

THE FARMER'S ADVOCATE

AND HOME MAGAZINE

* AGRICULTURE, STOCK, DAIRY, POULTRY, HORTICULTURE, VETERINARY, HOME CIRCLE.*

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A Resolution Favoring a School of Agriculture.

This year there are several Manitoba boys attending the Guelph Agricultural College; there are also a few attending the short course at the Wisconsin Agricultural College; and from personal knowledge we know of many farmers who would gladly give their sons the advantage of a college course, particularly during the winter months, if the opportunity were afforded in our own Province. The Local Government is, according to its platform, in favor of establishing an agricultural school, but so far no move has been made, and while public money is readily granted for the universities and colleges for the manufacture of lawyers, doctors, and professional men, there is absolutely nothing done for the higher education of the agriculturist. Agriculture is the one industry upon which the prosperity of the whole country depends, and it should receive more attention from our Local Legislature. Every one who believes in education along practical lines, calculated to help the young men in becoming more successful farmers, should make their representatives in the Local House understand their views. If the people show that they really want a school of agriculture, doubtless they will get it, for legislators are ever ready to do what will bring them votes.

At the recent annual meeting of the Neepawa Agricultural Society a resolution was unanimously passed urging the need of a provincial school of agriculture. If all the leading agricultural bodies, breeders' associations, etc., would express themselves thus, it would not be long before some action would be taken.

Turn Down the Grade or Unsound Sire.

Some three or four years ago the Neepawa Agricultural Society passed a resolution that in the live-stock classes grades would only be eligible for competition when got by pure-bred registered sires, beginning the year following the passing of the resolution, with the youngest animals, foals, calves, etc., and each year thereafter following the classes up. This resolution has at each annual meeting of the Association since that time been fully discussed, and continued in force by a majority vote of the members. At the last annual meeting of the Association, held in December, it was again voted on and carried, this year including animals three years old and under. The principle is a sound one, and should be adopted by every agricultural society that receives financial aid from the public treasury. In practical application, such a rule applies more particularly to the horse departments, as, generally speaking, cattle, sheep or swine good enough to be taken to an agricultural show are the get of pure-bred sires. But there are many, far too many, stallions used for stud purposes that have no special breeding, and get patronage simply because of the low service fee. While it may not be in accord with our democratic ideas to prohibit altogether by law the use of these nondescript animals, still it is certainly not right that the public's money should be given to encourage in any way their use.

In horse breeding there is, however, abundant evidence everywhere, and we have seen it right in the show-ring at Neepawa, that something more than a certificate of registration in a recognized book should be required to entitle stallions to public patronage. There are stallions, pedigreed stallions, unsound and defective in formation, that transmit the most objectionable qualities to nine-tenths of their progeny, and the use of such horses in the stud is as baneful as that of the mongrel. We believe the agricultural society should go further and place in the same category as the scrub the hereditary unsound and malformed pedigreed stallion, and rigidly enforce the same rule throughout all the classes of young and old.

There is too much of a tendency to award prizes to anything brought forward, under the fear of driving away entries or causing trouble for the judges or the directors.

At the recently held annual meeting of the Regina Agricultural Society, it was decided that hereafter only registered animals, stallions, bulls, etc., should be eligible for competition. It will be remembered that the ADVOCATE strongly condemned the classification of this society in giving prizes for general purpose stallions, calling for no registration, at their last spring stallion show.

If we are to hold our own in live-stock breeding, and meet the ever-growing competition, we must move forward.

Let QUALITY be the watchword of every breeder as we go forward into this new century.

Use Clyde or Shire Stallion to Get General Purpose Horses.

To the Editor FARMER'S ADVOCATE:

I noticed in a recent issue of your paper a letter from "Director," of Cottonwood, advocating the use of general purpose stallions. Now, the first question to be decided, I think, is, what is meant by a general purpose horse? At the Regina Agricultural Association Spring Show, the general purpose class included everything which could not be registered, from a light coach horse to a heavy unregistered Clyde; in fact, judging from the horses exhibited in this class, the term general purpose horse seemed to constitute any class of horse which could not be registered as one of the pure breeds. It seems to me what is really required in a general purpose horse is not that he be a horse of no breeding, but a good, lively, active horse, weighing in fair condition from 1,300 to 1,400 lbs., and suitable for the purposes of the farmer who cannot afford to keep more than one or two teams, and which must be available for all kinds of work belonging to the ordinary farm. The sire necessary to produce such a horse need not necessarily be chosen from any particular breed, and, in fact, it will depend on what type of mare the dam is what kind of a sire must be used. My experience is that for the mares of this country, which are below the proper size, the best stallion to use is a pure-bred Clyde or Shire horse with plenty of life and action, well put together and weighing say 1,500 or 1,600 lbs. One thing I would always say, and that is, in breeding any kind of stock it is not only necessary to use registered sires, but that the greatest care must be exercised in examining the pedigree in order to ascertain exactly the different strains which are combined in the animal to which the pedigree belongs. Without such care it is impossible for a breeder to have any idea of what the qualities of the progeny are likely to be.

