

THE FARMER'S ADVOCATE AND HOME MAGAZINE.

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DOMINION.

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understanding with the packers, is that the latter don't want to meet us half way. Their attitude—and attitude is tenfold more significant than argument—is unconsciously expressed, "between the lines," in Dr. Smale's emphatic words: "This sentimental talk about partnership—business partners and interested partners—is all in the air. There are three phases to this business—raw material, manufacture, and sale."

However, now that Hon. Mr. Fisher has wisely shut out American hogs, the problem will adjust itself, and the enterprising packers who have shown their confidence in the business by investing money in plants, may, in absolute self-interest, be obliged to adopt a liberal attitude.

Dr. Smale says there has been no combination among packers to depress prices, but Mr. Bowman, manager of the Montreal Packing Company, one of the speakers at the Winter Fair, admitted the fact of occasional telephone consultation among managers, which fact arouses the suspicion that in some seasons, at least, virtual combination does exist in an informal way. But, whether this is the case or not, it is not beyond the bounds of possibility that in the future, consideration for their own vested interests, may induce packers to co-operate among each other and with the farmers to keep the price from slumping disastrously in temporary periods of overproduction. The packers have it in their own hands to gain the confidence and good-will of the farmers, try to keep prices more even from year to year, and thus prevent the periodic shortage of hogs.

We do not say there is no money in hogs, nor do we dispute Prof. Day's figures, although he only gave them as tentative, and did not take account in his calculations of risk, interest on capital invested, labor, and a number of other items. As a matter of fact, we believe there is good money in raising hogs, but if the business is unduly precarious, and less remunerative than it might be, we want those evils remedied. We believe they will be remedied, and until they are, "The Farmer's Advocate" does not purpose to "lie down"; and the solid approbation of the thinking farmers of this country for the past forty years, and its record for fairness, is a sufficient answer for the uncalled-for insinuation of being a "mischief-monger."

Getting What's Wanted.

The receipt of a number of letters for our Questions and Answers department, from people answering enquiries for a variety of articles, some of them out of the ordinary run of things asked for, prompts us to take our readers candidly into our confidence concerning an important matter of publishers' ethics. There is, perhaps, no paper printed, the subscriptions of which pay for the cost of producing it. "The Farmer's Advocate and Home Magazine," for instance, costs us about \$2.00 for every 52 papers turned out. The commercial advertiser is the man who helps us out; but for advertising, practically every paper in the country would suspend publication, or else push the subscription price away up. To the publisher, additional subscriptions are desirable because they extend the field which his advertisers reach, enable him to sell his advertising space for so much more per column, and with the increased revenue, still further improve his paper and make it more useful to its readers. It is a matter of sheer self-preservation with him to guard jealously his main source of income, and he cannot afford to give away space any more than a farmer can afford to give away his crops. Those who think space costs us nothing, are sadly mistaken; it costs us printers' bills, paper bills, salaries, and a host of sundry other expenses. For this reason we cannot afford to give it away recklessly, though, in every case, we do strain the point in favor of the enquiring reader. If we were to start such a policy we would be besieged on every hand for similar favors, the consequence being we would soon find ourselves on the street. For the accommodation of readers we have special columns for live-stock advertising, and have also a "Want and for Sale" column for the exchange of farm properties, pet stock, help and situations wanted, and miscellaneous farm articles. Realizing that these departments are especially valuable to us from a subscription standpoint, we make the rates in them as low as we can possibly afford, and from a direct advertising point of view, these columns are much less remunerative than the others. The service is cheerfully rendered, however, knowing that our subscribers' interests are ours; but, having established these facilities for the exchange of farm stock and produce, we must, in all cases, decline to print gratis communications directly or indirectly offering articles for sale. We always cheerfully furnish advertising rates on application, and trust that our subscribers will make full use of the privilege accorded in this way, and that none will feel offended because we are unable to make our paper a free medium for the exchange of stock and farm property.

Cash or Credit for Dairy Supplies?

