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EDITORIAL

Raise Hogs.

It is generally recognized as being neither a Christian nor yet a prudent business principle to cut off one's nose to spite his face. Even supposing it were a revenge on the face, is it not a greater catastrophe to the person who has to wear the deformed lineament? This axiomatic principle seems to bear a striking application to the present state of the Canadian hog and bacon business.

Canadian pork-packers are not philanthropists. Some of them, we fear, are not even intelligently selfish. All the worthy sentiments we have heard in times past about co-operation between packer and farmer to develop an export trade in Wiltshire sides, was intended for the farmer. The packer wanted his co-operation to the extent of raising the hogs for him (the party of the second part), to buy as cheaply as he could, and make as much out of as possible. Any thought of being in the packing business for the joint benefit of himself and the producer never entered his mind. It is not the way of packers, nor, for that matter, of any other class of business men. They are in the business for what they can make out of it. Some of them are honorable to the extent of living up to their word and obligations; others are not, if they see a loophole. Some are far-sighted, and disposed to placate and feed the goose that lays the golden eggs; others are short-sighted, brusque, and simply snatch the eggs when they are laid, heeding not the next clutch, or thinking, perhaps, that the other fellow will get them, anyhow, like as not. Such is the nature of pork-packers, good, bad and indifferent. Prices paid for hogs at any period are regulated by the supply of raw material, prospective demand for the cured product, and relative anxiety of packers to secure hogs to keep their plants operating at a profit. There seems no longer any good reason to doubt that there is real competition in buying hogs.

Take the packer as he is. Expect no favors, watch your own end of the game, and let him attend to his; picture him at his worst; weigh the matter from a cold, calculating business point of view, free from considerations of sentiment, malice or sympathy. Discount the prospects from a standpoint of prospective prices and profits. Contemplate the buyer as an impersonal law of chance, which in effect he is. After this hard-headed manner of logic, consider the question whether it will not pay to raise hogs.

Recognize the fact that price fluctuates, and reckon returns on a basis of averages. Go into the hog business, not for the high spots, nor for the low, but to stick to it through thick and thin, dipping in a little heavier when others slacken up, for in the long run such will be found, in the majority of cases, to prove the more remunerative policy. Drift not with the crowd. Court the opportunities your neighbor ignores, and strive to sell at a period when scant supply makes prices high. Pursued on such lines, there is seldom a year but some money can be made out of hogs, if economically fed by a skilled and attentive swineherd, and judiciously marketed.

In the dairy districts, what better stock have we as a medium for marketing skim milk and whey? A recent correspondent of "The Farmer's Advocate" estimated that he made skim milk worth 50 cents a hundredweight for this purpose. The estimate may be high; doubtless it is, but place the figure at 25 cents a hundredweight. In what other way can the returns from the dairy cow be so well supplemented?

A thrifty lot of young baconers, weaned at six

to eight weeks of age, and fed afterwards on skim milk or whey, plus shorts, mixed grains, and some green feed, including roots and clover chaff, or alfalfa, can be easily marketed as first-class, 200-pound singers at between six and seven months of age. We will go farther, and say that when this result is not obtained, under the conditions specified, there is something radically wrong with the pen, the feed or the feeder. And the feed cost of producing such a hog, even in winter, need not usually much, if any, exceed \$5.00 per cwt., counting everything; while, in summer, by utilizing alfalfa pasture, the cost for feed need not run over \$4.50, including the rent of the land. How many times have there been, in the last five years, when these figures of cost would not leave a margin of profit? The trouble is there are too many early-weaned, ill-fed, stunted, rheumatic pigs, wallowing in wet dung in clammy pens, with an excess of stale feed in their troughs. Not one pig in ten is fed as he should be with a view to profit. We speak from experience and somewhat wide observation. Another difficulty is that too large a proportion of the supply comes on the market in the latter part of October, November and December, bringing the cured product on the British market at a period when the demand for bacon is curtailed by the consumption of poultry and other meats.

