field.

In one of his lectures this winter, Prof. Stone told the students that more clover cranks were needed in the State, and a system of field culture that will impart a deeper color to the soil, increase its warmth; enable it to hold more water, improve its texture, and promote its bacterial activity. Clover does these things.

As indicated in the paragraph relative to dairying, the dairy cow is the dominant feature of cattle-breeding in the State, beef-cattle feeding receiving comparatively little attention. Here again, by inference, under conditions prevailing in many portions of Ontario Province, the beef-raiser who readjusts his methods may well be in good heart over the outlook. Hothouse lamb production is a feature of New York farming, the young things often bringing as much as \$18 per head early in the season, but ordinary sheep-farming has still a considerable hold upon the regard of State farmers, and would repay greater attention. Prof. H. H. Wing, of the Animal Husbandry Department, mentions the encouraging fact, in connection with the horse industry, that there is a good increase in the number of pure-bred stallions in use. Costly new barns have been erected on the College farm, and the scope of animal-husbandry work will probably be enlarged at no distant date. Nearly every department of the College is overthronged with students, and yet only the fringe has been touched, for only about one student is enrolled for every 500 farms in the State.

For new buildings and equipment, several hundred thousand dollars are to be expended, and it will all be needed, as the fruitage of the extension work returns, in the form of ambitious and inquiring young men and women. It is probable that the principle of demonstration work will find continued application in the public agricultural policies of the State, and there is already in progress a regeneration of the rural educational agencies of the State. Education pays on the farm. Nowhere does it pay better. In certain farm-management investigations secured from 573 men, it was found that the net income derived by farmers who attended a district school only, was \$318 per year; while those who had attended a High School, or its equivalent, received \$622, and college or university men rose to a return of \$817. Even after arranging the farms in groups having equal capital, there was an increase of \$204 in labor income of men who had attended advanced schools. In other words, the conclusion was drawn that "A High school education is worth more to those farmers than an endowment of \$6,000 in 5 per cent. bonds." How much greater will it be when the rural and High School, officered by properly trained teachers, give a type of education better suited to the needs of rural life and its occupations."

The State food improvement programme swings its scope, with large appropriations, more thoroughly supervised and economical plans, and what is equally important, a saving in expenditures. It is a fact that the State of New York has been successful in securing a large increase in the production of its foodstuffs.

From the foregoing notes, the reflective Canadian farm readers will draw useful conclusions in addition to those suggested, and one of these will be that the present is no time for any relaxation, public or private, on the part of those who, in either capacity, are concerned in the progress of Canadian farming.

"Book-farming."

GOOD THEORIES CONDEMNED BY BAD PRACTICE.

A great many excellent methods, recommended on the very best authority, are condemned by faulty practice. Good ideas are applied half-heartedly, or applied wrongly, without attention to the minute instructions that alone guarantee results. It reminds me of an anecdote I read not long ago: A country vicar in England was visiting a family where a child had scarlet fever. "I suppose you keep him well isolated?" he asked. "Lor' bless you, sir, yes. He keeps behind that clothes-horse, and don't come among us but for meals."

Instead of being so ready to discount theory recommended to us on good authority, let us, rather, inquire searchingly into possible defects of practice. For there is no such thing as disparity between correct theory and practice. Sound theory and proper practice must agree. It is merely a matter of adjustment.

A BOOK-FARMER WHO HAS MADE GOOD.

Just one other example, but a most refreshing one. Down in my native County of Haldimand, last fall, I heard of a case which admirably illustrates several of the points which I have been trying to make. In a certain neighborhood was a comparatively young man named Warren Stringer, a school teacher. Twenty years ago, his father, owing to failing health, offered him the farm if he would come home, look after his parents, and pay off certain shares. Now, Mr. Stringer had no agricultural science whatever, but he did have an inherent liking for the farm, and a desire for such knowledge as would make it possible to do better work than his neighbors, and to understand the "why" of things. He attended Institute meetings, subscribed for agricultural journals, and began to practice what he learned as best he knew how. He tried both beef cattle and dairying, but found there was more money for him in the dairy. He kept accounts, practiced soiling to supplement his pastures, and built the first silo in his neighborhood. A few years ago there was a farm for sale in the neighborhood, and to everyone's surprise, Warren Stringer bought it for four or five thousand dollars. A neighbor offered to loan him some money to pay for the farm, but he didn't need any. Then the neighbors began to sit up and take notice. They are now commencing to follow suit.

I got these facts second hand, and have given them from memory. They may not be quite accurate in detail, but I believe they are substantially correct. I wrote Mr. Stringer for corroboration, and from his private letter, which displays a most admirable spirit, I cannot forbear to take the liberty of making a quotation.

"When I took hold of the farm, the only implements capable of giving good service were a sulky horse rake and a spring-tooth harrow. All other implements and tools were practically done for as regards good service. After getting some new implements, paying off certain claims to other members of the family, and buying 25 acres from my brother, I found that the farm of 105 acres, now with just sufficient tools and implements to work it, had cost me nearly \$3,000. What I wanted was such knowledge as would make it possible to do better work than the general practice, and also to understand the why of it. In groping about blindly, I made some ludicrous mistakes, but kept right on. About this time I heard of the Farmers' Institute, and attended a meeting of the same, becoming a member, and then for the first time I began to get ideas (knowledge). Soon after this, someone sent me a copy of Hoard's Dairyman, and soon after someone canvassed me for 'The Farmer's Advocate.' I subscribed for both papers, and these, with the bulletins received from the Institute, at last began to open up my understanding. At that time, protein, carbohydrates and ether extract, as well as nitrogen (in relation to agriculture), phosphoric acid and potash, were as so much Greek, and I confess the terms were among the hardest I ever learned, but, by taking one at a time, writing it down, and carrying it in my vest pocket, to be looked at a dozen times a day, and by reading all the available information about that particular term, I came at last to get quite familiar with them all. But now comes in the hard part, to apply the knowledge thus gained in actual farm practice, and here is where I got right in earnest, and

"Conclusion of Address by the Managing Editor of 'The Farmer's Advocate,' before the Western Ontario Dairymen's Convention, January, 1911.