On the subject of the cash system, as compared with buying farm apparatus and other supplies on credit, one of the foremost manufacturing concerns in the Eastern States, in reply to our enquiries, declares that, so far as their experience goes, the farmer that pays for his apparatus in notes pays 10 per cent. more than he could get the same goods for in cash. In a good many instances he pays 25 per cent. more. The system of giving notes running one, two or three years, for farm apparatus, particularly dairy apparatus, is a very expensive practice for the farmer, for he invariably pays a big percentage for the use of that money which he is holding back in payment for his apparatus. The writer goes on to say: "We do not take long-time notes. We sell mostly for cash, either in thirty or sixty days. Especially in the United States, the dairy products are cash products, and there is no reason why a farmer buying dairy apparatus should not pay cash for his apparatus, for cream and butter always bring cash. It is the practice of most of the creameries to pay the first of every month for the cream received during the preceding month, but in some places they are getting to pay oftener than that—as often as once a week. A thorough investigation will convince anyone that the practice of giving notes is very expensive, and in many cases ruinous to farmers."

A Progressive System of Advanced Registry Needed.

The matter of a system of advanced registration of pure-bred cows of the dairy breeds, based upon officially supervised tests of milk and butter-fat production, should be dealt with energetically at the approaching meetings of the dairy-breed associations. The idea should be quite feasible, in consonance with the national-record scheme, and we understand that Hon. Sydney Fisher, Minister of Agriculture, has agreed to furnish one inspector to begin with.

The day for guesswork in dairying is past. People are learning the great lesson that a cow's producing value cannot be gauged with any degree of accuracy by her appearance. Dairy quality is, to a very large extent, a matter of inherent capacity, and is not reliably indicated by outward evidences. Hence the great importance of weighing and testing the milk of the individual cows and keeping a record thereof, in order to decide which are the profitable cows and which are the ones that do not pay for their keep, and, consequently, are likely to produce calves of the same ilk. There is just as wide a variation among pure-breds as among scrubs, and there is far greater need for selection. The usual premium in price of pure-breds depends upon their supposed greater value for producing males to impress the qualities for which they are bred more strongly upon their get when mated with the common stock of the country than could be done by an otherwise equally good sire of mixed breeding. Therefore, since he pays an enhanced price for a pure-bred bull, the purchaser has a right to expect that the animal bought comes of superior producing ancestry, for what does it profit a man to pay a high price for a prepotent sire to impress mediocrity upon his offspring?

The plain truth may as well be pointed out, that, while prejudice and conservatism, and lack of purpose have helped to retard the dissemination of improved blood of all classes of stock, a greater reason why we have not better herds, of dairy cattle, for instance, is that the rank and file of breeders of pure-bred stock have not aimed straight enough at utility, which is the principal quality that commends a breed for general adoption by business farmers. Then, again, too many ordinary bulls and heifers have been sold on the strength of pedigree affinity to some famous prize-winner, sometimes, unfortunately, more valuable as a show cow than as an economical producer of milk or butter. There are many weeds among the best strains, and the only way to build up or even to perpetuate superior utility strains, is to pursue a relentless policy of knitting every female whose performance does not augur reasonable probability of her dropping extra good producing stock. This plan should be followed in intelligent self-interest by every dairy-stock breeder who hopes to build up a high-class herd, for the time is rapidly approaching when dairy stock will be valued with regard mainly to individual dairy capacity, constitution, and the milking capacity of the female ancestors, the latter point being valuable as going to ensure prepotency in transmission of dairy quality. The leading dairy breed associations have recognized this fact, and have encouraged such testing. Three of these bodies, the Canadian and American Holstein-Friesian Associations, and the American Guernsey Cattle Club, years ago instituted advanced registers, in which are kept the names, numbers and records of pure-bred cows and heifers, which, in official seven-day, thirty-day, or yearly tests, conducted under the supervision of competent and disinterested experiment-station authorities, have given milk and butter-fat yields above a specified minimum. The Canadian Ayrshire Breeders' Association has also established an advanced registry on the basis of yearly records. The American Guernsey Club has done only yearly testing, holding, quite properly, that a weekly or monthly test is no dependable gauge of a cow's capacity for yearly production. To emphasize this point, let us cite one or two examples. In a farm herd, the record of which was being kept by the Illinois Experiment Station, were two cows, Minnie, a grade Shorthorn, and Pet, a grade Jersey, both in the prime of life. In the second year's test, Minnie's best weekly performance was 10.5 pounds of fat, and Pet's was 10.2