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EDITORIAL

A Big Item Overlooked

Classifying the seasons according to gardening operations, this is now the catalog time. Seedsmen are making their usual offerings of tested and proven varieties and new creations of the plant breeders art. The volume of trade done in Western Canada in garden seeds is, considering the number of families and the remarkable fertility of the soil, distressingly small. This conclusion is not reached by a perusal of seedsmen's statements, but by the unanimous opinions of no inconsiderable numbers of people who have had occasion to lament the scarcity of vegetables and fruits in Western rural districts. Vegetables have a value in the open market which is expressed by dollars and cents. They also have a value on a farmer's table expressed indirectly in dollars and cents, for they insure against doctors' bills, but directly, their value is estimated in the keenness of enjoyment of food and in that incalculable boon—good health. Men are known to us who are making from \$500 to \$1500 per acre off their gardens, and any farmer may get equal or greater returns on a slightly different basis of valuation.

There is nothing that will conduce more to the comfort of life, nor add so much to the pleasures of home as the keeping of a productive vegetable garden, and now is the time to think about it. Gardens like buildings, have to be planned. Success cannot be expected if a piece of left-over land is hurriedly worked up, seed indiscriminately selected and indifferently planted. A few evenings cannot be better employed than in studying up on the growing of vegetables and the smaller fruits, and in planning the planting of such a garden.

Where is the Modern Lochinvar?

When the United States steel industry was in a disorganized state, with every manager of every manufacturing plant cutting prices down to the bare line of legitimate profit, and every man expecting every other man some day to spring a belligerent surprise upon him, a few shrewd financiers conceived the idea of co-operation by combination and capitalization.

The steel trade in those days was very much in the same condition as the grain trade is today in our own country. We have several elevator companies scrambling for grain, and maintaining expensive competitive agencies, but the shareholders live anxious lives, and those to whom the service of the elevator is offered are dissatisfied. What we want is a financial genius to organize the elevator trade under one management so that the cost of operating can be reduced, then just at this

point government intervention should be introduced to see that only equitable and fair charges for service rendered should be possible.

This is a more difficult problem than organizing and capitalizing the steel trust, in that, with that undertaking, there was the gold-lined goal of unrestricted prices which could be charged that induced people to go into it, but with Mr. Morgan's wonderful achievement as an example, the West should produce some daring young financial Lochinvar to conceive such a trust. True, our inducements and reward for the work would not be reckoned in millions as were Mr. Morgan's, but people are coming to esteem the opportunity of serving humanity of greater value than money. Certainly it calls into play more subtle and more rare instincts and abilities and is the most worthy ambition that could animate the human animal.

Facing the Charge

Means for obtaining more out of our annual grain crop for the producer are being seriously considered these winter days. The problem is being attacked from two aspects. The Grain Growers' Associations are endeavoring to devise means of eliminating unnecessary tolls, either direct or indirect, in marketing, while the agricultural societies, by their seed fairs, are endeavoring to place the grower in a position to grow larger crops. Both are important. There must be more co-operation and unanimity on the part of the growers with respect to the marketing process and there is need of a constant vigilance on the part of each individual farmer to keep his average yields from declining.

In connection with the question of yields there is no one so foolish as to suppose that his farm is yielding all that it is capable of, even in the most favorable seasons. For after farmer and farm have done their best, there is still the fact that all the farm has not been seeded with the best seed or with the largest yielding varieties. Our average yields are far too low, even considering the indifferent cultivation that some land is sure to get in the rush of seeding. With oats, for instance, it is not a difficult matter to get a yield of from 70 to 100 bushels to the acre, yet our average yield of oats is about 30 bushels. The same thing is true in a similar degree, with wheat. Smut cost the Western farmer five cents a bushel on 3,000,000 bushels, of grain marketed up to the end of the year, or in money \$150,000. Cannot anyone see where he can do something for himself, first, and for the country at large afterwards. These are the truths that are being circulated at seed fairs. They have a direct personal application. They come home with a little more force than if the responsibility could be shifted upon some circumstance in the trade.

The Comfort of Knowing Our Business

Quite frequently one hears surprise expressed that so many farmers, who have the reputation of being hard workers, with no expensive habits, have not made a greater success of their calling. They are pushing and aggressive in the management of the physical side of the calling, but fall down in the executive management and the conduct of the business end of it. The farmer who hopes to make a real success must be strong in both respects.

The successful management of a farm, no less than the successful management of any commercial undertaking, demands a careful, systematic and accurate record of all transactions affecting it. A farmer may know in a general way the run of his business affairs, he may have a rough and ready way of determining whether certain phases of his operations are profitable or otherwise, but obviously his conclusions lack certainty that a careful system of bookkeeping would establish. He would also find that his rough and ready conclusions were, not infrequently, unwarranted.

Doubtless many farmers are deterred from starting a system of accounts because they are not familiar with the methods of keeping books. There are also some who have the knowledge but fail, through indifference, to apply it. Some also object to it because it takes time and they can't spare the time, so they say. The keeping farm books need take but very little time if at the end of each day the few entries for the day are made. Farm accounts are comparatively a simple matter and no farmer of ordinary intelligence, and ability need hesitate to keep a record of his business transactions because he fears it will be a difficult and intricate piece of work. Like many other things he is called upon to do he will find that a start and a determination "to do" will carry him through. He will find also that a system of bookkeeping intelligently carried out will be no small factor in bringing him success. He will know with certainty which departments of his farm are paying and which are not. He will have a clearer, stronger grip of the line of policy he ought to pursue along each department.

In another column Mr. Bradshaw, a practical farmer of the Morden district, sets out the system of keeping accounts, and with due deference to others who have outlined their systems, we think Mr. Bradshaw's about the most practicable we have ever examined.

Our Mutual Help Feature

Readers will have noticed the announcement which first appeared at the head of the Farm department of the January 13th number, and which this week heads the Stock department. The object of putting a definite subject before our readers each week for discussion is to give many who would like to contribute their

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