

THE FARMER'S ADVOCATE AND HOME MAGAZINE.

THE LEADING AGRICULTURAL JOURNAL
IN THE DOMINION.

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JOHN WELD, MANAGER.

Agents for "The Farmer's Advocate and Home Journal,"
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1. THE FARMER'S ADVOCATE AND HOME MAGAZINE is published every Thursday. It is impartial and independent of all cliques or parties, handsomely illustrated with original engravings, and furnishes the most practical, reliable and profitable information for farmers, dairymen, gardeners, stockmen and home-makers, of any publication in Canada.
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basis, thanks, in part, to a very exceptional combination of adverse seasonal conditions, and in part to the inferior commercial merit of the varieties. But that both these orchards, and particularly orchard No. 3, will be put upon a paying basis, we have no reasonable doubt. Already they have shown conspicuous improvement in health and vigor of growth; also in the cleanness and quality of fruit, and every additional year's work will count in the development of bearing top. When it is stated that from six or seven acres of Orchard No. 3 over seventy big sleigh-loads of brush (much of it dead wood) were removed last spring, besides a good many taken off during the summer of 1910, it will be realized how disastrously this decadent orchard was hit by the blighting May and June frosts of 1910. It takes time to repair such ravages. But the time is well employed, as hundreds of private growers' experiences go to prove. We lay down the postulate that, if it pays to leave these old orchards at all, it will pay to take care of them, and we are convinced that there are very few, indeed, which it will not pay to leave and care for. It is simply astonishing what transformation two or three years' care will effect.

There is, of course, the question of variety to consider. Many old orchards are filled with poor commercial sorts. Top-grafting offers a more or less satisfactory solution here. These old trees are good ones to practice on, doing a little at a time. Before sacrificing these trees, then, which represent so many years of growth, see what one year's care will do. Prune the orchard this winter, preferably about March. Winter pruning is best to invigorate old trees. If you have a few loads of manure to spare, spread it over the orchard area—not under the trees, merely, as so often done. Also, broadcast any good wood ashes that can be obtained, at the rate of thirty to fifty bushels per acre. Plow shallowly as early in the spring as possible, rolling and harrowing each day's plowing as finished, and disk-harrow

three or four times at intervals until late in June or early July. Then sow a cover crop of mammoth clover, vetches, oats, rye, or something of the kind, and plow down the following spring. Spray the orchard three times, according to directions in our annual spray calendar, and watch results. If not encouraging, write us to find out why. Give the old orchard at least one fair chance.

The Immigrant Problem.

By Peter McArthur.

I am getting about tired of co-incidences. To join the crusade against level crossings, and then be caught on a level crossing, is enough of a co-incidence to last me for the rest of my life. But it is only one of a series. Some time ago I wrote an article on "How to Introduce the Christmas Spirit into the Homes of the Thrifty and Money-making Classes," only to find that the Ladies Home Journal for Christmas had a story which covered admirably every point I had raised. I had to throw my article away. A little later I grappled with an article on "economic conscription" (it isn't nearly so hard as it sounds), and I thought I had brought out a number of points that were impossible in advance of the times. I also flattered myself that it was original, for I had never seen anything printed on the subject. But the co-incidence happened once more. While the article was still lying on my desk, waiting to be mailed, the Rev. C. H. P. Owen, of Glencoe, came to see me, and, after a few minutes conversation, began to explain in detail an immigration scheme he had in mind. It touched on every argument I had used in my article, and gave a local application to the scheme that had not occurred to me. As Mr. Owen's plan would solve the hired-man problem, and the problem of the unfit immigrant, I think it should furnish excellent food for thought to the readers of "The Farmer's Advocate."

Mr. Owen takes the stand that the Government has a perfect right to see that all immigrants who come to this country to earn their living, should know how to do it. The great need of Canada at the present time is a full supply of farm laborers, and of men capable of taking up farms of their own. Instead of these, we are getting men from the great cities of the old world who know nothing about farm work, and are practically useless to the farmer with whom they hire. After a few weeks that are unpleasant to the men and to the farmers, they pack up and go to the cities that are now overcrowded with people who are accustomed to city work. Mr. Owen contends, and rightly, that as these men almost invariably try country life and country work to begin, they are not wholly to blame if they fail. Even though the farms are the places where so-called unskilled labor has its greatest opportunities, there is often a physical difficulty that few people recognize. Very few of the city-bred laborers who go to the country have the physical strength to stand the heavy work, no matter how willing they may be. Even if they have the strength, farm work calls into play a different set of muscles from those used by the city-bred man, and the result is a man tired to death by some such simple work as hoeing corn or pitching hay, which the farmer does as part of his day's work without feeling much effect from it. If the man works willingly, he is soon sore to the last fibre of his body, and if the farmer is inclined to be irritable because a sufficient amount of work is not being done, a break soon occurs, and the man hurries to town to hunt for work such as he has been accustomed to doing. I know that this is sound sense, for I have tried farm work after spending years at a city desk. In the first day's hoeing I discovered about twenty muscles that I had forgotten, made every one of them as sore as a burn, and if I hadn't been working for myself I would have fired my boss in less than a week. And I was not nearly so much handicapped as the average city man, for I was thoroughly familiar with the kind of work I had to do, though it was years since I had done it. This point in itself is one of the most important in the whole trouble. If the hired man understood the kind of work he had to do, and could do it without suffering physical torture, he would be much more willing to stay on the farm, where he is needed, and where he would be much better off.

