

which we are passing every means should be employed that will lighten and more evenly distribute the burdens the people are bearing in the common cause.
Middlesex Co., Ontario.

ALPHA.

Advice and Prejudice.

EDITOR "THE FARMER'S ADVOCATE":

The farmer is a much-advised man. If one were to sit down and think over the subjects submitted to his intelligence as being worthy of his earnest attention for his own good, the session would be a lengthy one, and there would be need for a soft-cushioned chair. He couldn't do it, for instance, "while the horses are eating their oats." Incidentally, farmers themselves are not above giving advice upon occasion. Some of our best friends have staggered us occasionally by tossing off suggestions of things that could be done "while the horses are eating their oats." Either their approval of our speed of action was altogether too high, or the speed at which our horses would eat their oats was entirely underestimated. It will possibly be of interest to select a few items of advice from different sources and make remarks about them. Here's one for instance about swine. It is taken from Prof. C. E. Day's address at the Ottawa Winter Fair and printed in the Annual Report of the Live Stock Branch of the Ontario Dep't. of Agriculture, 1916, which, by the way, has just been received. "Prevailing market conditions in Canada, and the general scarcity of hogs of all kinds, have rendered it difficult for packers to discriminate in price in favor of the bacon hog, even though they might desire to do so. . . . Undoubtedly, if hogs in sufficient numbers to bring about an export trade of any considerable magnitude are produced on the farms of this country, export bacon hogs will command a premium." Now, here comes the advice. Anybody who has had occasion to ask Prof. Day for advice knows that he is sincere and has the best interests of Canadian farmers at heart, and we must bear this in mind as we read what he said: "The bringing about of this desirable state of affairs can be greatly facilitated by the farmers themselves if they will take hold of the matter in an unprejudiced and business-like manner, as recommended in the paragraph which follows.

"Co-operation.—Perhaps the greatest drawback to the live-stock industry of Canada at the present time is the tendency on the part of our farmers to wish to get something different from the stock owned by their neighbors. This tendency to want something different means that there is no uniformity in the hogs going to market from a certain district. Surely no man is so wrapped up in any breed that he loses sight of the fact that, after all, the main object in keeping hogs is to increase our profits from the farm. Think for a moment what it would mean if all the hogs going to market from a certain district were of the same type and color. If this were accomplished farmers could market their own hogs and secure the highest market price for them. At present we find from one district all colors and types of hogs in a car load, and there can be only one result, an unsatisfactory price.

"Co-operation on the part of farmers, in breeding and marketing their swine, would make the paying for hogs according to quality immensely more simple than it is at present, and I believe that packers will be found quite willing to meet the farmers in a spirit of fairness upon a proposition of this kind. When all is said and done, therefore, farmers have it in their power to practically compel discrimination in price in favor of the bacon hog if they will go about the matter in a combined and business-like manner."

This is how Prof. Day sums up the farmers' failure with regard to the marketing of their swine. He says in effect that if Canadian farmers were not prejudiced, unbusiness-like individuals they would do better for themselves and for the country, and he is right. It is plain talk, but that's what we need to-day. The reason that farmers won't co-operate is that they are prejudiced, and one of the indications that they are unbusiness-like is that they won't co-operate. This looks very much as though if we could get rid of prejudice we could make a business-like combination of our class which would be hard to beat. But let us look into this advice of Prof. Day's more closely. It is given with the sincere belief that it would benefit the farmer. But how would it benefit the farmer? Every farmer to-day tries his level best to produce good type, smooth, well-finished hogs because he knows they fetch the highest price, but in every litter the individuals are not always alike; even when mating has been carefully considered, and the farmer has taken his sows a long distance to breed them so as to get bacon-type hogs, there may be some stubbier than others, and possibly there will be a runt. The ones that are good doers will bring him more money as it is, because it is in them to do it whether they are black, white or red, and all the co-operation in the world wouldn't make the good ones any better nor the poor ones either for that matter. The only thing that could be made uniform would be the color. The idea that the co-operation of unprejudiced farmers in a business-like way would necessarily produce uniformity in size and type of every hog raised in the district and that there wouldn't be any but high-grade, top-notchers to ship out. What would the farmer do with the wrong shaped and unthrift hogs which nature persists in supplying? They couldn't be shipped with the high-class, as that would spoil the shipment. They would have to be shipped separately, and we can imagine the beggarly price that would be offered for them. The farmer

