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EDITORIAL.

Prepare for Seeding.

The progress of seeding operations, which will soon be in season, depends so much upon being prepared and ready to push the work just as soon as the land is in fit condition, it may be in order to remind the more easy-going of the importance of economizing time, now so precious, owing to the scarcity of suitable help on the farm. Early sowing, it is conceded, generally ensures the heaviest yields of grain and the surest catch of grass seeds, and if the land is in workable condition at all, especially in the case of clay soil, the seed-bed is more easily prepared when slightly moist than later, when it may become too dry, and breaks up in lumps or flakes, requiring extra work to reduce to a fine tilth. In order to be prepared to make the best possible use of the time when seeding commences, it is important that the seed be provided, cleaned and measured in advance, and the teams, the harness and implements be all in the best condition to do their work well, and do a good share of it every suitable day.

The gospel of good seed has been so persistently preached through these columns, and the soundness of the doctrine so well demonstrated in various and repeated experiments, there should be a general observance of greater care in the selection and preparation of the seed, clean, sound, plump seed only being sown. To this end, it will be well to take time by the forelock, and be ready with well-cleaned seed before the time for seeding arrives. The series of articles by successful, practical farmers appearing in the farm department of this issue may, it is hoped, prove helpful in the way of hints to some who are undecided as to the best varieties to sow, and the best methods of cultivation, but at the same time it is scarcely necessary to remind experienced farmers that much depends upon the character of the soil, the climatic conditions of the district, and other circumstances, and that judgment must be used in the adoption of new methods, while new varieties, as a rule, had better be tried first on a small scale.

The great value to the farmer of clover as a fertilizer, as well as one of the best of stock foods, has been so fully proven it is of the utmost importance that if it be freely sown, not only as part of a regular system of rotation of crops, but wherever there is a fair prospect of a catch, even if the land is to be plowed in the fall of the first season of its growth, as the pasturage it will afford after the harvest of the grain crop, and its fertilizing value to the succeeding crop, will generally more than compensate for its cost.

It goes without saying that great care should be observed in the purchase of clover and grass seeds, that only sound, tested seed, free from the seeds of noxious weeds be sown, for these robbers multiply rapidly enough without paying for their seed and cultivating them.

A word of caution as to the management of the teams may not be out of place here. If the horses have not been doing regular work during the winter, their muscles and the skin of the shoulders will be soft and tender, and if the weather be warm, they should be carefully driven and not overworked, as from sweating the shoulders are liable to get chafed and sore, making it uncomfortable for both horses and driver. For the first few days it is wise to not feed or water heavily, or overdrive, in order that they may get used to their work by degrees. This applies especially to young horses that have not been accustomed to work. The neglect of these pre-

cautions may result in a disabled horse and serious delay of the work. Care should be observed that the collars fit comfortably, and that the draft comes equally on the shoulders, and not unduly on the point of the shoulder or the top of the neck. Then, in warm weather, causing much sweating, a short rest should be given occasionally, the collars being pulled up from the shoulders to allow them to cool; the shoulders should be washed every evening with salt water, to harden them, and the collars should be dried and scraped, or brushed clean. Sweat pads are now on sale which may be used to advantage to prevent chafing of the shoulders, and for all they cost, it may be a good investment to secure and use these, since so much depends upon the teams being kept in sound condition.

In the Extra Lies the Profit.

The aphorism that stands as the caption of this article embodies a principle which has long been realized by merchants and manufacturers, but which to the farmer has been somewhat obscured by the fact that he is usually his own manager, his own laborer, and oftentimes his own rent collector and tenant, hence a larger proportion of his sales receipts is straight income than in the case of the ordinary city business man. Add to this that he seldom keeps books, and also that his business and living are not divorced, as with the financiers of other industries, and it is not surprising that his ideas of profit are sometimes not very clear-cut. Yet, all will admit it is most important that we should make accurate analysis of our returns if we are to aspire above the level of mere wages, with which a good many seem content. If farmers generally were to cast up accounts, take an inventory, figure out compound interest on the farm investment, allow themselves and their families reasonable wages, and deduct a fair cash value for living expenses, how many could show a dollar profit? Some who have studied the matter have despaired of making such a showing, contenting themselves with the compensating advantages of health and independence afforded by their calling, and concluding that farming is not sufficiently remunerative to satisfy all the factors of the economist's equation. We grant there is ground for the opinion, but yet, when all is said and done, is the smallness of the farmer's profits due wholly to parasitism by other classes, or must something be charged to a looseness of the principles on which his business has been conducted? If so, this should be our first concern, and it is a material service any farmer renders the community who produces a higher quality and a greater quantity of goods with less labor and at smaller expense.

