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EDITORIAL

Educational Work for Live-Stock Exhibitors

The present is none too early to begin the fitting and training of stock for the summer exhibitions. An animal cannot be fitted for the show ring in a month, or in two months and the earlier the fitting begins, providing it is judiciously carried on, the better chance the owner has of having his exhibits in creditable shape when they come beneath the scrutiny of the judge in the ring some months hence. It pays to be forehanded and the inexperienced exhibitor who is contemplating making a selection from his herd stud or flock, for exhibition at next summer's shows should begin now to get his animals into shape.

The FARMER'S ADVOCATE is preparing for publication some matter along the line of fitting stock for exhibitions and those who have had successful experience are invited to take the matter up. The livestock breeder who by his suggestions helps another man to become an exhibitor of stock stimulates interest in the pure-bred livestock business, and even though he does increase the number of competitors in the show-ring directly helps himself, and the breed he is interested in. The general diffusion of information on any phase of any agricultural industry is beneficial to the industry as a whole and profitable to everyone concerned. Agriculture may differ in this respect from other lines of human endeavor, but the rule holds. The more breeders who can be induced to bring exhibits to the show rings, the better it will be for the shows, the better for the pure-bred stock business and the better for the individuals concerned. Help the thing along, if you are an exhibitor with your experience and observations.

Interest in Special Courses

The attendance at the special short course given at Manitoba Agricultural College during convention week and the enthusiastic interest taken in the lectures given, serve as another evidence that farmers of the West are anxious to become well versed in the various departments with which they have to deal on their prairie farms. It is not so very many years since such a series of lectures would be laughed at by practical farmers. Why the change? Is it not due to the fact that even those who, for one reason or other, have been obliged to content themselves with meagre schooling, realize that true advancement depends on education. They were perhaps, unable to become acquainted with subjects on school curriculums, but they want to know the details of methods that mean progress on the farm.

This thirst for general agricultural knowledge introduces another bright phase. Does it not betoken a tendency, induced either by desire or compulsion, to adopt lines of farming other than wheat or oat growing? An eagerness to know how to improve home surroundings and the conveniences of the buildings is also in evidence.

The next decade promises desirable changes in methods adopted on farms of the Canadian West. Indications point also to an improvement in farm home surroundings that will do much to make the prairies renowned as suitable for home making as well as for making money.

Use the Manure

Discussion is offered in another part of this issue regarding the application of farmyard manure. We do not presume to suppose that more than a small percentage of our readers will consider this question of manuring of any serious importance. We have been hugging so long to the hoary old bugbear of inexhaustible fertility that it is hard to get away from the idea that our soils are not reeking with plant food, or to convince ourselves that we cannot go on forever tickling the surface of the earth and watching it laugh back the golden grain. But unfortunately the earth is becoming weary now of our tickling and gives us sow thistle and other useless plants instead of No. 1 hard wheat. So to some, the question of manuring is forcing attention.

Farming, properly carried on, permits of never ending production, but the fertility removed from the soil by one crop must be returned by the next or by the use of manures. Only then can crops continue to be grown without halt and the soil be kept up to the point of maximum production. But this kind of farming is rare — rare especially in this part of the country where we think we have the accumulated fertility of all the ages since the glacial

epoch as the basis for a permanent system of agriculture. But a permanent system of agriculture can be built only on farming methods that are not wasteful of soil fertility, that return plant food in proportion almost to what the crop takes in growth.

Manuring as a regular practice is coming more and more into vogue in Western Canada; but there are many thousands of acres of cultivated land that require fertility-containing and moisture-holding farmyard manure to bring them up to their most profitable point of production, and there is on many a farm so circumstanced tons of accumulated animal manure that might be more economically used than it is at present, when its use chiefly is in littering up the barnyard and surroundings, or in hastening the rotting down of the buildings around which it is stacked. The soil of these farms needs it and the suggestions offered here for its application may be useful in forming a plan for its profitable use.

Better Ventilation Necessary

A stable twenty-eight feet by forty-six feet will accommodate twenty head of horses. If the ceiling is nine feet high there will be 11,592 cubic feet of air space in the stable. An average-sized horse requires 3,401 cubic feet of air for twenty-four hours. Twenty horses would require 68,020 cubic feet of air in that time to supply the oxygen needed for the performance of the bodily functions, or some six times the quantity contained in the stable. This is one reason for ventilation.

Another fact to be remembered is that air once breathed has lost a good deal of its sustaining power. When three or four horses are worked abreast, it may be noticed that the inside horses show more effects of labor than those working on the outside. If close observation is made it will be found that the inside horses are effected most when the outer ones are permitted to travel a little in advance and incline their heads in. The inside horses are then forced to breathe air that has been partly exhausted by their fellow workers, and are required to breathe larger quantities of it to procure oxygen required in the system for the performance of work. Another argument for ventilation, for if a horse has difficulty in securing a sufficient supply of fresh air when hedged in between two other horses in an open field, he will have rather greater difficulty in securing an adequate supply when confined in a stable and forced to breathe the respirations of twenty or more.

Stable ventilation is a large problem, and seemingly more difficult of solution in this country than in milder climates, but we are not doing anything like all that can be done to provide stabled live stock with the maximum supply of pure air. In most stables the volume