

The Farmer's Advocate and Home Magazine

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EDITORIAL.

It is to be hoped that June behaves better than May did.

Be sure to take your umbrella and rain-coat to the field!

It is time to see that all the haying machinery is in good repair.

Keeping records will make you a better dairyman and your herd more productive.

A wet year is generally a weedy year. If possible, never let the weeds get a start.

If all that is said against the Ross rifle is true, it is time a change was considered.

The commission business seems to be a profitable business in so far as it applies to war contracts.

Increase the acreage of corn and roots, even though planted late. Remember, the season is late.

Read the article on keeping dairy records in this issue. One man is now able to make more from a herd of 17 cows than he formerly did from 27.

The session of the Dominion Parliament, recently prorogued, might have been known as the railway session almost as appropriately as the second war session.

Those who sowed early, even though the land was none too fit, are congratulating themselves. This year, as is the case most years, it was better to sow early than late.

When you pay a fair price for a high-class article and get good value, you generally feel better than when you are separated from ten or fifteen cents and are "stung."

Records are capable of increasing the annual income from a herd of from 12 to 15 cows by \$500. These are not abstract figures. They have been proven by practice.

Seeding weather, such as has prevailed over the greater part of Ontario this year, generally means more catch crops as buckwheat, millet, etc. Sow something to keep the land productive.

Some of those who were calling for grain production a year ago are now endeavoring to show that there is likely to be a surplus of grain and a shortage of live stock at the end of the war. It never pays to give up good stock for grain growing.

Some prophets, and others, are now sure that the intense bombardment in Europe caused the heavy rains which deluged Ontario in April and May. If so, why didn't Western Quebec get the same dose? The weather in that Province was not unusually wet, we are told.

Real good horses may be scarce, but it will take considerable persuasion on the part of arm-chair Government officials to make the farmer who has one, two, three or half a dozen sound, serviceable horses for sale, believe that there is any scarcity in sight. However, we believe every farmer with a good brood mare should breed her to a good sire this year.

What Parliament Did for the Railways.

Elsewhere in this issue is the report of what the Dominion Government did for agriculture in the session recently prorogued. There was practically nothing, so far as legislation is concerned, to report regarding agriculture. The resume is worth reading, however, in order to acquaint oneself with the way the estimates are allotted to each branch of the agricultural work. No one would expect much new agricultural legislation during a war session. Canadian Governments have gone about as far as they safely can with the "pap" they call agricultural legislation. As a matter of fact agriculture is generally legislated against more than for. Governments have a habit of making a big noise about the money they spend for agriculture, while they proceed to give big corporations and the so-called Big Business, legislation which permits them to get the advantage of the farmers of this country to an extent many times greater than that covered by the expenditure of the Agricultural Department. However, Canadian farmers believe that the expenditure of the Agricultural Department is high enough, and all they ask is a fair field, with no favors to any business or class.

It is interesting, however, to note that there was enough railway legislation in the recent session to warrant its being called a "railway session" as well as a "war session." It seems that anyone who went to Ottawa on railway business had no trouble in impressing Parliament. In fact we heard a statement made in the Capital City that there was no use in coming to Ottawa unless you had a railway to sell.

Year after year the heads of one big railway corporation have been going to Ottawa for financial help, and now another transcontinental line finds itself in a position which necessitates Government aid. During the past session \$8,000,000 was guaranteed to the Grand Trunk Pacific, and \$15,000,000 to the Canadian Northern. Those who have followed the situation will remember that in 1911 \$35,000,000 was guaranteed to one road, and they were back again in 1914 and received a further \$45,000,000. Each time the Government is told by those who are after funds that this will be the last. But this year they were confronted with a new proposition; the directors of the G. T. P. came to them with the road practically in their hands, ready to pass it over, but the Government would not, fearing that, with the financial load necessitated by the war, it would dangerously increase the obligations of Canada. What the public would like to know is how long these railroads are to remain under private control and be financed by the people, which is really the case at the present time. If the Canadian Government is to be called upon to meet the financial obligations of the roads, which the roads themselves cannot meet, it means nothing more nor less than that the Government stands behind the roads. It is said that it would be a bad thing for Canadian finance if one or more of Canada's leading railroads were to go into liquidation. If this be true it would seem that the only thing to do would be for the Government to take over the roads and operate them. All those who are following the situation closely believe that this will be the ultimate necessity, and wonder is expressed that the Government delays and keeps doling out year after year money to finance the roads when they have no jurisdiction over their operation.

Not satisfied with meeting the financial obligations of the two railroads another commission was added to the long list already appointed. This commission, at an expense to the country of \$150,000, is to go over the affairs of the two railroads and make some

plans as to what shall become of them in the future. Governments of the present age are expert at getting out of work themselves by handing all investigational activity over to expensive commissions, who, in a vain hope to earn their money, turn out reports so voluminous that no one finds time to read them through, and by the very volume of the printing add to the cost of the work. If it is necessary to further go in to the affairs of the C. N. R. and the G. T. P., it would appear to the average Canadian citizen that Parliament could have made some provision other than the appointment of a \$150,000 commission. In fact, is it not for this very class of work that we elect members of Parliament?

Then, toward the close of the session, there was hurriedly put through, legislation authorizing the purchase of the Quebec and Saguenay railway with the Lotbiniere and Megantic railway at a cost of between four and five million dollars, and which it is estimated before the road can be put in first-class running order will run close to \$10,000,000. This road, which is being taken over at a cost of something over \$70,000 per mile, runs, it is said, through an uninhabited and uninhabitable, barren and rocky country, along the banks of the St. Lawrence River. The road is very little use in winter, and during summer cannot compete with steamboat rates. From the standpoint of cost and from that of utility of the road, there seems to be no good reason why the Canadian people should be saddled with this bill of expense, particularly during this time of national sacrifice.

There was one good feature about the railway legislation of the past session but it had a bad ending. Bill No. 87, known as an Act to amend the Railway Act, was passed through the House of Commons, but the Railway Committee of the Senate succeeded in side-tracking it. The Bill itself was to give the Board of Railway Commissioners power to pass upon the proposed location of any new railway and approve of it, or, if the Board deemed that the construction of the railway upon the proposed location or any portion thereof was not in the public interest, it had the power to refuse approval. The Bill, in effect, was to give the Dominion Railway Commission power to determine the final location of railway lines in Canada. The people of this country have every confidence in its Railway Commissioners, and up to the present have found little or no fault with the Railway Commission. The location of railways would have been in good hands had the Senate seen fit to pass this good Bill. The Senate seem to want the Railway Commissioners to pass upon these railway matters, and then for Parliament to have the final action. This would make the work of the Commission useless in many cases where any decision they might make not favorable to the interests could be reversed by a well-lobbied Parliament. At the same time the Senate Committee recommended an extension of the unused railway franchises held by private interests in the Niagara Peninsula.

And lastly let us mention the gigantic project of the Hudson's Bay Railway, which has already cost \$15,466,304, and which, at a time when every effort is necessary to carry Canada over a crisis, is to be pushed to completion. It is hoped by it to open up new and undeveloped resources. This may be necessary in time to come, but at the present Canada has plenty of these awaiting development that this road might have rested until conditions were more favorable. There is a question in the minds of many people as to whether or not the road will ever prove profitable. This is no time to expend large sums on guesswork.

These figures are not used here as an attack on the Government. The other side, if in power, would doubtless do all they could to hold power, and would