

657

# THE FARMER'S ADVOCATE

AND HOME MAGAZINE

\* AGRICULTURE, STOCK, DAIRY, POULTRY, HORTICULTURE, VETERINARY, HOME CIRCLE. \*

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## EDITORIAL.

### New Year Resolves.

We apprehend that few farmers in reviewing their work for the past year will feel like congratulating themselves on having farmed as well as they knew how. This is probably true of most men in every calling in life, that they have not improved their opportunities to the full; but we are inclined to believe it applies with peculiar fitness to a larger proportion of those engaged in agricultural pursuits than of those engaged in any other line of business. Speaking generally, intelligent farmers have a pretty correct idea of the treatment that is necessary to the best results in the cultivation of a crop or the feeding and management of their stock; but the trouble is that so many, from indifference or neglect, or from procrastination, fail to put into practice the knowledge they have, and consequently come short of the realization of the full returns which await the husbandman whose whole duty has been done. We readily grant that in dealing with the soil and with animal life the farmer has many things to contend with which are beyond his control, that frequently conditions of weather or other contingencies prevail which offset, and, it may be, nullify, his best efforts well meant and honestly made; but given the most favorable conditions, and the fact remains that often we fail to do as well as we know how, and though we derive fairly good returns, we have to admit they might have been much better had we taken advantage of all the circumstances and made the most of our opportunities.

The commencement of a new year is an opportune time for the making of good resolutions in regard to business methods as well as to the highest aims and objects of life, and it will well repay every farmer who puts into faithful practice the good resolve to do thoroughly everything he undertakes in the way of preparation for and cultivation of his crops and the feeding, care, and management of his stock. The temptation to slight the work, the outgrowth of a spirit of indifference or in order to gain time and to be ahead of his neighbors in finishing the seeding or harvest, if weakly yielded to, may make all the difference to the farmer between a partial failure and a gratifying success in the harvest yield. It is all right to push the work and have the seeding done as early as the condition of the land will properly admit, but let it not be done at the expense of thoroughness, and let the cultivation of hoed crops be done, if possible, at the time when it will do the most good to the growing plants. In the feeding of animals intended for the meat market regularity and punctuality in serving their meals is of so much importance that no ordinary excuse should be allowed to interfere to disappoint the expectations of the animals, as the best results can only be obtained by keeping the engagement with them every time. The man who has cattle to feed that are depending on him cannot afford to loiter in the town talking politics when the feeding hour is near; better leave that to the politicians. The same remarks apply to the care of dairy cows; regularity as to time of feeding and milking is of the first importance, and any deviation from the rule will tell with more or less ill effects on the returns. These are facts which are known to all observant farmers and feeders, and we mention them only as a reminder to any who may be drifting upon the sea of indifference, with the hope that they may be led to call a halt and make a good start at the beginning of the new year. "Be sure you're right, then go ahead," is a good motto, and we are especially solicitous that the farmer readers of the FARMER'S ADVOCATE may not only start right, but continue to the end in the best courses, so that this year's labors on the farms of the Dominion may be intelligently directed, faithfully performed, and

crowned with a rich reward. The outlook is encouraging, the prospect hopeful, and the probabilities cheerful to those resolved to do their best according to the light they have; and the FARMER'S ADVOCATE, standing on the watch-tower, cherishing a fellow feeling for the faithful workers on the farms, will keep a sharp outlook for dangers threatening their interests, which will be promptly communicated, and also to furnish all the information available which may be helpful to our readers, whom one and all we wish a Happy and Prosperous New Year.

