

# The Farmer's Advocate

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### EDITORIAL.

#### Marketing Homemade Butter.

From all parts of the country frequently comes the cry about low-grade butter in country stores. How it gets there, remains for the storekeeper to explain. In some cases it may be due to the fact that he is not competent to discriminate between the good and the bad. Generally, however, it is due to the fact that he pays the same price for all grades of butter, in most cases getting even with the one who brings in the inferior product by charging more for goods taken in return, or giving inferior goods. Particularly is this the case in districts where a creamery or cheese factory is in operation. The consequence is that progressive farmers, who consistently put up a high-grade article, are obliged to take a lower price for their butter than the quality of their product demands. In other words, those who put up trashy butter keep down butter prices.

A keen demand always exists for a high-grade product, and certain classes are always willing to pay high prices for really superior goods. Two means of improving butter prices are possible. One is a consistent discrimination in prices paid by purchasers, in accord with quality; the other is more cleanly conditions in stable and dairy, and more up-to-date methods in making, and in preparation for market. The merchant who refrains from telling the person who brings low-grade product from the farm that it is not up to the standard, for fear he might lose trade, does not deserve custom. He places a price on his goods, according to quality, and he should teach his customers that what they bring him will be taken only on such basis. A little quiet advice would go a long way toward remedying the defects in future. The product, in too many cases, is just as good and no better than the purchaser demands.

The home buttermaker, in turn, should be prepared to be fair. There are very few who cannot distinguish between good and bad butter. If they would wait to consider that if a merchant gives them just as much as is given to a neighbor, who takes in butter of a higher grade, he, in turn, gets even by giving inferior goods, or charging higher prices for goods of equal quality, they would not hesitate about endeavoring to make the necessary changes in methods.

Articles in recent issues show that a great deal depends on the care of the cream separator, on the farm. Regular and thorough washing of all utensils, and strict care to cool the cream as quickly as possible, and always before mixing with cream from a previous milking, are requisites. With due precautions, there is no reason why inferior butter should be taken to any market in Canada. It does not pay.

#### Australasian Pensions.

The Australasian Commonwealth Government's Old-age Pension Trust Fund now has to its credit £543,621, and, by the end of the current financial year, will reach the total of nearly £750,000, sufficient to enable the treasurer to inaugurate the national pensions system. The first year's payments are expected to absorb £1,500,000. When the invalids' pensions are made operative by proclamation, it is estimated the taxpayer will be required to provide £2,000,000 a year for the veterans of industry, and those who have been permanently injured while in pursuit of an honest calling.

#### Increasing the Returns from Pasture.

An idea persists in many quarters that pasture is a cheap feed, which costs next to nothing, and is necessary for the economical production of milk, meat or wool. Many farmers still consider themselves justified if they can carry their stock over winter without much or any increase in weight or yield of milk, just so that they may have it to make profit from in the halcyon days of summer pasture. This mistaken view is responsible for what, in the aggregate, bulks up into one of the most enormous losses of the farming business. As a direct result of it, millions of animals are maintained at a dead loss during six or seven months of the year, and at but a meagre profit during the remaining five or six.

Pasture is about the least-productive crop we raise. That is to say, an acre under pasture, grazed by stock, will furnish less sustenance for the human race than an equal area under any other crop. It is a very exceptional acre of Canadian pasture that will, without supplementary feeding, sustain an ordinary cow three months. More often it requires two acres. But suppose the case of a rich, well-seeded, well-manured, permanent pasture, on fertile soil, and assume that one acre of such land would graze a cow abundantly for three months. Now, put that land under alfalfa, and corn, roots, clover and mixed grain, grown in rotation. If well cultivated, and regularly enriched by the manure from the feeding of previous years' produce, such a field will come very close to turning off enough feed and bedding to sustain the same cow a twelve-month. The celebrated Pennsylvania dairyman, Mr. Dietrich, succeeded, on a small lot, in keeping considerably over a cow to the acre, by housing his cattle all the year round, and practicing a soiling system. What is more, he made it pay. Of course, this was intensive dairying; he was producing a high-priced product (milk for Philadelphia trade) on high-priced land, and had to utilize the full producing capacity of every acre of land. It would not be advisable for many Canadian farmers to follow his methods in full, but they carry a potent suggestion.

