

FARM AND DAIRY

AND RURAL HOME
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The Rural Publishing Company, Limited
PETERBORO, ONT.

"Read not to contradict and to confute nor to believe and take for granted, but to weigh and consider."—Bacon.

The Stability of Agriculture

WAR is declared between Austria and Serbia. There is a panic on the stock exchanges of the two continents. Germany, France and Russia become involved. The stock exchanges close their doors to prevent the panic of speculators bringing industry to a standstill. Every day brings news of firms that have failed because of the influence of war on commerce. Great manufacturing concerns begin to lay off men. Even in countries that are neutral the evil works of the War God are in evidence. The United States rejoices in her neutrality, but at the same time is faced by a declining revenue that makes additional taxation necessary. Well my business men say, "this world is out of joint."

In the general chaos one fact stands out clearly—the stability of agriculture. Of all occupations that of the agriculturist is least affected by factors that leave men of all other occupations in uncertainty and involve many in ruin. Even as it affects the individual so it is with the nation. The country that has the greatest proportion of its people on the land is the one that will pass most safely through any great crisis. Who knows but that the result of this war may be to turn the attention of men and of nations more towards the one altogether stable industry—the cultivation of the soil. May not this change in the attitude of legislators, who for generations have neglected rural development in order that urban expansion be quickened, be one of the compensations of the present situation.

The Most Frequent Mistake

A FAMOUS breeder of Ayrshire cattle was asked recently for advice on establishing a herd of pure bred dairy cattle. It was given in terse form. "If capital is somewhat limited," said he, "buy as good registered cows

as you can find for a reasonable price, say two hundred dollars each, and then pay at least twice as much for the bull."

How widely different the advice is from the common practice. We have visited many recently established herds, and in almost all cases, generous prices were paid for females, while the bull was the cheapest animal in the barn, both in cost price and in value. Such a policy is comparable with placing the cart before the horse. The high-priced females will influence but one calf a year. The bull will stamp his characteristics, for better or for worse, on ten, twenty, or thirty progeny, depending upon the size of the herd. It is only through the sire that we can look for general herd improvement. To the neglect of this point we can trace many of the failures of breeders. Every judge at fall fairs can tell of herds that were better ten and fifteen years ago, than they are today. Judges who make a point of inquiring for the cause tell us that parsimony in the purchase of sires is largely responsible.

This is a time-worn subject, we know. But so long as the vital breeding principle it enunciates is being violated, so long we must emphasize the only course that can lead to herd improvement—the use of strictly first-class males. For such males we must be prepared to pay a price commensurate with their value.

Value of the Experimentalist

WHY the experimentalist? Many visitors to our agricultural colleges inspect the experimental plots in connection with the field husbandry departments, take note of the vast amount of labor required to manage these plots, of the high salaried men at the head of the work and then go home wondering if it is not all a waste of money. "What good does the average farmer obtain from this expenditure?" they ask themselves. For the benefit of these doubters we will give a little experience of our own, which showed us very clearly the value of the experimentalist.

We were walking through the experimental plots at Macdonald College with Mr. Paul A. Boving. He called our attention to a plot of several hundred individual alfalfa plants. All of these plants were from seed supposed to be of the same strain. No two plants were alike and some of them would be several times as valuable from the standpoint of forage production as others. It is the work of the experimentalist to select the best plants and develop from them new strains of alfalfa that will be more productive than the old. Think of the benefit of a new variety that would increase the yield of alfalfa even ten per cent. The extra income to Canadian farmers as a whole would meet the expense of conducting the experimental plots of our agricultural colleges several times over.

In another part of the experimental plots we inspected three different strains of orchard grass which had been growing under the same conditions, the seed having been originally selected from three different plants. One strain showed a splendid growth, another had a medium stand, and the third one was poor. Selection from the best will result in a more productive strain of orchard grass for the use of Canadian farmers. Plots of timothy showed the same variety of growth. As Mr. Boving expressed it, "there is as much difference between two timothy plants as there is between a Shire and a pony. There is the difference in earliness and in energy of developing. Some are ready for pasture early in May, others from the same variety not until June."

