

The Farmer's Advocate and Home Magazine

PERSEVERE
AND
SUCCEED

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EDITORIAL.

Nineteen-eleven was an extraordinary year for subduing weeds, but one would never realize it by surveying the growth of 1912. The fight next year will again be on in earnest.

Our school systems are characterized by too much of the abstract; too little of the practical; too much wearisome memorization; too little development of thinking capacity; too much mere studying; too little doing.

Questioners should not forget to sign full name and post office address as appearing on their labels, otherwise their inquiries are promptly disregarded. It taxes our editorial resources to accommodate subscribers who comply with the rules.

The civilized world, remembering the fanatical atrocities perpetrated by "The Unspeakable Turk," has little sympathy with him in his disastrous struggle against the Balkan allies. Perhaps, however, we understand him no better than he understands us. Much depends upon the point of view. We rather suspect there must be some pretty fine qualities in the despised Turk.

For insipid drivel the colored illustrated comic section of the average modern newspaper would be hard to beat. With neither art, humor nor even bright imagination, it spreads its hideous blotches of red and blue before the reader's eye, more offensive than a bill-board advertisement in a city landscape. How much longer will it continue to deprave the taste for what is beautiful and good?

An American investigator nails the once familiar calumny that farm women were especially prone to insanity—a statement for which there is no statistical authority in the United States any more than there is in Canada, according to enquires made by "The Farmer's Advocate" not many years since. The American referred to says there are indications that it originated where many other forms of current errors have their rise, viz., in the lurid fancy of a popular writer.

In the course of an address on Education, Dr. David Sloan, Principal of the Nova Scotia Normal College, remarked that this year the federal revenue of Canada would amount to \$170,000,000, equal to \$24 per head for every man, woman and child in Canada, or say \$100 a year for the head of an average family. This money is paid by Canadian citizens as taxes without knowing it, because the tax is levied indirectly by customs duties on imports and by other means. We pay it not as taxes but as innumerable extra charges here and there tacked on to the cost of living. In addition we pay another large sum to manufacturers and middlemen for goods made in Canada and sold at prices equal to the value of imported articles plus the duty. Then we wonder why the cost of living is high.

A a first-class basis for a Nature-study lesson we commend the installment of "Nature's Diary," which appeared in our Farm Bulletin department last week.

It has been a trying summer for getting farm work done. August disappointed the expectations of July; September disillusioned the hopes of August; October failed to justify the faith preserved through September, and November started out by upsetting the calculations of those who builded on a dry, late fall. Still hope springs eternal, and we yet have confidence that somehow, somewhere, a few weeks of uninterrupted nice weather will be experienced. Better hope than worry.

City-people are prone to a habit of truculent criticism of "the farmers'" lethargy in road improvement, but according to our observation, the township and county roads, leading to almost any town or city in Canada, are pavements compared to the jolting, rutted, pitch-holed streets in the suburbs of said urban communities. The London Advertiser has performed a public service in drawing attention to the condition of the outlying highways in its home city. Other newspapers might well do the same. The numerous and varied forms of foolishness manifested on rural road improvement are more than matched by the records of many city engineers.

It should be kept in mind that heat is lost from a winter stable in two ways, (1) by conduction through the wall without exchange of air, (2) by displacement of warmed inside by cold outside air. The former loss is always great through a thin tight wall composed of material like concrete, which is a good conductor of heat. It secures no ventilation and represents a sheer loss of warmth. The second process is a necessary incident of ventilation, whether accidental or systematic, and can be avoided only by the expensive and questionable expedient of warming the incoming current of pure air. Some lowering of temperature due to free ventilation is ordinarily necessary and is not to be worried about, but waste of heat through walls should be guarded against by reasonably thorough insulation.

Railways have a very direct interest in promoting agriculture for the reason that, as shown by reports to the Interstate Commerce Commissions, ten per cent. of the total freight revenue of the railways of the United States was derived from carrying grain, hay, cotton and live stock. Demonstration farms and plots are among the means employed. Railroads were conducting experimental or demonstration farms in 1911 in Maine, New York, Delaware, Virginia, North Carolina, Montana, and Texas. Some of these farms were conducted to show the possibilities of raising vegetables in certain regions along the Atlantic coast; one farm, located up on the Blue Ridge Mountains, was devoted to fruit, and others served as examples of other branches of agriculture. Sometimes the railroad companies may select one or more private farms along the line of its road and refer to them as models, or at least as worth the consideration of a farmer who wishes to be progressive. A favorite plan of railroad agriculturists to show farming methods is by use of a plot, under their direction, on a private farm.

Ventilate.

With the advent of winter comes the temptation to shut stables up tightly to keep them warm. As a rule, this means depriving the inmates of adequate ventilation. Very few stables are so constructed as to provide proper ventilation and at the same time prevent manure ever freezing in the stable. As a rule, stables kept close enough to prevent this are too close for the good of the stock. While low temperature in a stable is not desirable, it is far less undesirable than impure air and less uncomfortable. Close observation and experimental evidence afford grounds for believing that cattle in a freezing temperature with plenty of pure air feel better and do better than cattle in a stable ten degrees warmer with vitiated atmosphere.

Generally the attendants, accustomed as they are to high living temperatures, mind the cold of a stable much more than do the animals, which have wonderful inherent powers to withstand climatic extremes, as must be the case when we consider how comparatively few are the fatalities among, say, young calves, even when born under quite rigorous conditions. Of course, it is not wise or profitable to subject animals to violent extremes, but coddling is not so necessary nor so much appreciated as is often supposed and this is particularly true in the matter of temperature. More attention to ventilation and somewhat less to the thermometer would reduce the ravages of tuberculosis and preserve a degree of vigor necessary for best returns in production of milk, meat, wool or work. Protect or tear out exposed water pipes, ventilate the stables, avoiding the strong drafts, of course, and don't worry if the manure freezes now and then. It is a good healthy sign."

Reluctance to Invest.

The environment of a life time produces certain psychological effects—certain habits or attitudes of mind. Perhaps it is the inevitable uncertainty of agricultural conditions, operations and results which has begotten in us an unconscious habit of thought that nothing is sure or safely to be counted upon until it has been secured "in the mitt" so to speak. The proverbial injunction against counting chickens before they are hatched has been emphasized to farmers time upon time by unexpected forms of mischance. The lesson of thrift and prudence thus enforced has been of great importance to us in prosecuting our occupation. Sternly and soberingly it has brought air-castle builders down to the stubborn facts of life and experience. The life-long lesson has been needed and has been good.

But good tendencies sometimes run to extremes, developing ill balance. With farmers this very habit of caution has often held judicious enterprise in check, rendering us hesitant to step out where progress has been proven safe and wise. Our skepticism, born of personal experience, leads us to doubt the verities of science, and the facts of other people's experience. It brings us finally to a point where we can scarcely see past our bank books.

This is one reason why so many men accumulate goodly savings accounts while their farms go down in fertility, and suffer plainly for lack of improvements. They would rather draw three per cent from the bank than ten or twenty per cent in the form of returns from land drainage or from a silo. They would rather sell most of their grain and hay than feed it to live-stock, and