I do not say that an unregistered horse is more likely to be unsound than a pure-bred, but, as we have not the means of tracing his ancestry and of ascertaining the families to which he belongs, we are unable to protect ourselves in breeding by the information which the pedigree affords us, and then the constant use of the pedigree has a tendency to weed out those families of pure-breeds which have proved themselves to inherit any particular weakness. "Director" states that if intelligent selection has been made in regard to parentage that there is no danger of perpetuating the poor qualities of ancestors. But how are we to intelligently select without a pedigree, as without it we can only go back a generation or two at the furthest.

At the last summer fair in Regina we find that the first and second prize general purpose teams were bred from registered Clyde sires, and, in fact, had almost enough crosses to entitle them to be registered as pure-breeds. All through the general purpose class the same class of horses were the winners. Then, again, compare the class of horses bred by the farmer who is content to use a grade horse with those of the farmer who chooses the breed and kind of a horse that suits his fancy. If we do so we will always find that the latter is a man who is constantly improving the horses of the country, while the other is allowing them to retrograde.

"REGINA EXHIBITOR."

Institute Work.

It is encouraging to note that at the annual meetings of agricultural societies such a large number have enthusiastically taken up that branch of their work formerly left entirely to Farmers' Institutes. From the local press reports of some of these meetings, it would, however, appear that the inspiring motive was not so much the hope of any benefit that might come from this branch of the work as of obtaining the little extra grant from the Provincial treasury. The directors of agricultural societies are in a position to realize better than most others the great advantages of improved methods in every branch of agriculture, and should be ever anxious to encourage everything tending to that end. That there are immense possibilities for good along the lines of Institute work none will deny. The difficulties in the way of successful money-making agriculture in this country are many, as in every other country; new difficulties are ever occurring, but the fact that a large proportion of settlers have made a success of farming in these Western Provinces affords encouragement, as what one has done others may accomplish. Who is so foolish as to deny that there is much to be learned from the successful about their systems of cultivation, stock raising, dairying, etc. There is, however, a scarcity of suitable speakers available for this work. Few of our successful farmers are in a position to absent themselves from home duties to devote a week or two at a time to benefiting their fellow laborers, and it is worse than useless allowing impractical and unexperienced men to address meetings simply because they can talk. Nothing will disgust an audience quicker than listening to a man posing as a teacher who does not know what he talks about. This is the rock upon which many a farmers' association has been wrecked. He whose duty it is to guide a Farmers' Institute meeting should do so with a firm, judicious hand. Only men practical along the lines upon which they are speaking, and able to express themselves intelligently and concisely, should be allowed to address meetings, as Superintendent Gregg, of the Minnesota Institute system, says: "An Institute speaker who doesn't strike fire during the first five minutes he is speaking I call down without further waste of time." It is a delicate thing for a chairman to call down a speaker, yet it is surely better to run the risk of offending one man than to waste the time of a score or two of men and alienate their sympathies with the whole thing.

While much may be done by the individual societies, the main work must be guided and inspired by the unremitting efforts of the central department, and since the Department of Agriculture has taken hold of this work, we look to it to put forth renewed energy along this line of work. More new men are required to take up the work—practical, level-headed, successful men, who can tell of their experience in a plain, direct way; their political leanings should have absolutely no bearing on their employment, for a man suitable for this kind of work will have common sense enough to leave politics alone when on an errand of this kind. The Government need not be afraid to spend money on Institute work, for if it is well done the people will support it.

Portage La Prairie Agricultural Society and Farmers' Institute.

The Portage la Prairie Agricultural Society, at its annual meeting, held on December 10th, formally amalgamated with the Farmers' Institute, and celebrated the occasion by the holding of a banquet, which was a most successful affair. A number of the prominent farmers and citizens of the town delivered appropriate after-dinner speeches. The election of officers for the ensuing year resulted as follows: President, T. E. Wallace; Vice-President, Sheriff McLean; 2nd Vice-President, F. A. Brydon; Secretary-Treasurer, Wm. Shepperd; Auditor, D. McCowan; Directors—T. A. Newman, J. T. Charlton, E. H. Muir, W. McCowan, D. McVicar, J. P. Young, and W. R. Taylor.

How to Crowd the Institute.

If the right kind of a programme is prepared, the promise of the ladies to take part secured, the meeting properly advertised, and a suitable room, properly heated and lighted, furnished, nothing but a blizzard of the worst kind, or roads utterly impassable, can prevent a successful Institute. Wallace Farmer.