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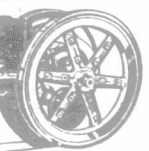
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The Farmer's Advocate and Home Magazine

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LONDON, ONTARIO, DECEMBER 25, 1919.

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EDITORIAL.

"The Farmer's Advocate" wishes one and all a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

It is not the number but the quality of New Year resolutions that counts, and the determination with which one carries them out.

When dehorned market cattle will bring from 50 cents to \$1 more per hundred than horned cattle, it does seem foolish to neglect dehorning the feeders.

The most enthusiastic and significant convention in the history of the U. F. O. was held in Toronto last week. A full report of the meetings appears elsewhere in this issue.

Nothing has yet happened in the live-stock markets of the world to discourage producers; in fact, actual conditions point to a bright future for the Canadian live-stock industry.

Eastern Canada is getting into the swing and through a big Royal Show, with several small fairs as feeders, we shall be able to reveal the great possibilities wrapped up in these Provinces for live-stock production.

Impress upon the hens, with plenty of feed and loving care, that eggs are badly needed now. If they can be induced to lay while eggs are selling well up to the dollar mark, you can well afford them a holiday next summer.

Now is the time to campaign against the scrub bull, and farmers should take the matter into their own hands, for they are the ones most affected. It would mean millions of dollars to the live-stock industry if all farmers would resolve that from now henceforward they would use nothing but a pure-bred sire.

Dr. J. W. Robertson stated at the U. F. O. co-operative meeting last week that in his judgment two more crops would have to come before the food situation would again become normal in Europe. The speaker stated that grain has advanced 160 per cent. over pre-war conditions, dairy products 108 per cent., hog products 142 per cent., and cattle 96 per cent.

"Swat the scrub" is a slogan backed by Chas. McCurdy, Manager of the U. F. O. Live-Stock Department, Union Stock Yards, Toronto. Mr. McCurdy said last week that he has seen 22 cattle consigned in one lot sold for more money than 40 head consigned by another man. It would be difficult to find a stronger argument than this in favor of the better-sires campaign.

The possibility of the U. F. O. establishing a branch of the Live-Stock Department on the Montreal market provides occasion for again pointing out the need for improved live-stock marketing conditions for Eastern Ontario and Quebec farmers. Conditions at Montreal are a long way from ideal, and the only effective way of remedying them is for the farmers themselves to get in on the market.

While consumers pay almost any price, without protest, for manufactured commodities, it is hard to convince them that it costs more to produce milk and dairy products than it did five years ago. The inadequate returns have already forced many dairymen to slow down, and the small volume of supply is already creating many hardships in towns and cities. Greater production is badly needed, but it can only be accomplished through adequate returns to the producer.

Misrepresenting the Dairymen.

The good-natured, hard-working dairy cow, "foster mother of the world" and all-round benefactress, has stood a good deal of abuse without even holding up her milk or altering its fat content. In summer and winter she has continued to chew her cud, unconscious or regardless of the anathemas directed at her on account of Government statistics, which say that she gives "on the average" only four thousand pounds of milk per year. Officials and others whose duties take them on to the public platform have dwelt long and hard on this four-thousand-pound average, and perhaps the Press is not altogether guiltless. However, the statement has been so mooted that critical urban dwellers are beginning to complain about the inefficiency and carelessness of the dairymen who keep cows of four-thousand-pounds production, when six or seven thousand pounds ought to be the minimum. The complaint is urged that consumers are paying too much because dairymen are not conducting their business as they should, and are making the users of dairy products pay the penalty. In other words, this abuse of the dairy cow, which is all right for tactical purposes, is reflecting upon the dairymen, who, as a rule, are not guilty of criminal inefficiency. Averages are good for statistical purposes, but their value ends there.

The cows fed and milked by dairymen who contribute to the city milk supply, and the cows maintained by dairymen who feed the great dairy enterprises of Canada are above the four-thousand-pound average. In fact, the production of these cows brings up the average for Canada, because a great number of animals which should never be designated as dairy cows are included in the aggregate. The good reputation of the out-and-out dairy cow is besmirched by being pooled with cows in general, and the reputation of the dairymen is injured because of these pleasing platform generalities which are based on averages.

