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EDITORIAL.

Blessings on the man who plants a row of trees by the highway, is the benediction of those who use the roads in winter.

It is so simple—and yet effective—that people are forgetting that one of the prime needs of country life is just neighborliness.

If you do not manifest some pride in your farm and your district, you need not expect your children to do so; nor will other communities turn in your direction.

Owing to the terrible losses of the past season through frost, hail and wet weather, the Government at Ottawa has under consideration the distribution of seed grain among the suffering settlers in the Northwest.

The American Government has given the people an efficient and economical postal service, and has reached the point of being able to do it at a profit. The telephone and telegraph service will probably come next.

Dr. Thos. O'Hagan, editor of The New World, of Chicago, in a recent Dickens' centenary address in Toronto, paid this tribute to Canada: He believed that in it was to be found the sweetest and most wholesome home life in the world. To preserve this is worth our supremest effort.

Phrases have been bandied between those who complain of the high cost of living and those who object that the root-trouble is the cost of high living. Both are partly right. It seems to us that the "high cost of high living" expresses the situation more nearly than either of the others.

To discard the use of oil means squeaking and rickety machinery that will sooner or later break down. In looking about for some elaborate means of bettering farm life, people are apt to forget that one of the most effective agencies is simple Good Nature in the home, to be applied hourly. Try it.

The idea that farmers are responsible for the high cost of living is a patent absurdity. If anyone is individually accountable it is the man who is not farming—the one who has left the ranks of food producers to become a food consumer. Of course, tariffs and a dozen other economic factors have their effect, but the last man to blame is the farmer.

That was a very good point, made by Seager Wheeler, of Saskatchewan, winner of the \$1,000 prize for wheat at the New York Land Show, in describing his methods of agriculture. A hard-working man, who has risen from the bottom, he freely concedes the value of reading, and frankly styles himself a book-farmer. Besides newspapers and other reading, he takes five agricultural journals, and evidently reads them. Problems, he says, can be worked out in a comfortable arm-chair beside the fire, as well as by observation in the field. Active work is, of course, necessary, but it does not all have to be done out in the wind. Thinking and planning count for much. Brains are greater than arm power, horse power or gasoline.

More Emphasis on Breeding Value.

Prizes for breeding, as distinguished from mere individual excellence, is the theme of a paper by Prof. H. S. Arkell, which concludes with the third installment in the present issue. We hope our readers have studied it, and that stockmen and fair boards will give it careful consideration.

It is admittedly difficult to construct prize lists which suit all classes of exhibitors, and, while the systems followed at our larger exhibitions, and generally copied on a smaller scale by the county and township fair managements have many good points to commend them, it does very frequently appear as though the breeder's end of the exhibiting business does not get the prominence and share of the awards it justly merits. As Prof. Arkell aptly puts it, "money furnishes one of the easiest means to acquire show-yard winners, but it takes brains to produce them." True, the wealthy breeder and importer has done and is doing a great work for the livestock industry of our country, and he must be encouraged to keep up the competition in his class at the exhibitions, but, while not in any way lessening the importance and support given to the imported classes, there seems to be room for increased aid and inducement to the average breeder. The bulk of our stockmen are not large importers or men of great wealth. They are well-to-do, prosperous farmers who are interested in the well-being of the livestock industry of Canada, and many of them would, if the prize lists were arranged to give them a fair chance of winning, enter the show-rings at our exhibitions, and add to the interest and competition. Some system of awarding prizes on the basis of breeding value is to be desired. A breeder's services to his particular breed and to the country should be measured by the practical breeding value of the sires and dams in his herd or flock, which can only be ascertained through the offspring, through milk records and other factors. An exhibition must be something more than a public entertainment and amusement centre, it must reach beyond the object of advertisement; it must, in short, if any lasting and real beneficial effect is to be noticed, reach out, encourage and benefit the ordinary average farmer and stock-breeder, thus proving a real boon to livestock breeding. Few of our most progressive dairymen would buy a pure-bred cow without some knowledge of her milk record. It is so easy to be led astray in the buying of sires. Many show the desired conformation and quality, but, as breeders, are discouraging failures. Place the awards on merit in breeding, and buyers would then be more sure of their ground in making purchases. We do not wish to infer that prizewinners in our show-rings are not producing animals of the approved type. Many of them have very good records to their credit, but the fact remains that some of them have proven disappointing, and the standard of type, conformation, etc., used in present judging has not proven a thoroughly reliable test of the animal's value as a breeder.

Prof. Arkell's solution is a reasonable one, and one which should be seriously and honestly considered. He states that prizes should be awarded according to the demonstrated efficiency of the individual in actual breeding practice and the breeder's young herd, get of sire, and home-bred pens, offer opportunities to open the practice. There needs to be a greater difference in standard between market and breeding classes.

Misleading Experiments.

Strongly as we believe in agricultural experimenting, publicly by officials, and privately by individual farmers, we wish once more to warn our readers against the familiar habit of drawing sweeping general conclusions from the results of any one or two or half-dozen tests. As we have repeatedly observed, there is nothing much more misleading than a limited personal experience. It is the large body of broadly-representative experience, summarized and digested by scientifically-trained interpreters, that furnishes the most dependable information. An individual's experiment, covering but a single year, is usually more helpful to the experimenter for the education it gives him, the interest it arouses, and the observation it stimulates, than for the information he derives. The results are not to be relied upon until corroborated or modified by much further work. Not only may his conditions be greatly different from those obtaining elsewhere, but even on his own farm he may secure radically different results in different seasons or with different strains of stock. For example, because spring-plowing for corn gives him better results some season than he obtains from fall plowing, is no guarantee that it will turn out the same way next year. Seasons differ, soils vary, previous cropping and manuring have their influence, and a hundred and one other factors enter into the case. Again, ask any bookkeeping cattle-feeder whether the comparative results of feeding yearlings and two-year-olds pan out the same way every year, or any milk-record dairyman whether a certain food produces equally good results with all his cows. The answer will generally be an emphatic "No."

Not only the observed, but the unobserved, factors vary. A few years ago we were shown over the premises of the Michigan Experiment Station at Lansing. One six-acre field near the buildings was pointed out, where for many years tests with field crops had been conducted, and the results broadly published. But, lo and behold, one day they bored into the subsoil, and found it to vary so radically under different areas that the test plots were moved elsewhere, and all the many years' data discarded as unreliable! If such discrepancies occur at a State institution in charge of experts whose business it is to see that there is a uniform basis for comparison, how much more likely are they on a private farm where no particular pains is taken to secure comparative conditions? Manifestly, before one can ascertain the effect of a variant factor, he must be sure that all other factors are levelled up. It is very difficult and expensive to do this on a private farm, or even at a public station, hence the need of caution. However, the average of several hundred or thousand tests at scattered points is likely to reduce the possibility of error to a fine point, for the law of averages works out with astonishing truthness.

We have lately had quite an illustration with our poultry at Weldwood, of how easy it is to be misled in forming conclusions. A flock of fifty-five May- and June-hatched pullets, besides a few cockerels, were last fall divided between two 8 x 12 colony houses, built on the same plan, and similarly located. The feed was the same, and the stock as nearly equal as could be conveniently determined, though it turned out that one had a slightly larger proportion of cockerels, leaving half a dozen more pullets in one house than in the other. Both pens commenced laying in December, but the pen which we considered least likely laid