This brings up the question, "Under what conditions is it advisable to utilize pasture, and to what extent?" In general, it pays to graze stock where land is relatively cheap, in proportion to labor; and by labor, we do not allude to the cost of it per day, so much as the efficiency and productiveness thereof. The farmer who adopts wide-swath methods has cheaper labor at thirty dollars a month than his neighbor who hires at twenty dollars, but uses time-consuming implements, such as five-foot-cut mowers and single-furrow plows. Hence, we perceive that, while, in the long run, wages are ever rising, invention is fully counterbalancing such advance, so that, in the case of most kinds of farm work (milking being a notable exception), the labor cost of raising crops is not increasing, but rather decreasing, on the up-to-date farm, while rents and land values show a tendency to augment—a tendency that will become much more marked as the West fills up. Therefore, we see that land-rental values are becoming (relative to labor) an increasing factor in the cost of production, and this will progressively tend to decrease the profitability of pasture, as compared with crops to be harvested, and either cured or fed green. Even to-day there is not a shadow of doubt but that it would pay farmers, and particularly dairymen,

on the more valuable farms to practice summer stable-feeding to some extent, not merely as a precautionary measure against summer drouth, but as a settled practice. If an acre of alfalfa will furnish almost enough feed to keep a cow a year, or, say, three and a half to seven times as much as an acre of pasture, will it not pay liberal wages to grow some alfalfa to help out the pastures? Corn silage is another excellent feed that can be employed to advantage for the same purpose, while alfalfa and corn silage, or alfalfa and green corn together make an excellent feed. Even fresh, well-cured alfalfa hay is first-class for stable-feeding a herd of cows at night.

As stated before, we do not advocate the adoption of an exclusive soiling system, and, for two or three reasons. First, it entails too much labor to be profitable for any except extremely intensive practice; secondly, we hold strongly to the belief that the natural conditions of exercise, liberty, fresh air, sunshine, and palatable, wholesome food, which a watered and shady pasture affords, are a valuable contribution to the well-being of the stock. For breeding animals, a pasture is particularly beneficial. Let every farmer, therefore, provide such pasture for his stock, but let him also consider the economy of supplementing the pasture, for his cows, at least, by regular practice of stable-feeding at night during most of the summer. It would lead to the maintenance of a much larger stock, and much greater returns and profit per acre. It is one of the best means of enlarging one's farm without buying more land.

#### Orchard Management.

The seven systems of orchard culture, as outlined on another page, contain suggestions that demand the attention of every man who grows fruit trees. Soil and climatic conditions must always be taken into consideration, but, on the whole, thorough cultivation during early summer, followed by seeding to cover crop in July, is admittedly the best.

Figures quoted, as showing the results in Western New York, are not at variance with the results obtained by Canadian orchardists. Particularly has advancement been noticeable in districts where co-operative fruit-growers' associations are well organized. Numerous instances are known where orchards that lay in sod for a number of years were giving little or no annual profit. Rules of the association necessitated better cultural methods. Pruning helped to give larger fruit; spraying helped to keep down insects and fungi, and so insure freedom from blemish; cultivation, however, is acknowledged to be a most important factor in giving annually increasing returns from the area devoted to fruit-growing.

#### Prosecutions and Quality.

That Ontario inspectors, both in city and country, intend to put a stop to tampering with milk supplied for retail trade, or for factory use, is evidenced in the prosecutions made already this season. In the factories, also, a vast improvement is noticed in the shape of cement floors and such repairs as make it possible to maintain sanitary conditions throughout the season. There is, too, a prospect for strict action in regard to a few factory proprietors who are slow to make such changes as are essential to the manufacture of high-grade product.

Among the prosecutions made recently are one producer in the Woodstock district and one in