

FARMING

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A Merry Christmas

Once more we have the pleasure of extending to the readers of FARMING our best wishes for a joyous and merry Christmas. May all the pleasures of this festive season be yours. We have provided for this occasion several pages of special matter suitable for Christmas reading, which we trust you will enjoy to the fullest extent. Let us, in enjoying ourselves, not forget that there may be others not so fortunately situated as we are, and be willing to lend a helping hand in bringing some spark of joy into their lives.

Christmas Presents.

Farming Makes it Easy for any Reader to secure one or more.

The two-page announcement of FARMING in our advertising columns should be gone over carefully by every reader. It tells with completeness the story of our premium offers. With a little exertion one may secure a good book that will serve as a Christmas present, or a bible, or a reading glass or a watch. One subscription alone is sufficient to give you a handsome dollar book. A comparatively small club will give you a solid silver watch.

The Farmer's Ideal

In speaking at the great public meeting held at London during the winter show, the Hon. John Dryden laid special stress upon the fact that the breeder or the farmer should have an ideal before him when raising and fitting animals for market. We would like to emphasize this fact. No hap-hazard or careless methods of breeding or feeding will suffice if the farmer wishes to make a success of his calling. He must have an ideal before him and that a pretty high one too, before he can hope to produce the fine quality of product required by the market of to-day. What then should be the farmer's ideal? In beef cattle, the kind that will bring the highest price on the market; in the dairy cow the one that will produce the most butter during the year, over and above her cost of keep; in sheep the kind that will produce the finest quality and the largest quantity of mutton and wool, and in the hog, the one that will give the finest quality of bacon. These ideals are the ones the farmer should constantly have in mind, and he should not stop short of turning out any one of them. It will not do to cease one's efforts when a cow that will produce 250 lbs. of butter a year is secured. There is the 300 lb. cow ideal to be reached, and when she is secured a still higher ideal should be aimed at. By having these ideals constantly before him an improvement in the quality of the product a farmer turns out is bound to come. Keep pressing onward towards the goal of perfection, and when it is reached the highest possible success, financially and otherwise will be your reward.

Government Assistance to the Poultry Industry

In the premium list of the Ontario Poultry Show, to be held at Peterborough in January, a notice appears calling a meeting to discuss the appointment of delegates from every local poultry association to wait upon the Ontario Government to ask for affiliation of all local associations with the Agricultural and Arts Association, and for an annual grant for each on the same principle that grants are given to branch agricultural and horticultural societies. A movement of this kind cannot be allowed to pass by entirely unnoticed. Where public money is asked for, to carry on any line of work or to promote any industry, we naturally inquire if the cause is a worthy one and deserving of Government assistance. Judging of the work of the Ontario Poultry Association for several years back, and also of some of the local associations from the standpoint of practical benefit to the farmer, we have no hesitation in saying that these organizations do not merit any assistance from the Government. Until they can show that they are working for the best interests of the farmer in teaching him how to breed, feed and raise the kind of poultry required for the export trade in dressed poultry or for the production of eggs, we say emphatically, that it would only be a waste of money to make them any further grants.

The Ontario Poultry Association has held a show and its general meeting annually for a number of years, and we would like to know wherein it has succeeded in materially benefitting the poultry industry of this country as carried on by the average farmer. The show has been largely under the control of breeders of the "fancy" who bring their bantams and dainty, useless birds to the show every year, draw their prize money, and that is about all we hear of them till the next show arrives.

Take the Provincial Show held at Toronto last January as an example. There were only at most three breeders who showed in the purely fancy classes and the list of awards appeared something like this: Class 5, section 1. 1st prize, Mr. A.; 2nd prize, Mr. B.; 3rd prize, Mr. C. Section 2. 1st prize, Mr. B.; 2nd prize, Mr. C.; 3rd prize, Mr. A. Section 3. 1st prize, Mr. C.; 2nd prize, Mr. A.; 3rd prize, Mr. B.; and so on till all the sections in the class were gone through with. These three individuals went home thinking the show a great success and with their pockets well lined with prize money. True, at last year's show there was a large and very creditable exhibit of what are known as the utility breeds, the kind that our farmers should raise, but in awarding the prizes more attention was paid to fancy points than to the bird's adaptability for roasting or broiling purposes.

The Ontario Poultry Association receives annually a large grant from the Government, and while a portion of it goes towards prizes for the utility class of fowls, too great a share goes out in prize money for fancy birds and pet stock that are of no more practical use to the farmers of this country than so many sparrows. We say then that it is time for a change, and instead of increasing the grants to these organizations they might better be discontinued altogether, or a stipulation made that all Government money given in prizes be devoted to practical and useful purposes. A leading breeder of utility poultry writes us