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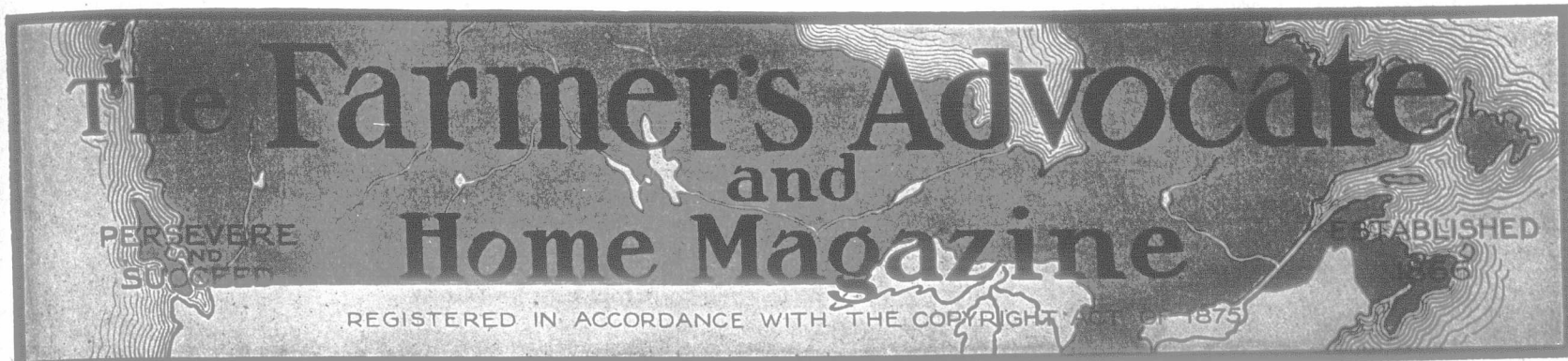
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VOL. XLVIII.

LONDON ONTARIO, DECEMBER 18, 1913.

No. 1081

EDITORIAL

Train up a calf in the way he should go, and when two years old he may become an International champion.

A United States Congressman has made the discovery that cold storage covers a multitude of the cost of living sins.

The pork packer, now having three strings to his bow, should be in a position to make it worth our while to raise bacon hogs.

Unless in some very exceptional cases, the plowman may now stand aside and observe Farmer John Frost perform his wonderful winter tillage operations.

Among the publication announcements elsewhere in this issue, is a remarkably favorable encyclopaedia proposition that a great many readers will be glad to embrace.

Many long centuries ago a successful Roman farmer was prosecuted before "The Forum" for sorcery because he grew more abundant crops than his neighbors, but his defence was "better cultivation."

"Our folks all shouted with glee," writes an old and appreciative reader, "when the rural mail man left us the big Christmas 'Farmer's Advocate' last week. It was a little late in coming, but all the more welcome when it arrived."

The refreshingly candid way in which newspapers of both sides of politics and the more avowedly detached exponents of public opinion, have called in question the clamor of the railways for extra compensation, because of the incoming parcel's post system, may result in their premature demands putting a check upon themselves.

Some of the modern achievements on which we plume ourselves are not so absolutely new in conception after all. A good many readers of our Christmas Number were somewhat surprised to learn that the great American editor, Horace Greeley, over forty years ago, had sufficient insight into the future to foreshadow the use on the farm and otherwise at long distances of electric power developed at Niagara River.

The men and women of other trades and professions find a good paper devoted to their interests an indispensable aid. And this is more true of farming, because of its many-sidedness and because farmers are more isolated. Having enjoyed the benefits of "The Farmer's Advocate and Home Magazine," you can render no better service at this season than by extending its advantages to others.

It is reported that nearly a dozen Bills are pending in the United States Congress on the cost of living. If some of the authors were to take off their dress suits and put on farm overalls it might be as effective as their legislative cure-alls.

Federal Aid and Provincial Action.