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Mr. Owen's scheme is to have the Government provide work for every laborer who comes to the country, so that he can get the necessary physical development and training before trying his luck on a farm. In Ontario, at least, there are thousands, perhaps millions, of acres that are only useful for reforestation, and the new arrivals could be put to work at planting trees under competent and sympathetic foremen. In the northern part of Old Ontario there is a vast stretch of land that will ultimately become a desert, unless the Government takes action and plants trees.

Throughout this district there are occasional small, fertile stretches that could be made into Government farms, and on these the immigrants could be taught farm work of all kinds when not busy at tree-planting. Properly handled, the scheme could be put on a paying basis, and the men, having their difficulties understood could be put at work that would enable them not only to earn their livings, but to put by some money that would help them to make a decent start when they graduated from the Government farms. Immigrants who come to the country with the honest intention of working for their living and becoming citizens should have no objections to make to a course in farming of this kind which would make things so much easier for them. In a sense they would be wards of the Government, and the Government might find it advisable to keep them under supervision for some years after giving them their training, to see that the unforeseen difficulties with which they would have to contend did not discourage them and drive them back to the city.

While no disgrace would attach to this system of fitting men for citizenship, there is another phase of it that has already been taken up with great success by Mr. Hanna in his Prison Farm scheme. Instead of treating the unfortunates of the world as enemies of society, his aim is to make men of them, so that they will be useful to themselves and to the country.

In Mr. Owen's opinion, the only fault with Mr. Hanna's scheme is that it doesn't begin soon enough. A man has to matriculate to Mr. Hanna's excellent institution by committing a crime. Would it not be much better to have farms to which men could go to get the necessary strength and training as soon as they found they could no longer keep up the pace in the city. From letters that I have received since moving back to the land, I know that there are many in the cities who would do the same if they had the faintest idea of how to go about it. It is absurd for the Government to be spending good money in bringing immigrants to the country who are unfit for the work they will have to do. Personally, I am of the opinion that the Government has a right to demand of every man in the country that he know how to make his living from the raw materials of nature, just the same as in some countries they force every man to be trained as a soldier. It is much more important to have people trained to make their living than to have them trained to destroy their fellow men in battle. The question of food production is becoming much more important to the world than the question of conquest or defence, and I do not think that it trenches in any way on a man's personal liberty to compel him to take the necessary training to be able to make his living. It is only an extension of our present compulsory education.

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Judging from the correspondence there has been in "The Farmer's Advocate," a very considerable part of the trouble between hired men and employers has been due to the difficulties pointed out by Mr. Owen. The men were not physically capable of doing the work they attempted, did not know how to do it, anyway, and if it dawned on the farmers at all why the men were so unfit, they could not see that it was any part of their business to fit the men for their work, and then have them probably go and hire out with someone else for larger wages. Every city housewife is perfectly familiar with this phase of the servant problem. She employs a newly-landed immigrant, teaches her how to do the work, paying her at the same time a fair wage, only to have her pack up and leave as soon as she is able to command the highest wages. With such a scheme as Mr. Owen has in mind, the Government might be able to take over this phase of the servant-girl problem on its broad back, without much inconvenience to itself, and perhaps with profit.

Of course, I am only able to give an outline of Mr. Owen's scheme, but I think I have given enough to induce those who are interested in the problem to give it some serious thought.

In view of Mr. McArthur's painful experience with coincidences, it seems almost heartless to state that in this week's article he has stepped into another. Nearly two years ago we reviewed in these columns a book by Emerson Hough, called "The Sowing," in which he suggested the establishment of farm training stations by the Dominion Government, financed by Great Britain. Here, newcomers were to remain a year or two on a semi-self-supporting basis while learning farming and being prepared in some measure for citizenship. It looks good, and may contain the germ of an idea for someone to work out, but we have grave doubts. Would the men remain at their training station, and would they develop at a Government institution that grit and fibre requisite in an efficient farm hand? Few city men know what a day's work should accomplish on the farm, and we doubt whether they would learn it at a public training farm.