

# The Farmer's Advocate

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### EDITORIAL.

#### The Quest for Knowledge.

A notable manifestation of the spirit of intelligent activity characteristic of Canadian agriculture to-day is to be seen in the recent growth of Farmers' Institutes in the Maritime Provinces, Ontario, and other portions of the Dominion.

In Ontario, more applications have been made for meetings this year than ever before. Last year 791 meetings were held, and this year over 800 meetings have been arranged for. The year ending June 30th, 1901, shows a total membership of 20,307, 730 meetings and a total attendance of 131,653 persons. On June 30th, 1902, we notice quite a step in advance. The membership has increased to 22,948; 791 meetings were held, and 147,642 received instruction, an encouraging growth, for which Supt. Creelman and the local Institute officers are entitled to very great credit.

The special features of the work last year included the increase of Women's Institutes, designed to promote scientific knowledge in domestic economy, from 20 to 44, with a membership on June 30th last of 3,081. The Institute excursions brought about 30,000 visitors to the Agricultural College, at Guelph, and a number of seed fairs were held before spring planting time.

But what of the future? During the coming winter instruction will be continued along the same lines as before, but in addition in Ontario a special campaign will be inaugurated in opposition to the pea weevil, as foreshadowed in our last issue, and to weeds. The latter campaign has our most hearty approbation. All Institute workers will receive instruction on these two subjects at the meeting of the Experimental Union, and at the Provincial Winter Fair this month. Prof. Wm. Lochhead, Guelph, and Dr. James Fletcher, Experimental Farm, Ottawa, will instruct the Institute delegates on matters pertaining to the pea weevil, while Prof. Zavitz, of the Agricultural College staff, and Mr. G. H. Clark, Department of Agriculture, Ottawa, will deliver addresses on the subject of "Weed Seeds and How to Avoid Them." Institute workers will also be provided with a chart, showing the amount of weed seeds actually counted in grasses and clover seeds procured from seedsmen in different parts of the Province. They will be supplied with literature, and a complete set of grass seeds and weed seeds, to show at the meetings.

The subject of fall fair improvement, educationally, from the farmer's standpoint, will be taken up. At these exhibitions the products of the farm and garden should be gathered together and so labelled that the average visitor may be able to see what can be accomplished by better methods, and return home and be able to apply that knowledge in the production of farm products. The advisability has been suggested of having some one in charge of each division of the show, to give information desired as to how the different plants and animals were grown and fed and finished. At a number of fairs this year, Institute workers were present as judges, and others gave a practical demonstration of killing, plucking and dressing of poultry, packing of apples,

describing the valuable points of cattle, sheep and swine, the handling of bees, and the growth and production of sugar beets. Several fairs, also, had splendid experimental plots of grasses, grains and forage plants, and had these crops looking their best at the time of the fair. The success of several local fairs, such as those in Norfolk and Dufferin counties, Ont., attended by members of our staff, go to prove that the people will appreciate a wholesome, instructive exhibition, if it is only properly presented. It is to be hoped that the country has seen the end of the mad rush for "attraction" follies, with which so many agricultural societies have been carried away in recent years. From all indications, we are looking forward to a good year in connection with the Farmers' Institutes.

#### The Dairy Outlook.

Never in the history of dairy farming in Canada was a more favorable summer and autumn experienced, or the business more profitable than this year, and never has the prospect for that industry been more encouraging. The returns from the export of Canadian cheese and butter the present year will, it is confidently estimated, reach the record of \$30,000,000. Ten years ago it was less than \$10,000,000. What other branch of farming has in the same time come near making such a showing in the upward trend of its course? With cheese selling now at 12 cents at the factory and butter at 20 cents to 25 cents in the home markets, and our barns choke-full of feed, what better business can the farmer covet? It is safe to say that dairying is the surest source of revenue the average Canadian farmer can count on. While it requires no special skill to make it a fair success, yet it rewards in dollars and cents the most intelligent and skilful management that can be applied to it. Comparatively few farmers make a financial success of feeding cattle for the market for beef, while the majority can keep cows paying their way and putting by a little profit. Since the steady demand and the good market for young hogs has evidently come to stay, the sow and the cow have proved the farmers' favorite reliance for profitable production. Our export returns for hog products last year totalled close to \$12,000,000, while ten years ago they were but little over \$1,000,000. Dairying and hog-raising fit into each other admirably, as there is no other food so suitable for young pigs as skim milk, while the next best thing is whey from the cheese factory. These by-products of the dairy, which would otherwise be largely wasted, go far towards growing the pigs, which, in little more than half a year from birth, go off as money-makers with a reasonable certainty. The labor question is liable to be raised as an objection to dairying, but can any class of farming be made successful by the average farmer without labor? And what line of farming will pay better returns for the labor bestowed upon it, or what line of farming will so well contribute to keeping up the fertility of the farm as dairying. Manure must be supplied from some source if the land is to continue to produce paying crops, and in what way can manure be so cheaply and conveniently provided as by feeding cows and pigs and other young stock, and where can as good a market for the

grain and hay grown on the farm be found as that furnished by the cows and the hogs which take it in right at home without any tedious teaming, and pay for it in the form of milk and meat that has a cash value and brings in money steadily the year round.

A successful Ontario dairyman elsewhere in this issue writes, "We market our crops through our cows at about these prices: Barley, \$1.00; oats, 75 cents; hay, \$20 per ton, and have the manure too, which is worth a lot." The labor problem, too, is being gradually solved by the introduction of improved methods of handling milk, by the use of the cream separator, the adoption of the cream-gathering system, the establishment of milk-condensing factories, and the increasing demand for milk and cream for city trade.

These things, and all other indications, point to a steady demand and profitable returns for the dairyman, while improved farm buildings and facilities for carrying on the business with a greater degree of comfort and cleanliness, which are within the reach of most farmers, helps to make the work less irksome, and may with patience and good management make it a pleasurable occupation. A herd of well-selected and well-kept cows and young cattle is a source of solid satisfaction and pleasure to one who loves animals, and he who does not is to be pitied.

Those who are in the dairy business will do well to stay right in it, because it is safe and sure, and they will do well to pay more attention to the character of the cows they keep, testing them to ascertain whether they are money-makers or merely boarders, paying only for what they eat and contributing nothing to the profits. Good cows pay well for good feeding, giving profitable returns for what they get, and the only way to get the best out of a cow is to see that she is regularly supplied with good feed and kept comfortable.

#### The Caleb Jenkins Letters.

Who has not heard of the "Caleb Jenkins" letters? Replete with shrewd common-sense, his observations on current questions have been so keen and yet expressed with such a sense of good-humored irony as to make them popular even with those who were satirized. With this gift the author (Bengough) combines the still rarer skill of the cartoonist, which, added to the product of his genius as a poet, first gave him enduring fame. By a happy thought he has now turned his humor in the line of agriculture, and his letters will be one of the new features of the "Farmer's Advocate" for 1903, the series beginning with the present issue and the Christmas number.

The Chicago Live Stock World describes as "facetiousness" the recent allusion by the "Farmer's Advocate" to a Washington bulletin labelled "American breeds of cattle," but which contained descriptions of the well-known British breeds, and then asserts, "American breeders are, in fact, striving to get away from English and Scotch types." Their zeal in "getting away" is manifested by continued purchases by American breeders of imported cattle and the presence of their buyers at the recent sales in Great Britain. American experts can doubtless enlighten the World man on how to keep up the march of improvement in their cattle.