would have to make two trips instead of one, and he would have to keep the hogs he knew were to be discriminated against in price till such time as the district was ready to ship a carload of poor quality hogs. Isn't it better for the farmer to clean up his shipment on one day if he needs to, either to save time or feed or what not at the best price he can get? It seems to us as though Prof. Day's suggestion would be more in favor of the packers than of the farmers, because they would be saved the trouble of grading at their end of the line. We must admit, however, that even apart from hogs or profits it would be an inestimable boon if we could get rid of prejudice, if we could co-operate, and if we could be business-like. It would be interesting to try out Prof. Day's theory and to try it out honestly. It might be the beginning of getting rid of some of our prejudice, and it would mean that we would find out the benefits of co-operation and being business-like.

Now we will look at another piece of advice. This time it is given by the Farmer's Advocate. Now, anybody who has taken the Farmer's Advocate, even if he has only done so "for the women folks," knows very well by reading every page of it himself, even to the advertisements before "the women folks" get a chance at it—that this magazine wouldn't under any circumstances knowingly give a farmer a wrong tip. Page 2042, column 1, paragraph 1. We read: "The side of bacon must be such that it will cure into something acceptable to the trade, and whether it comes from a black, white or red pig is a secondary matter. A good deal of this breed controversy is piffle, and if the average breeder would make his choice, and then be as much of a stickler for strain and type as he generally is for breed he is pretty sure to make a success. . . . Select your breed and allow your personal likings to be gratified to a considerable extent. . . . The most successful breeders cannot see anything attractive about animals which do not belong to the particular kind with which they work. They are wrapped up in their breed, so to speak, and are more successful on account of their admiration for it. Have a high standard or ideal and make your herd of whatever breed you choose attain to it."

Here we have an entirely different direction for the attainment of success. For farmers who cannot rise above prejudice it is excellent. We are not all constituted alike, and the Farmer's Advocate is for all. This advice, it is plainly stated, is for the average breeder. Some men are not content to be classed among the average breeders, they would like to be a little bit above the average.

If in a district there are a few farmers desirous of trying out Prof. Day's theory it would be necessary, if they are to have any success, to win over to their way of thinking some of those farmers who "cannot see anything attractive about animals which do not belong to the particular kind with which they work."

It is difficult to get the average farmer who has been used to certain methods and certain breeds all his life to change them, and the only way to do it is, in a case like this, to provide good sires of the type and color decided on and try to induce the prejudiced farmers to use them. In fact, it would pay for those interested in getting one type and color in a district to club together and offer prizes for the best litters sired by their chosen hogs. Many men will work for a definite prize who cannot see anything in furthering a scheme which will benefit others as well as themselves. The idea that others, and especially certain individuals, were to derive and benefit from their actions would kill the project at once. The younger generation is happily growing up with fewer of these prejudices, they are measuring up to the standard of men such as the country needs, and are not so afraid that there is a "nigger in the fence" when new schemes are proposed. They are willing to examine and take a chance at testing out plans that come from good, reliable sources, and it is to the men of to-morrow that we look to really develop Canadian farming and bring it into line with manufacturing and transportation, and the other influences which at present govern the country.

There are some men among us who are whining because the farmers are ignored by the powers that be. There are others who loudly declaim that we, as a class, possess more knowledge and ability for clear thinking than could be found in the cities, and want to see farmers in control of the destiny of Canada at once. There are those who look on District Representatives and the work of the departments of agriculture as worse than useless. These are not constructive advisers. They are the men of yesterday, the Rip Van Winkles who have just waked up to find the world has changed and is still changing. They cannot catch up but they make a noise and shout to those in front to look out or they will run over them. In the meantime the young men see clearly that whining and grousing will do no good. They know that farmers must so act that they will inspire enough confidence in the minds of the people at large that they will be invited to assist in the control of the country's destiny, until at last farmers are strongly represented side by side with others, who also have rights, in our parliament at Ottawa. These younger men know the value of District Representatives, the need for scientific research, and the advantages to be gained from the results of such work carried out by the government agricultural departments and colleges. The report of the fourth convention of the United Farmers of Ontario is before us—a terrible exhibition of prejudice and spleen. No wonder they complain of being out of favor with the press and the government. Let us hope that their bark is worse than their bite, and that they may reveal some of their good qualities at their next convention.

