

THE FARMER'S ADVOCATE AND HOME MAGAZINE.

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AND N.-W. T.

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Experimental Farm in Alberta.

Closing your article, "Alberta Needs an Experimental Farm," in your issue of July 20th last, you ask, "What is the opinion of our readers in that quarter?" Replying, I beg to state that your article, in my opinion, is an excellent one, and just what is required to direct public and official attention to a matter of first importance and special urgency for this district of central Alberta, of which I have more particular knowledge. As an Englishman, coming into this new country, I set to work promptly to enquire for definite and reliable information respecting those matters mentioned in your article, viz., grain, grasses, clovers, trees, fruits, etc., but found it impossible to come to any conclusion respecting them, as the statements made by those who have been here for a considerable time often showed careless and untrained powers of observation, indifference, and, not infrequently, contradiction.

This was made very manifest during the recent visit of Mr. Anderson, a travelling lecturer under the Government, who addressed a meeting—very thinly attended—of interested persons on stock judging and breeding, and in connection with which lecture a discussion was raised on the points so pertinently raised in your article. Mr. Anderson strongly urged the growth of grasses, clovers, etc., and gave an instance of white clover growing and flourishing alongside the railway track. Several persons were at once ready to say that clovers could not be successfully grown in this district, when one farmer, an old Cornishman, by the way, said he "had sowed white clover seven or eight years ago, and it was growing now, and extending each year." If one man can grow it, why not others? The fact seems to be that beginners fall into the way of those working before them, and do not care to trouble or go to any expense to experiment for their own information or that of the country. The farmers generally take what they find in the country, and are content. The cattle grow and are fattened, in a shape, by the really wonderful natural growth of wild grasses. This is very well as far as it goes, but it is not farming. I have never seen any large extent of land in the Old Country to equal the general soil of this district, but we must "cultivate, cultivate, cultivate," if the full value is to be taken out of this rich soil, and cultivation means knowledge of what to grow and how to grow it. Not only would the primest fat beef be the result, but the hog-raising business would follow, and can be made a most successful and profitable one. May I here state that a sagacious old-timer told me the other day that a secret in the successful growth of tame grasses, clovers, etc., was not to sow any for two years after breaking, or, as he put it, "Until the Indian was out of the ground," and then, when the soil had been cultivated and sunned, they might be grown with an assurance of success. Very little has been done in the way of fruit-growing, but there are promising signs of success if experiment and perseverance are adopted. Our population is gathered from many climes, all is new, and the feeling is amongst thoughtful men, who in these things "will show us any good."

Respecting trees, spruce grows well, and soon adds to the rich beauty of the homestead and the landscape, but I ask in vain will pine, Scotch fir, Norway fir and Scotch larch grow, and what deciduous trees? When extensive prairie fires are prevented, if tree-planting is encouraged, this great country may be made one of the most picturesque, and everyone knows that the appearance of a district, together with its producing value, helps to give it high value.

I trust all interested will wake up and follow your excellent suggestion and stimulating article, by agitating until they obtain what is so greatly needed in our midst, an "Experimental Farm," from which may go forth, after time, that special knowledge so absolutely necessary in these days, to enable those who live on the land to make the most of their occupation; to brighten, and even beautify, their home surroundings; and increase the value of their stake in the country. One word more, let all farmers remember, that to them, above and beyond all men, are these words true and applicable, "Knowledge is power."

Respectfully,

T. B. GOWELL.

"Coming Back to Canada."

There's a bustle on the border, there's a shuffling of feet,
Where the greatest of Republics and the big Dominion meet;
For the sons of the Dominion, who have wandered far away,
Are coming back to Canada to-day.

True, their children sang America and Hands Across the Sea,
And they themselves have learned to love the Land of Liberty;
But it's feet across the border now, with toes the other way,
They are coming back to Canada to-day.

Yes, they're coming back to Canada, although there's nothing wrong
With the land of their adoption, but they've been away so long;
And some of them have soldiered there, and some of them are gray,
But they're coming back to Canada to-day.
—Warman, in the Idler.

The Objects of Harvesters.

Amongst the thousands of young men who have come West to engage in harvesting operations, there are many who have come to stay. There are also a number who will stay should the conditions of the country impress them favorably. We would advise such not to be in too great a hurry in coming to a decision. Conditions which may make an unfavorable impression may be found to be purely local, and may be got rid of by a short migration, for along with many other advantages our country has that of variety. It would be a pity that any small matter should prejudice the minds of our young Eastern friends to such an extent as to send them away before giving the country a fair trial. Let them remember that thousands have established themselves in comfort here, and thousands are arriving at a comparative degree of independence every year, who came here and started with no other asset than a good name and industrious habits.

The Alternative Railway Proposition.

Hon. R. L. Borden, leader of the Opposition in the Canadian Parliament, in a carefully-prepared and well delivered speech on August 18th, proposed an alternative policy to the Grand Trunk Pacific proposition of the Government. His speech was an argument for the extension of the principle of Government ownership. Following is an outline of Mr. Borden's policy:

"Extend the Intercolonial to Georgian Bay by constructing a line from Montreal to Coteau, where the Grand Trunk and Canada Atlantic intersect, and by acquiring or paralleling the Canada Atlantic from Coteau to Parry Sound.

"Acquire and improve the Canadian Pacific from North Bay to Fort William, operate it by commission, which shall handle all traffic delivered at either end by the Intercolonial, Grand Trunk, Canadian Pacific and Canadian Northern.

"Improve the grades of the Canadian Pacific or Canadian Northern, or both, between Fort William and Winnipeg, the road or roads to grant in return Government control of rates, running rights and haulage powers to the Grand Trunk and Intercolonial.

"To assist the construction of the Grand Trunk, running north of the Canadian Northern, to Edmonton.

"To effect between the Grand Trunk and Canadian Northern an arrangement by which only one line shall be constructed from Edmonton to Port Simpson, in default thereof the Government to build the line.

"To build the proposed line between Quebec and Winnipeg through Northern Ontario and Quebec as a colonization road, and as information and necessity may demand.

"To develop Lake Superior and Georgian Bay ports, the lake waterways, the St. Lawrence route and the ports of Montreal, Quebec and the Maritime Provinces, on the same scale as that of the American equipment."

"Kindly send the Farmer's Advocate to my son. —, —, who is just beginning to farm for himself. I do not know what I could do better for him just now than give him the Farmer's Advocate for a year. This is a plan that many another reader might follow with advantage.