

MANITOBA AND WESTERN
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THE FARMER'S ADVOCATE & HOME MAGAZINE

THE LEADING AGRICULTURAL JOURNAL IN THE DOMINION.

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The FARMER'S ADVOCATE is published on or about the first of each month. It is impartial and independent of all cliques or parties, handsomely illustrated with original engravings, and furnishes the most profitable, practical and reliable information for farmers, dairymen, gardeners and stockmen, of any publication in Canada.

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Our Monthly Prize Essays.

CONDITIONS OF COMPETITION.

1.—No award will be made unless one essay at least comes up to the standard for publication.

2.—The essays will be judged by the ideas, arguments, conciseness and conformity with the subject, and not by the grammar, punctuation or spelling.

3.—Should any of the other essays contain valuable matter, not fully covered by the one awarded the first prize, or should any present different views of the same topic, and we consider such views meritorious, we will publish such essays in full, or extracts from them as we may deem best, and allow the writer ten cents per inch (one dollar per column) printed matter for as much of such articles as we publish. By this rule each writer who sends us valuable matter will receive remuneration for his labor, whether he be the winner of the first prize or not.

4.—We invite farmers to write us on any agricultural topic. We are always pleased to receive practical articles. For such as we consider valuable we will pay ten cents per inch (one dollar per column) printed matter. Criticisms of Articles, suggestions How to Improve the ADVOCATE, Descriptions of New Grains, Roots or Vegetables not generally known, Particulars of Experiments Tried, or Improved Methods of Cultivation are each and all welcome. Contributions sent us must not be furnished other papers until after they have appeared in our columns. Rejected matter will be returned on receipt of postage.

Replies to circulars and letters of enquiry sent from this office will not be paid for as provided by rule 4.

A prize of \$5 will be given for the best essay on "The Advantages of Windbreaks for House and Farm Yards; the best Trees, when and how to plant, and subsequent care." Essay to be in this office not later than March 15th.

A prize of \$5 will be given for the best essay stating the conditions that render summer fallowing desirable, its advantages, and describing in detail the best system based on writer's experience and observation. Essay to be in this office not later than April 15th.

Farmers' Institute Meetings.

The following circuit of meetings of Farmers' Institutes has been arranged by the Manitoba Central Farmers' Institute and the Department of Agriculture:—

Birtle,	Wednesday, Feb. 3rd,	R. W. Maugh.
Minnedosa,	" "	J. W. Bartlett.
Gladstone,	Friday, " 5th,	" "
Rapid City,	Saturday, " 6th,	R. M. Waugh.
Souris,	Wednesday, " 10th,	J. W. Bartlett.
Baldwin,	Thursday, " 11th,	Wm. Thompson.
Wawanesa,	Saturday, " 13th,	J. W. Bartlett.

Mr. Bartlett will also attend meetings at Douglas on Tuesday, February 9th, for the organization of an Institute there.

Timely Notes for February.

THE FARMER AND THE STOREKEEPER.

During this month at many Farmers' Institutes and Alliance meetings various topics of absorbing interest to agriculturists will be discussed, with more or less profit to the audience; but how many will take up the above subject? We have heard a good deal lately about Farmers' Clubs, &c., for the purpose of buying more advantageously. But surely the storekeeper, especially the country one, deserves some consideration. We, as farmers, often complain of the apparently extortionate prices charged by some retail dealers in our country towns. Let us look behind the scenes of a storekeeper's office. It is the beginning of winter, and Jackson, urged by a laudable desire to clothe his family warmly, enters the store, and orders mitts, mocassins, caps, yarn, underclothing, &c., say \$50 worth, and then says he will pay the amount with the first load of wheat he brings in. Wilson comes a week or so after, and lays in a stock of provisions for Christmas, saying he is feeding a "dandy fine" steer, which he is going to sell next week, when he will settle up. Thompson comes in immediately after and informs Harrison, the storekeeper, that he has a dozen cords of wood ready to haul on the "first sleighing," and if he can get some tea, sugar, &c., he wants, he will pay as soon as he gets that wood out, and so on, and so on. In too many cases that load of wheat is never sold, that steer still awaits the buyer, those cords of wood are hauled home and burned in the kitchen stove. Is it any wonder, then, that when Fisher goes for his winter supply of goods to the same store, that he is charged twenty per cent. more than he would otherwise be, if he had not to make up, as a cash buyer, for the losses incurred through the sales to Wilson, Thompson and Jackson? Even a storekeeper has to live, and when he has a good many bad debts which the exemption law prevents him from collecting, he must make more out of those who do pay promptly, and so the honest farmer has to pay for the delinquencies—to call it by no stronger name—of his more reckless brethren. Go and ask any storekeeper in any village, and he will say this picture is not overdrawn. As a member of a Farmers' Society, let me exhort my fellow-farmers to act a little more fairly to that much-abused man, the country storekeeper. Pay as you go, and don't go until you pay.

KEEPING ACCOUNTS.

Profit and success in farming consist as much in selling and buying to advantage as in raising good crops and animals, and in order to buy and sell to advantage a man, in whatever business

he may be engaged, wants to know at a glance just how he stands. I would suggest that every farmer that can write and cipher should commence with a few simple accounts, say a cash account, entering on the one side all moneys received and on the other all paid out; a crop account for each crop, debiting it with seed, labor, harvesting, etc., and crediting it with money received in sales; an account for each branch of stock—cattle, horses, pigs and sheep, also poultry. A few minutes each week will suffice, and he can then at the end of the year tell what has paid him best; and if he finds he is losing on any branch of his farming, either drop that branch or find out the leak and stop it. I would also like to suggest here that it is a wise precaution to keep a copy of any notes that you may give, making a memorandum on the back of the date when payment is required, etc. Too often we find a man taken completely unaware by having a note presented for payment which he had no idea was due yet.

CREAM SEPARATORS.

I see that the Alexandra Hand Separator is now offered at as low a price as \$100, with a capacity to separate 25 gallons an hour. This is getting down to a reasonable figure, and I believe it would pay, especially in this country of high-priced help, in a herd of a dozen cows, in increased yield of butter and better thrift of the calves, especially if the young stock were good grades.

GENERAL NEWS.

Have your cattle insects on them? Sulphur, tobacco and buback are good vermin killers. Bran is cheap now. Buy your supply now.

Do you expect young pigs in spring. Prepare for them now, and lay in a stock of feed sufficient to last all summer.

Haul out those pickets this month and sharpen them.

If you have enough timber, cut enough rails to fence in a good big lot for your hogs for the summer. A half-acre a piece is not too big. Get enough rails laid round the proposed piece to make a "bunkum," fenced horse-high, bull-strong and pig-tight.

Attend the institute regularly. Get a circular of the Winnipeg Cordage Co., and see if you cannot support it, either taking shares or ordering your twine from them.

Join the Farmers' Alliance, the Patrons of Industry, or the nearest club, and try "to improve yourself," and neighbors, morally and intellectually and financially. INVICTA.

Mr. John Ryerson Neff, M. L. A.

The farming interest have not been overlooked in the formation of the Northwest Territorial Cabinet by Premier Haultain. Mr. John Ryerson Neff, M. L. A. for Moosomin, has been chosen as one of the cabinet. This gives general satisfaction, and the farming community are well pleased, as Mr. Neff, besides being a first-class business man, is one of the most extensive and successful farmers of the locality. His varied experiences fit him for the exalted position. If his efforts in the past are a forecast of his future, his part in the administration will be well done.

Prior to settling in the Moosomin District (N. W. T.), Mr. Neff carried on farming and a general store at Troy, County of Wentworth, and St. George, County of Brant.