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EDITORIAL.

Ready for seeding? It may come with a rush.

This ought to be a great season for maple sap. But one can never tell.

Barn plans and building hints are the order of the day.

The milk of human kindness tendeth to abundance of the milk that bringeth the cheques.

Study your cropping system carefully, with a view not so much to the production of big crops this season, but rather to insure steadily-increasing production from year to year.

"So far as appearance goes, you might get a thousand-dollar prize for a hundred-pound sack of grain, as was done by one good Canadian, and then take that seed and sow it on soil improperly prepared, and reap a very inferior crop."—J. H. Grisdale.

There has been a deal of grumbling during the ten weeks of steady cold weather. It caused serious inroads on the wood pile and coal bin, but made business dull for the doctor and trained nurse. It was more healthful than the mild December.

As short-cuts to superior crops in grain-growing, people have in the past depended too much on a change to some vaunted new variety, instead of a proper preparation of the soil. We need not relax our efforts to sow good seed, but 1912 is a good year to turn over a new leaf in the matter of tillage.

There is an artist's pride to be taken in every piece of work, if one will only view it with an artist's eye. Such pride dignifieth labor, endowing it richly with satisfaction and real pleasure. Read Peter McArthur's article, "How's That?" and cultivate the artistic temperament. It's worth while.

Clover seed is too dear to waste this spring. Sow plenty of it on every acre you seed down, thus doing your utmost to economize in the truest sense, by reducing the chances of failure to a minimum. Of course, first-class soil preparation should accompany the reasonably liberal use of seed. Red clover being so extremely dear, it is worth considering the advisability of substituting some alfalfa, which, containing so many more seeds to the pound, goes further. A little alfalfa seed may also with advantage be scattered over the hard ridges before drilling the grain.

Very sound sense is expressed in Mr. Stonehouse's article on Government roads. National highways can obviously be of little or no direct benefit to farmers living a few miles away from them, though we would all have to help pay the bill. They would become touring routes for automobiles. Owners of motor cars would throng across the country over these expensive highways, being ostensibly in the farmer's interest; while the tax of them, held up as a form of assistance to the farmer, would be used as a palliation or excuse for extending tenfold greater advantages to privileged interests. The farmer's melon would probably turn out to be a lemon.

Abuse of Rural Telephone Lines.

"Line's busy, please."

Three minutes later, still very sweetly in feminine tones, "Line's busy, please."

Again, in two or three minutes, "The line is in use."

(Overheard)—"Where's George?" "He's down watering the cows." "Oh! Was he out to the dance last night?" "No; are you going next week?"

Bzz-bzz-bzz-bzz-bzz—as the waiting subscriber's patience becomes exhausted, and he determines to end a ten-minute conversation and force the long-winded talkers off the line.

At last, after the gossipers have retired, repentant or otherwise, "Central" is called.

"Thirty-two ring 5."

"Line's busy," comes the cheerful, if not cheerful reply.

Again, later, "Thirty-two ring 5"

"Five is busy."

Ten minutes later—bzz-bzz-bzz (someone else has rung a second ahead of the fuming would-be speaker).

Five minutes later— At length, after "Central" has walked leisurely across the village store and attached the apparatus to her head, the waiting subscriber hears:

"Jonesville."

"Hello, thirty-two ring 5!" with much emphasis.

Connection established—"Hello, that Mr. Brown's?"

"Yes."

"Mr. Brown there?"

"No, he just went out about five minutes ago."

Profanity is unbecoming, is contrary to the rules of the telephone company, and in most municipalities against the law. There are some other things that should be against the law, also. One of them is the loading of a party line with more than 15 instruments. Another is the use of a party line for more than three minutes at a call, except on serious business. We believe the companies do have rules to this effect, but some of the persons entrusted with the enforcement of the rules must be very lenient. Properly regulated, the rural telephone is one of the most useful and excellent country conveniences. Abused, it becomes a trial to the temper and a weariness to the flesh. Were it not withal such an economy of busy men's time, saving long errands, there is more than one instrument that would have ornamented but temporarily the wall on which it was placed.

We would not for a moment take the ground that nothing but business should ever be spoken over the telephone. It should be and is an agency of sociability, as well as a business convenience. In a long "shut-in" winter it may serve very appropriately as a medium of brief communication—even flirtation of a proper sort. But the persons who employ it for such purposes should remember that there are other people wishing to use the phone, some of them perhaps on urgent business. It is but reasonable to expect that social chats should be confined, as far as conveniently possible, to hours when men are not likely to be talking business. And, in any event, such conversations ought to be restricted to a reasonable duration. We believe there are companies which go the length of reserving the noon hour for men's use only. This seems drastic, but may be necessary where privileges are abused.

A rural company is, by reason of the fact that it excludes other companies from profitable occupation of its field, a sort of public-service monopoly, and competition cannot be depended upon to insure efficient service. Its conduct is, therefore, an appropriate matter for public regulation. We believe there is scope for it, and commend to our Provincial legislators the introduction of a well-considered thorough-going bill, aiming to regulate telephone companies effectively in the public interest. It would be a welcome change from the nine hundred and 'steenth amendment to the Municipal Act or the Drainage and Water Courses Act. Here is opportunity for real reform. N'est pas?

Dr. Rutherford's Retirement.

By birth and education, John Gunion Rutherford was ordained to a career of affairs. Determination and action characterize the ten years' strenuous official service in the Canadian Department of Agriculture as Veterinary Director-General and Live-stock Commissioner, which he finally terminates on March 31st next. With the circumstances leading to this denouement readers of "The Farmer's Advocate" are tolerably well cognizant.

Born in Peeblesshire, Scotland, in 1857, the son of Rev. Robert Rutherford, M. A., he was educated in part at Glasgow High School. On the soil and in Scottish institutions he acquired a knowledge of both the theory and the practice of agriculture. In 1875 he entered the Ontario Agricultural College at Guelph, becoming a first-prize man on the practical side. Then he went to the Bow Park Shorthorn Farm, in the historic days of John Hope, who imbued him with a deeper love for live-stock husbandry. In 1879 he graduated a gold medallist of the Ontario Veterinary College, practiced in Oxford County and in the United States, where he managed a large horse-breeding establishment, taking lectures in spare time at leading veterinary colleges. Young men who think any sort of smattering, quick-step schooling will fit them for serious undertakings in life will find no encouragement in the career of Dr. Rutherford. About 1884 he established a veterinary practice at Portage la Prairie, Man., becoming in due course a veterinary inspector under the Manitoba Government. Attracted to political life, he obtained a seat in the Provincial Legislature, and ere long appeared in the Federal House of Commons, where he sat until 1900. He found time, while his home was in Manitoba, for leadership in veterinary, social and beneficent organizations, and while at Ottawa held the presidency of several professional organizations, notably the American Veterinary Medical Association. In the latter capacity he was chiefly instrumental in the formation of an international commission on the control of bovine tuberculosis, representing scientific and practical interests, which under his chairmanship, has formulated an intelligent policy for the suppression of this widespread and dangerous disease. To its origin in a noxious weed he had traced the Pictou cattle disease; sheep scab has been pretty well eradicated from the country; hog cholera, once so serious a menace to the pork industry of Canada, eliminated from Essex and Kent; glanders brought under control, the only place where it still proves a serious problem being in Saskatchewan; and the operations against mange, one of the curses of the West, have been very successful; at his suggestion, Messrs. Dryden and Ritch have reported on the resuscitation of the sheep and wool industries, and