Huron Co., Ont.

DERMOT McEROY.

Why Keep the Boys on the Farm?

EDITOR "THE FARMER'S ADVOCATE":

The increasing cost of farm produce, and the scarcity of foodstuffs has brought us up against some problems. One is how is this old world going to be fed? Some one has suggested the Chinese plan—a population forced to subsist on a vegetable diet, and we may be coming to that.

The so-called "High cost of living", is one that was attracting considerable attention before the war, and the slogan, "Back to the land," was becoming quite fashionable; whole volumes have been written on the subject by our city friends. Yet have we seen any stampede of city-born people to the farms? Instead we see a steady movement of good citizens off the farms to the cities and the farms are left desolate, sold to lumbermen or speculators or deserted as the case may be. We also hear considerable about how to keep the boys on the farm and most of what we hear is arrant nonsense. The boys on the farm must be educated, and they must be allowed to fill their proper place in the nation, wherever that place may be. Our educational system will some day be framed and improved so that not only our boys but our girls will get a good education and practical help and encouragement that will assist them to decide what profession or what position in life they are likely to succeed in when the inclination as well as the ability of the boy will be taken into consideration. When that time comes we hope there will be fewer men who make a failure of life. We all agree that the farmer's son is more likely to succeed on the farm than his city cousin. But if nature meant the farmer's son for a statesman or a lawyer or an engineer surely that is his place.

Agriculture, the most essential vocation in the world is the one that brings the smallest remuneration, and that is the reason so many farms are vacant to-day—the reason our boys prefer city life. The government is wasting millions on what they call a campaign "To educate the farmer". They have accomplished nothing because they have begun at the wrong end.

The farmer asks for nothing but a fair deal. He is willing to do his share but he is struggling under burdens grievous to be borne. Education is a good thing but it must be a "balanced ration". And most of the stuff dealt out to the farmers is conflicting and contradictory impractical, and in many cases insulting.—When farming as an industry pays half as well as making cement, or paint or munitions or automobiles we will have farmers aplenty.

If the government would give farmers cheaper farm machinery, cheaper autos, better roads and better educational advantages for their children it would help more than all the "hot air" that is being poured out in the name of education. The farmer certainly needs an all-round education, also a knowledge of human nature, of domestic animals, of plants, seeds, birds, weeds, insects, etc., etc. He must have business ability and experience. He must be a hustler and have a large measure of good sound commonsense. He must have capital, and he must be willing to work from fifteen to seventeen hour per day. Is it reasonable for him to expect fair remuneration for his work? For the farmer must get a respectable livelihood for himself and his family, and his children must be educated. Even if "The country skies are always blue", and the birds sing ever so sweetly, "And food is to be found in stones" and "sermons in blades of grass."

The farmer is being urged to produce, "yes produce even at a loss" as his patriotic duty. No doubt the farmer will do his best but he is already working to the limit of his strength and can only increase production if he gets the right kind of help. If skilled labor is available wonders can be done, but the farmer has no time to waste with the novice. Again, the farmer is asked to raise hogs—more hogs. Can he make bricks without straw?

The farmer's wife is being told to save, to economize. Let me assure you she will save. She has had a life-long training in economy. She is master of the art. No foodstuffs go to waste on the farm. What the family does not eat goes to feed the chickens or those much needed hogs. But let me suggest someone else must be found to feed those hogs. The farmer's wife is a busy woman and must not neglect her children to feed hogs.

Compton Co., Quebec.

A FARMER'S WIFE.

Public Opinion.

EDITOR "THE FARMER'S ADVOCATE":

The elections are over. Some are pleased and some are displeased, but it is the duty of all, whether things have turned out to their liking or not, to make the very best of the situation as it exists. Governments are very much what the people make them—not only prior to an election but afterwards. Even the most corrupt and shameless politician is susceptible to public opinion, while those who would do good are rendered powerless if they have no support from the people. Therefore, while the elections are over, and the die is cast, it is government can do little harm to an alert, public-spirited electorate, determined to protect their own interests; whereas a good government can make little headway against the powers of darkness if it is not generously and persistently supported by those whose interests it would guard. Let everyone, therefore, who would make the present crisis a starting point for better things become individually responsible for "doing his bit" so that pre-election promises may become established facts instead of being straightway consigned to oblivion. Thousands of our bravest sons have gone forth to

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