With an embargo upon American live hogs, and a duty of three cents a pound on American fresh pork, the Canadian hog-raiser enjoys about all the Government favor that can justifiably or effectively be granted him. Legislation never made an angel out of a pork-packer, and never will. The one thing needed to revive the Canadian bacon industry is about one to five good brood sows and ten to fifty well-fed, growthy shoats on every farm. It is time to cease grumbling at the packer, but take him as we find him, make the best of the business, and, for the sake of our own pocketbooks, raise hogs.

Seeding Under Difficulties.

A subscriber, who says he sowed oats in a well-prepared seed-bed on April 17th, writes that on May 10th they were not yet out of the ground, and that it was then raining as though it had never rained before. Alluding to our editorial on timeliness, thoroughness, and despatch in seeding - practice, he expresses a desire to learn of a method of preparing a seed-bed in the mud.

We have no method of seeding to advocate that can be followed, irrespective of weather, but the suggestions offered in the editorial referred to are calculated to produce successful results, in so far as these can be insured by any method under the untoward conditions prevailing. Indeed, the points advocated are of especial advantage in just such a season. Those who were in a position to rush the work will find themselves ahead in the end. It is somewhat surprising, and very unusual, that oats sown April 17th should not have been up by May 10th, but if the seed was good, we would have little or no concern for the final result. The probabilities are that a great many fields will have required harrowing after seeding to break the crust and allow the plants to come through.

There is this consolation to be offered in the present backward spring, for, while the man who misses his opportunities to sow at the proper time usually suffers for it, yet, when one does his best, and commits the seed to the ground in good condition as soon as land and weather permits, he not infrequently secures a full crop, even though the season may have opened later than usual. It is a case of one doing the best he can under the circumstances.

Milk Situation at Toronto.

The decision of the milk and cream producers in the vicinity of Toronto to enter the retail field, marks an interesting development in city milk business. Needless to say, they are not undertaking the scheme for pleasure. Ultimately, it is hoped that higher net prices will be derived, and that a steady and certain outlet for the milk produced on their farms will be secured.

A profit from the business, amounting to interest on capital invested, and a reasonable return for the raw product, are two essentials. Evidently, then, the assumption is either that the dealers are at present deriving substantially more than interest on capital invested, or else that the management of businesses now in operation is not economical. Other considerations that may be taken into account include higher quality in the supply, and more efficient service. None of the producers have complained that too much is being paid for the milk as it comes from the farm.

As a rule, the development of a successful business is a slow process. Sometimes a high-salaried manager, who understands details from start to finish, by practicing economy, and yet by judicious expenditures, succeeds in showing a healthy situation after a comparatively short period of operations. On the average, however, even with shrewd business management, it is found to be up-hill work.

One of the difficulties of co-operative effort in Canada is to induce the co-operators to make "the long pull, the strong pull, and the pull all together, my hearties," in the face of temptations and seducements accidentally or purposely thrown before them. The Toronto milk-producers will not find the operation of their own retail business by any means smooth sailing. If they succeed, their example will certainly be emulated, and will attract wide attention as a phase of unique co-operative enterprise.

Increase the Corn Acreage.

The lateness of spring-grain seeding throughout a large area of Eastern Canada, owing to cold, backward weather the latter part of April, followed by a snowfall on the night of the 29th, with later flurries in May, and much wet weather since then, will probably have the effect of curtailing the acreage of grain and increasing the area devoted to corn, millet, buckwheat, rape, and other crops adapted to a later planting period. If this proves to be the case, the backwardness of the season will in all probability turn out to be a not unmixt disadvantage, perhaps a benefit. It is safe to say that if Canadian farmers were awake to their opportunities, there would be at least four times the corn grown in Canada that has usually been raised in the past. The advantages commence with the planting season, which, coming after the grain seeding, lengthens the time for putting the plowed land under crop. The second advantage consists in that it affords remunerative employment in its summer cultivation, with a splendid opportunity to rid the fields of noxious weeds. A cornfield, cultivated as well as it should be for the good of the crop, will incidentally be freed of all weeds by horse work, except an odd one close to the hills or in the rows, which will require the hoe, or perhaps hand-pulling. Intertillage may be—and, in fact, should be—largely accomplished with the weeder and two-horse or three-horse corn cultivator, for cultivators are now made which will straddle two rows at a time, being drawn by three horses, and guided by a man behind. This is faster than many farmers of the old way work their summer-fallows, and almost as thorough in