Strong emphasis should be laid on quality. There is a limit to the amount of food per head the world can consume, and mere increase in quantity might glut markets and depress prices. In this age, the tastes, not only of foreigners, but of our own city consumers, are yearly becoming more fastidious; they demand better, more uniform and finer-finished goods, and an increasing class is glad to pay cheerfully an extra price for an extra article. We sustain a loss that profits no one when we sell for 15 cents a pound butter which, prepared with a little more care and skill, somebody would have been pleased to buy at 20 cents. There will always be money for him who will take the pains, make the effort, and use the intelligence to produce an extra quality.

We sometimes hear certain progressive methods disparaged as hardly worth while, because they do not result in striking increases of crop or values. This is not the right view of the matter,

The bulk of the returns from any legitimate business proposition go to offset the cost of production. It is the little extra return that yields the profit, and it may easily transform a loss into a gain. It is the extra pound of meat produced from a given amount of feed, the extra bushel of grain from a given area of land, the extra half-acre of plowing accomplished by using a third or fourth horse, the extra ton of crop produced by a little better rotation, the extra pound of milk per day as a result of a daily milk record, and more important still, the extra dollar obtained for produce by reason of its superior quality—wherever we turn, in all the ramifications of our business, in the extra lies the profit every time. The world is full of ordinary men, marketing ordinary stuff at ordinary prices. The one who prospers amid this competition is the one who can do just a little bit better than his neighbor. Such a one not only bettera himself, but, since small profits are all we have any reason to expect, we should multiply these by increasing our turnover. A large turnover is made possible by a close study of margins. The man who produces ninety cents' worth of goods at a cost of one dollar cannot afford to borrow capital and hire labor to increase his output, for the more he hires the more he loses. His best plan is to conduct his business on a small scale, with a view to affording opportunity for himself and family to earn wages. The ten per-cent. business loss will, of course, come out of their wages, but that is better than suffering the corresponding loss on a double volume of business. On the other hand, the man who produces a dollar's worth of goods for ninety cents can afford to extend his operations, and the farther he extends—within limits, of course, for farming does not lend itself advantageously to vast extension—the more money he will make. A difference of ten per cent. in cost of production may easily mean the difference between the possibility of a large, profitable business and the necessity of a small, unprofitable one. It pays to study margins closely. It would pay to build a silo, for instance, even if it reduced the cost of producing \$500 worth of meat and milk by only five per cent. each year. A little gain here and there, a little spreading of cost and selling price, is well worth looking after. A very few such gains bulk into a respectable dividend. The great American meat-packing enterprises have paid enormous dividends by effecting small economies on large turnovers. On a smaller scale, and to a less extent, similar principles apply in farming. Let every reader ponder this question, and ask himself whether he could not make various little savings here and there. Am I making the very most from my cows? Am I making every possible cent out of my steers? Am I raising as much feed as I might? Am I employing my hired man's and my own services to the best advantage? Can I afford to work a two-horse team? Can I afford to waste a load of manure? Could I increase my revenue by keeping a flock of sheep? Can I afford to sow poor seed? Can I afford not to keep books and take an annual inventory? Such questions are calculated to arouse thought and stop leaks. Meantime, let each man nail up in his barn, or frame as a motto in his house, that they may come to be emblazoned on his memory, the words: IN THE EXTRA LIES THE PROFIT.

There are two effects modern invention should have: It should lighten the husbandman's toil, permitting him to devote less time to the mere struggle for existence, and more to the improvement of himself, family and home; and it should enable him to produce goods that will command a higher price.