There is still a great need for improvement in dairying, as there is in all industries, and we would not belittle the enormous possibilities in this regard, but we do wish to emphasize that the out-and-out dairymen, with whom consumers are dealing largely, are unworthy of the criticism which is being projected at them. Under present conditions if dairymen milked and fed cows of only four thousand pounds production they would be bankrupt before spring.

A New-Year's Suggestion.

The Minister of the Crown, who always does what he knows to be right, regardless of what those affected may say or think, has no sinecure. It requires a measure of autocracy to democratize a department, but in this case the end justifies the means. During the last quarter century the Agricultural Department at Ottawa has become barnacled in spots, and in isolated instances even fossilized. The Department as a whole is well-manned with officers of long experience and irreproachable records for service in the cause of Canadian agriculture. There are young and middle-aged men, too, of marked ability giving the best part of their lives to the industry which is nearest and dearest to them, but there are some weak cogs in the whole departmental machinery which prevent speeding up. The spirit of the age demands honest, conscientious work, energetic action guided by safe counsel, and all-round efficiency.

The Honorable Minister of Agriculture has not been long on the job, and in the meantime has had an electoral contest on his hands. However, he has the confidence of farmers at large, and now a favorable verdict from his constituency, so any action he may take in accordance with a new-year resolution to replace the weak cogs and increase the efficiency of his Department will be rewarded with public endorsement. Appointees have in past years swung from the ends of

political wires into positions they were unable to fill; there are now "job-hunters" around Ottawa whose records are blanks, so far as achievements are concerned, and their appointment to offices of responsibility would be the cause of keen disappointment to many who have the welfare of agriculture at heart.

We understand that in one branch there is an employee so useless that his Chief considers him as a nonentity. The work performed by the Assistant Deputy Minister of Agriculture, who is generally considered as a political appointee, could well be given to some competent member of the staff, and the burden would not weary him. In any case the Deputy is badly in need of an assistant who knows agriculture and can relieve him of much work that should not occupy his time. In another branch is a servant whose time is spent chiefly in padding his expense accounts, and whose achievements in behalf of agriculture could well be designated by a cipher with the ring knocked off. These three instances suggest the nature of a program needed for Departmental re-organization at Ottawa, and in filling the vacancies now existing the object should be to increase the efficiency of the staff rather than add unnecessarily to the personnel.

The Scrub-Bull Campaign.

It is hard to understand the delays in connection with the much-talked-of scrub-bull campaign. If, as seems evident, forty-seven per cent. of all the bulls on Ontario farms are scrubs, it does not require much discussion to establish the fact that they constitute a grave menace to agriculture, and one that cannot be eliminated too quickly. For over a year now Official Agriculture has been heralding a strong campaign against the nondescript herd header, but the campaign seems to be as far away as ever. Quite a few conferences have been held on the subject, the last one at Guelph during the Provincial Winter Fair, but the net result to date, as far as we can learn, is that the Provincial and Federal Departments and the Ontario Cattle Breeders' Association are going to co-operate in forming a committee to hold further conferences. If those in charge of this important matter would only remember that it has taken thirteen years to relegate the grade and scrub stallion to his present position in Ontario, and that now is our golden opportunity to act as well as talk improvement in live stock, the need for an immediate and vigorous campaign might appeal more strongly than the diplomacy of more conferences. The scrub bull is not going to be eliminated in a year—or ten years—even from the great live-stock Province of Ontario. If by any happy chance we should see the last of him within the next fifteen years there will be plenty of opportunity for everyone to pat themselves on the back in recognition of a tremendous task well done, so that it does seem rather unnecessary for anyone to worry now as to just how the glory will shine about them a decade hence.

We readily recognize the fact that co-operation between Federal and Provincial Departments is necessary to the successful solution of a big national problem of this kind, but it is equally true that any campaign that is put on will be almost wholly, if not entirely, of an educational nature, a fact which automatically places the responsibility for its success on the shoulders of provincial authorities. The Federal Department undoubtedly will be able to help the work along very materially, either through the use of money or men, but this we believe can best be done by offering a separate, co-operative plan of assistance that can be granted to every province in similar proportion. Criticism of provincial matters is not a part of the duties of any federal officer, any more than it is wise for provincial officers to court delay in order to secure advice from men at Ottawa. If there is someone at Ottawa