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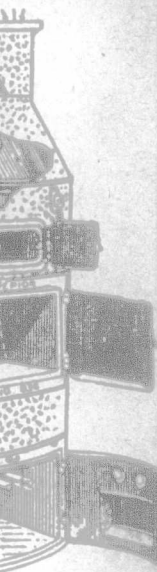
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The Farmer's Advocate and Home Magazine

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1866

REGISTERED IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE COPYRIGHT ACT OF 1875

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LONDON, ONTARIO, DECEMBER 2, 1920.

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EDITORIAL.

Save out a little skim-milk for the hens daily; they will make good use of it.

There is no use for any implements on the farm now except plows; the other machinery should be under cover.

The U. F. O. demonstrated in East Elgin that the farmers' party is a factor in Federal as well as Provincial politics.

Make a final inspection of the drain outlets. A drain clogged at the mouth may be less than 50 per cent. efficient.

The apples stored in the cellar should be inspected occasionally, and the bad ones removed. Apples do not seem to be keeping well this year.

One thing is certain, this game of politics has got to be learned all over again. The old rules don't apply any more, and the old tactics don't bring results.

The season of winter fairs, annual meetings, and conventions is approaching. Arrange the work so as to attend some of these; they will help you and you can help them.

Come to think about it, we have never seen or heard anything definite regarding the source of funds which are used to conduct election campaigns. When these are not raised openly in the various ridings, whence are they?

The Christmas Number of The Farmer's Advocate and Home Magazine is mailed just as carefully as any other issue, and you should receive it without fail. If you do not receive it on time, make enquiries at your post office and of the courier.

Attempts are being made to make bitterness a feature of the forthcoming Dominion election fight. We may rant and rave till we are black in the face, but if we don't vote calmly, intelligently, and conscientiously as citizens of Canada, we will still be floundering hopelessly in a political quagmire.

The downward trend in the values of market live stock is accompanied by a similar decline in grain prices. The selling of grain and stocking lightly apparently offers no escape for there is abundance of roughage which must be fed, and to derive full value from it as feed it should be supplemented with grain or millfeeds. A persistent adherence to the doctrine of a well-stocked farm will bring farmers through the period of readjustment most successfully. Out at the bottom and in at the top is always a disappointing policy.

A great many farmers are feeling pessimistic at the present time, and not without reason. They are doing more real work every day—the kind of work that whitens the hair and stiffens the limbs—than the bulk of the city workers do in two. Their cost of production, labor, implements, transportation charges, threshing charges, etc., are abnormally high, and their markets are in a state of flux. Pessimism, however, will not ameliorate these conditions, but will only make them appear more serious than they are. We should face our problems with composure, looking forward to the future hopefully. When we allow pessimism to overcome us, the future always looks as black as Erebus. Nobody really looks forward to conditions that are bad, but if we cast a shadow on the future we should not complain if the shadow remains.

The Annual Christmas Number.

This is simply to warn our readers that the next issue will be the Christmas Number of The Farmer's Advocate and Home Magazine. It has been under preparation for weeks, and we can say, with all modesty, that our readers will be presented with a real treat in agricultural journalism, for the text has been prepared by some of the best writers and thinkers in Canada. The illustrations have been selected with great care, and the articles have been purposely varied so as to afford entertainment and enlightenment in generous measure.

We do not intend to describe in detail all the good things that will appear in next week's issue, for that would detract from the pleasures incident to expectancy, just as that happy sensation enjoyed when opening a Christmas box is partly destroyed when one has been previously acquainted with the contents. Owing to the fact that fifty-one issues carrying a liberal amount of downright, practical information are put out each year, we can afford to make the Christmas Number a little lighter and more entertaining. There will be some good, sound agricultural gospel included in this special issue, but a portion of the space is given over to story, rural sociology, reminiscences, and other interesting matter, in addition to live stock and farm topics treated in a popular way. The Home Magazine will, as usual, be replete with interesting Christmassy articles, and the stories in it will appeal to old and young.

We are making this mention of our forthcoming Christmas Number only that subscribers may be on the look-out and not miss this special Christmas issue of "The Farmer's Advocate."

More Milk Per Cow.