Unknowingly we farmers are profiting continually by the work of the experimentalist, in

the better strains of grasses, grains and legumes that are made available for use. Because we do not realize the source of these improved strains there is an inclination to be unappreciative of the work of the experimentalist. When we stop to think about it, however, we must concede that the experimentalist has more than justified his existence. He has proved himself a valuable acquisition to the agriculture of all lands.

Farm Security

"PEOPLE aren't starving back on the farm. They aren't wondering which day or week will close their factory and put them out of a job. There may be some things you lack on the farm, but there are many things you have that you do not half appreciate. Your security, for instance. Take my own case. It is rumored that our shop may close down in two weeks. Orders have ceased to come in since war was declared. I have nothing ahead of me to carry my family through the winter. If the Mass. Harris Company closes down, as they threaten to do, what will happen to their moneyless employees? They will face starvation. Were I ever in a position of a man who has children to feed and nothing with which to feed them. If not, you are not in a position to understand the insecurity of the average city wage-earner."

This young engineer, who faces a winter of uncertainty, has a better appreciation of the merits of the farm than many of us who live in the country. Perhaps we don't count our blessings as often as we should, or value them as we ought. Of one thing we may be sure: The farmer who owns his own place, be it ever so small, has a job that is not ended at the will of an employer. He is always sure of food enough and spare. Such security is a blessing that should weigh heavily in favor of the farm, particularly in these troublesome times.

Current Comments

All honor to the Socialists of Europe. That of all the organizations of importance on the war-cursed continent, stood firm for peace. They insisted that murder is still murder even when committed with the sanction of governments. They themselves largely outside the Christian Church they have proved themselves firm adherents to one of the greatest truths of Christ's teaching—the brotherhood of man. Little as we may believe in many Socialistic teachings, we cannot withhold praise of their firm stand on the side of peace.

National wellbeing is a meaningless term unless it means greater happiness and prosperity to the individuals who compose the nation. Results in national glory or national distinction to the individual citizen it means a greater load to bear whether his country win or lose. Hence there is no sympathy between the materialist and the social reformer. The former is an enemy of civilization; the latter seeks his advancement.

The dairy industry and the Holstein breed are both indebted to the late E. H. Dollar for the part that he played in the development of producing strains of dairy cattle. Death cut him down in his prime and denied him many years of usefulness that we all expected to see his. But his work will live after him. The descendants of old Pontiac Korndyke will continue to make new records and add to the fame of the great breeder. In Holstein history he will be accorded such a place of honor as is accorded the Bates and the Cruikshanks in Shorthorn and Canadian breeders, no less than United States Holstein men, have profited by the late Mr. Dollar's work, and will not soon forget the part that he played in the development of the breed.

The Out

H. Percy Blanchard
"We farmers,"
Editor in the Post

A city farm journal, find yourself, find your own voice, to give letter to the farmers, the many, with a cheap and a few cents, and market, and bank. What is our matter what would not? If he were perhaps suggest something for which he is fitted. He is a clergy, squash though, will do for the many; so to be.

To be frank, I prescribe for this opportunity for a little farmers to give suggestions; men the short cuts and however, not to through too much forward a few such the dairy. With of pure-bred cows and work for some and bred the other stock. Join the acre and boost your better calves as the result of the first strain and guarantee. Try and get beef heifer calves. bred—Ayrshire, Guernsey, Jersey, and a big c's need not but luxuriant pasture will rustle for her!

FIELD MAN

With one man doing chores and essential to a full farming system. To lands systematically a little fertilizer or on the small, starved ground, it is sended so often. Eng; pick out a few est and best land, expensive, but it is are or so of field cart and cut green cut for two days' This run through, cutter, or if that is with a sharp axe in the big milk when the and lets the cows into in good feed. Us for roots next year crop of potatoes the Some would advocate as soon as the potato fall seeding with grass. But however seeded off hay off it is after having, night pot milch cows till it is next year's corn crop. Of course, like a bath twice a year, fed or not, a hayfield is turned up and