### The Need for Individual Effort.

Mr. Walter Lynch, of Westbourne, Man., in an article in our Christmas number on "The Decadence of the Cow," alluded to the days "when there were not so many political meetings nor conventions of all kinds as now, but when people had a little time to attend to their own business—the increase and improvement of their herds." Mr. Lynch is well known to many of our older Eastern readers, and has earned distinction as a successful pioneer farmer in the West and breeder of Short-horn cattle, so that his suggestion will command attention. The present is an age of conventions and associations, and it is not to be wondered at that the question is sometimes asked: Is the return (unless, perhaps, to the office-holding class) commensurate with the outlay? In the main the answer of the public would probably be in the affirmative, but Mr. Lynch's observation suggests one weakness of so much organized effort and of the modern political fashion of governments to expand their functions, viz., weakening individual enterprise and self-reliance, long the distinguishing characteristic of the Briton. Dependence and spoon-fed concerns will beget a form of degeneracy. Proper organization is of very great value and necessary in accomplishing many objects, such as conducting exhibitions, invoking the power of Government in dealing with powerful transportation companies, and in other ways that might be mentioned, and governments can undertake needed scientific investigations, etc., with which individuals might not be able to cope. Substantial advancement is being made in Canadian farming, and the FARMER'S ADVOCATE is free to give liberal praise where due to various governments, Federal and Provincial, for many encouragements afforded, and to much of whose work it has lent cordial co-operation; but though well-satisfied officials may quietly appropriate *honus bolus* to themselves the credit of progress, the observant, thoughtful man knows, after all, that he must, with increasing knowledge, work out his own agricultural salvation, and at the beginning of our year this fact should be fairly recognized. From small beginnings over 30 years ago this journal has labored incessantly, issue after issue, giving the results of every real advance in practice and science to promote better and more successful farming, frankly speaking out where criticism was deemed necessary. Going so numerously into every quarter of the Dominion, as well as into other countries, who can calculate the sum total of the scores of actual accruing advantages to the industry resulting on thousands and thousands of farms, and indirectly to the whole country, from its founder's individual effort and enterprise.

### One Article Worth the Year's Subscription.

To the Editor FARMER'S ADVOCATE:  
 SIR,—I am trying to get as many new subscribers as I can, because I think wherever your valuable ADVOCATE is read it will be a means of doing good to the farmers, and others too. Sometimes one of the articles in it is worth a year's subscription.  
 R. J. MCNEIL.  
 Chateaugay County, Quebec.

### Fat Stock Shows.

The annual winter shows of fat stock have evidently become a permanent institution in Canada, as they have long been in Great Britain. To our mind, they are among the most useful as well as the most interesting of our agricultural exhibitions. Being entirely free from counter attractions, such as are associated with the autumn fairs, they are purely agricultural in their composition, and being in compact form, under one roof, are peculiarly adapted to serve an educational end. When properly systematized, the exhibition of the animals and the judging is under the eye of visitors, who, by the aid of carefully-prepared official catalogues, which the organization, being liberally supported, can well afford to issue, and displayed numbers on the animals corresponding with the catalogue, can follow the programme, the judging and the placing of the awards. This of itself is a liberal education to a young farmer in the most interesting features of his calling, and the meeting of stockmen for the exchange of ideas and comparison of notes is a privilege enjoyed to the full by those who avail themselves of it, and their number is increasing every year. At the inception of these winter shows it was thought best, on account of the limited number of high-class steers, wethers and barrows in the country fitted to make an extra good show, to allow breeding stock to compete. The effect has been the bringing together at the winter shows of a large proportion of the breeding stock which had gone the round of the fall fairs, making an exceedingly interesting exhibition, but one made up largely of animals intended for breeding purposes and not likely to be sold for the butcher's block, at least till their usefulness as breeding stock has ended. We can readily understand that a board of directors, largely composed of stock-breeders and exhibitors of breeding stock at the summer shows, are content to have a prize list which admits of the entry of the stock they have prepared for the earlier fairs and which can at little cost be kept up in show fix to come out again in December, and we are not disposed to object to this so long as a building can be secured sufficiently large to accommodate the show, but what we do contend for is that the original idea of a fat-stock show proper should prevail to this extent, that more and better prizes should be given for steers and spayed heifers, wethers and barrows in all the classes, so as to conform more nearly to the character of a fat-stock show, to encourage the production of ideal export animals and set the standard high as an example of what is needed and must be produced in order that Canada may hold her own in the competition for the best prices in the markets where we meet our strongest rivals in these lines. One of the probable effects of the return of better times and better prices for pure-bred male animals will be the castration of fewer of these, a course which will not tend to the improvement of stock, since many more inferior ones will be retained as sires. As long as much better prices can be realized for bulls for breeding purposes than for steers there will be a temptation to retain the calves entire, and the castration of average ones will seem to be a sacrifice. The same applies to sheep and pigs, and our contention is that to encourage the preparation and entry of good animals of the classes indicated at the fat-stock shows, the best prizes in the list should be offered for these. The prizes in the classes for grades and cross-breds should also be increased, which would have a tendency to encourage the more general use of pure-bred sires of a higher type, and the prizes in the classes for swine are too low in proportion to the importance of the industry they represent and the expense involved in their preparation and handling.