During a period when price levels are changing, such as has occurred during the last few years and is now a matter of serious moment to all classes of the farming community, dairymen are, in one sense at least, placed in an unfortunate position. Milk is one of the last commodities to rise in price, and it has happened in this instance that no sooner had milk reached a price fairly proportionate with the cost of production than prices of nearly all other commodities took a downward turn. Naturally this general tendency toward lower prices is having its effect on the dairy industry and the price of milk, so that the dairyman is faced on a rising market, with a condition whereby his costs increase faster than the price of his product, while when prices are falling he must be ever tugging against a common inclination to depress values. In other words, no one is concerned about him so long as his product advances in price more slowly than other commodities, but once other products quicker to respond to price-tendencies begin to go down every eye is turned toward the dairyman who is expected to follow suit after a very limited enjoyment of higher values.

At the same time the dairy industry has many compensations for its followers, not the least of which is the fact that it is possible to increase production per cow, per acre or per farm to a greater extent than in almost any other branch of agriculture. It is generally recognized that there is a great deal of room for improvement in the average quantity of milk produced per cow, and investigations have shown with the most conclusive proof that increased production per cow means an increased labor income for the owner under anything like reasonable care and feeding. This is one of the avenues of escape open to the dairymen from the disadvantage of declining prices, and it is one which it will pay well to take advantage of. The margin of practicability for increased milk yield per cow in dairying is very wide, and in almost every herd there is a level of production that could be materially raised either by better feeding or better cows. Too many dairymen believe that they possess herds as good as the average

and are content to let it go at that. Many do possess such herds, but are poor feeders so that the returns from the herd are lower than the average. Others are good feeders but are wasting their skill on inferior individuals, one or two of which in a herd may entirely dissipate the advantages of unusual ability to feed economically for milk.

Fortunately there is available this fall a comparative abundance of rough feeds which the dairy cow can utilize more economically than any other kind of live stock. Farm grown grains are also more plentiful at lower values, while purchased concentrates have declined considerably. These factors lend a greater element of feasibility to the advantages to be gained from liberal and more careful feeding, and it certainly behooves each feeder to feed as economically as he can. The milk scales and Babcock test are too seldom used, and we believe that greater stress placed upon their value and usefulness would inevitably result in large profits from more milk per cow.

Agriculture in the Rural School.

The Departments of Education throughout Canada have made an heroic and, on the whole, a laudable effort to introduce agriculture into the curricula of the public schools. Whether they took this step voluntarily and in the interests of education, or in response to a public clamor, is of little concern at present. However, it is well to bear in mind that laws and regulations more often are, and should be, simply a statutory expression of public opinion, and so far as Ontario is concerned no steps were taken, that we know of, to make agriculture a subject of study in rural schools until it became what was construed to be a popular demand. Intermittently for the past twenty-five years the cry has gone out to "keep the boy on the farm," and the origin of this slogan could probably be traced to the very centres of population, sky-scrapers and big business. Farmers have, unthinkingly, in some cases, taken up the cry and heralded it abroad, but, generally speaking, rural people have desired an all-round education for their children that would equip them for citizenship in any field of endeavor and qualify them to select any profession or occupation toward which their own peculiar temperaments and abilities inclined them. We are not opposed to any effort of an economic or educational nature that will make farm life more enjoyable and farming more remunerative, thus attracting youth and holding it in the country, but treating agriculture as a vocational subject in the rural schools with the object of chaining young people to the farm, even if they do not care for and are not fitted for the life, is a crime against society.

The teaching of agriculture is still in the experimental stage, and, no doubt, departments of education throughout Canada will evolve and perfect systems far superior to those under which the work was begun. Educationalists, like the general run of people, are only human, and must learn by experience, so we do not feel inclined to condemn anyone because of the present and past attempts to brighten up the public school curriculum with something that may get us into a little closer touch with life itself.

Canada is primarily an agricultural country; farming is the basic industry, and it is only reasonable that our public school system should be so modelled as to recognize this fact. Reading, writing and arithmetic are the corner-stones of education, but these and other listed subjects should be so related and correlated as to give due recognition to our natural industries, with emphasis on agriculture. This is fair to the urban and rural child alike; it creates no class consciousness; it raises no class barriers. After all, the science of agriculture is based on a knowledge of Nature's laws. Farming more than any other occupation is a partnership with