Economic conditions, as far as they pertain to agriculture, have, during the past few years, been a matter of deep concern in this country as well as in other countries. Orators have orated upon and writers have raked the far corners of their thought reflectors to find some further advice upon the all important subject of helping the farmer produce more abundantly, that they (the exhorters) might live more cheaply. Our agriculture has its needs—its weak places which require bracing up, and hindrances to be removed, but, as the present Dominion Minister of Agriculture has many times pointed out in his addresses, it needs no "pap feeding." It is entitled to a fair field. Most of the quack doctors who have found a cure-all for the ills of our basic industry have diagnosed these wrongly, usually from the statement of the case by others who have ventured long-distance advice. The Hon. Martin Burrell, realizing that there was a growing need of a Dominion-wide agricultural policy set to work to inaugurate a campaign to help where help was needed, and where the people receiving it were endeavoring to help themselves. To Dr. C. C. James, formerly a moving spirit in Ontario agriculture, he entrusted the work of finding out what the country most needed, and laying plans to meet these needs. From an already wide knowledge of Canada's agricultural conditions and from a year's further specific study of them, Dr. James, than whom no better man could have been chosen, conceived the idea of working out the Federal aid to the provinces for the advancement of education, interpreting the term, "education" in the widest possible sense as it applies to agriculture. The beginning seems to have been made in the right place, and much credit is due the man who so admirably handled such a big question in so short a space of time. In another column details are given of the plan as worked out.

The beginning has been made; the Federal grants have been apportioned. Ten million dollars in all goes from the Dominion Treasury to the various provinces during the next ten years as an aid to better agriculture. A decade leaves plenty of time to work out many of the details of the expenditure as the yearly grants increase, and it is up to the provinces to see that their methods of spending the money improve as time goes on. This money is not all to be spent in a year, so no great difficulty in finding a place for it has been thrust upon the provinces, and they have been given time to develop the "education" in agriculture.

While "education" in the broad sense is not education as it is generally understood, the plan takes in the latter, including public schools. As far as school systems are concerned, however, the British North America Act gives the control to our provincial authorities, so, within existing limitations, the Federal Government, through the Minister of Agriculture and Dr. James, have done their share competently and thoroughly.

"The Farmer's Advocate" has long held that there is room for improvement in our public school system. Agricultural needs are not taken very seriously into consideration by the educational authorities and our text books while they contain a great deal of matter of decided merit from a literary viewpoint, tend, with other developments, to promote the military spirit rather than a knowledge of and respect for agriculture.

Part of the new Federal grant was this year used in this Province to pay the salaries and ex-

penses of six field agents of agricultural education—young men, students from the Ontario Agricultural College, who spent the summer months visiting schools, giving short talks of an explanatory nature, embracing instructions in play, addresses to trustees and inspection of Children's Progress Club work. One of these men organized a corn contest and one a Township Teachers' Association, while others carried on township education surveys. The grants are also used to meet expenses of inspectors at short courses, public and high school teachers' travelling expenses to the summer school at Guelph, exhibits at fairs, special publications, etc. All this may and no doubt does help some, but one hour spent in talking to a teacher or a class or a school-room of pupils cannot do any great amount of lasting good. The best-informed and clearest-thinking teacher in the world could not hope in so short a time to accomplish very much. The crux of the matter is in the regular teacher training. Ontario has her summer school for teachers at the agricultural college, and her nature study courses for normal trained teachers, where a little is learned and a good time enjoyed, and from which a few go away enthusiastic over the possibilities of training the young mind to appreciate nature and things agricultural—but lacks effective teacher training in the real ground work. Educationists have recognized the need of this training, but trying to accomplish it as the teacher labors in the public school cannot bring desired results. If there is such a need, and there is, why not use some of the grant to work out a thoroughly reliable system of teacher training in agriculture? Perhaps fewer bulletins and a little more actual instruction in the Normal Schools would help. A good deal depends upon the attitude of the educational "powers that be." One thing is sure, that the public is about surfeited with bulletins and superficial agricultural work in connection with rural schools. One of the really good things for the youth has been the school fair work carried on by the District Representatives of the Ontario Department of Agriculture where the plots are grown at home and planned, planted, cared for and harvested by the pupils. Overlapping of Departmental work has already been complained of. There is no use of the Educational Department attempting something that the Agricultural Department has accomplished, but they would be in their own field if they planned a re-adjustment of curricula and inserted little more pertaining to agriculture in the text books, and in their regular teacher-training courses.

The Good Farmer Succeeds.

Director J. H. Grisdale, of the Dominion Experimental Farm, in his comprehensive review of the farmer's year in Canada in the Christmas Farmer's Advocate and Home Magazine, made the suggestive comment regarding one of the provinces that the good farmer has had a good year. There is food for thought in Mr. Grisdale's observation. Why should he not have a good year? As a matter of equity or fairness, the good farmer may reasonably look for good returns from his season's operations. We expect that he will, and we are seldom disappointed. A combination of sound theory and practice usually works out that way. It does so in other pursuits, and it would be an extraordinary upsetting of nature's procedure if in farming things all