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EDITORIAL.

The Call for a Railway Commission.

The communication from the vigorous pen of Mr. John McMillan, for many years representative of the south riding of Huron County, Ont., in the Dominion Parliament, which appears elsewhere in this issue, we commend to the careful study of our readers and all interested in the problem of freight rates. Both as a parliamentarian and an extensive shipper over Canadian railways, both east and west, and as an exporter to Great Britain, he has had special opportunities for acquiring first-hand information upon the subject of transportation, which he has supplemented by a careful study into what has been accomplished elsewhere in the effort to regulate freight rates in the interests of the people. He makes out probably the best case we have yet seen for an efficient railway commission in Canada: first by presenting evidence to show the imperative need for such a remedy, and, in the next place, by indicating that there is good ground to believe that the means proposed will be to a very large extent effective. The time has certainly come when measures must be taken on behalf of the people of Canada, who have contributed so enormously toward the construction of railways, to prevent them from being discriminated against in favor of foreign shippers and foreign consumers, as has been and is still being done, for example, in favor of Western States produce. These discriminations have become in reality a heavy and intolerable tax upon the Canadian agriculturist, and for this reason we gladly give space to Mr. McMillan's able and informing letter. We should be glad to hear from others upon this important question, as it will assuredly demand attention at the forthcoming session of the new Canadian Parliament.

The Horse Breeding Industry.

The horse-breeding business of the present day is rapidly adjusting itself to new conditions. The surplus stock of a few years ago is fairly well worked off, and those who are now breeding and rearing horses are recognizing more than ever before that animals for special lines of usefulness are the only ones it will pay to produce. The search for remounts that occurred throughout the horse-breeding sections of Canada last year revealed the fact that it is only of the lighter class that there is a supply in excess of the demand. The little road stock, of no particular character, from trotting, pacing or running sires, have not been picked up for export because they filled no particular field of usefulness, but for sound, active stock, of suitable weight and activity for the army, good prices have been realized. In fact, it is being felt that we are on the verge of a shortage of suitable army horses, and to meet this it has been recommended to establish a Government ranch and remount depot in our Canadian Northwest, organized and operated by the Remount Department of the British Army, the British and Canadian Governments being asked to co-operate to put it into operation. This scheme has been mooted as a result of Lord Wolseley's repeated remark that the mounted infantry force must be greatly increased in order to keep pace with the requirements of modern warfare.

Such a recommendation indicates that there is a broad field for horse-breeding being developed.

The stamp of horse needed for military purposes is much after the type of the English hunter, with short legs, compact form, good shoulders, back, ribs and loins. Good weights are also necessary, and the more breeding the better. Horses of this class will pay to raise, and will sell for their full value for years to come. The plainer ones, of moderate quality, will not bring as much as the better class having higher degrees of staying power, such as strength, speed and endurance.

Besides the useful road horse, the high-class harness horse and the jumper, all of which are in demand, and will be selected from among the remount stock raised, there is the draft horse that is safe to produce and is always a seller if sound. Weight and soundness are of chief importance, and when these are combined with quality and good fitting we have a high-priced horse. It was only a few weeks ago that five geldings and one mare from Waterloo Co., Ont., sold in Chicago for three thousand dollars. These were winners in a keen international competition; but this sale goes to show that it pays to produce the best. A few years ago they would have brought little more than half the amount, as all horse values have risen. For instance, during the year ending June 30th, 1897, there were 813,670 horses sold in Ontario for \$2,700,479, whereas in the twelve months preceding June 30th, 1899, 615,524 horses brought \$3,204,006—198,146 horses less, while the total value was \$503,527 more, or a difference of about \$20 per head—an extraordinary advance in prices in two years. Nor is this advance likely to cease at an early date, as the material from which to rear good horses is not at command. This is true especially of mares, while in many sections there is a dearth of first-rate sires. It is true that many draft stallions are being imported, but the low service fee that can be collected from the average farmer who rears one or two foals does not warrant importers in bringing many of the best class of horses. Some are blemished, others have outstanding weak points, and again there are among them unsure foal-getters, so that with our best efforts we cannot hope to soon have on hand an overproduction of really good horses. It therefore behooves every horse-breeder to make the very best use of his material on hand in order to get the most out of it. The foals and young horses should be well fed and cared for, the in-foal mare should be suitably nourished and given the most healthful conditions possible, and the stallion owner should winter his horse so as to have him in best vigor by the early spring months. A certain amount of roughing it is as important as good food and comfortable quarters, while the question of ventilation, and, in fact, all sanitation, should be duly attended to. Since the best methods of breeding and rearing first-class horse stock is too little understood, we invite correspondence from horsemen who have had success in producing vigorous foals and rearing them up to be good mature horses.

The Work of a Forestry Association.

In view of the series of meetings about to be held throughout Manitoba and the West, under the direction of Mr. Stewart, head of the new Canadian Forestry Association, the following extracts of the twenty-fifth annual meeting of the Minnesota Forestry Association, furnished us by the Secretary, Mr. Geo. W. Strand, will be read with interest.

After the business session, a joint meeting was held with the Horticultural Society, Pres. J. H. Cross taking the chair. A number of interesting papers were presented, but lack of time did not permit a discussion on them.

President Cross, in his opening remarks, outlined the work of the Association, past and present, and its relation to the various other forestry divisions now carried on by the State. "Its

province is to be enthusiastic and even radical by nature. It must be continued as the organized popular power back of advanced forestry movement. As such, it must keep the people informed, prod them when they become indifferent, and appeal to them in order to awaken an earnest interest, which will react in the law-making power."

"A Lumberman's View of the Forestry Situation" was ably given by Col. W. P. Allen, of St. Paul. Among the facts brought out, he stated that the lumberman has little to apologize for, as he has done his share towards the building up of the country and the advancement of civilization. The barriers in the way of the rapid inauguration of a rational forestry system in this country will be mainly owing to the large area to be protected and difficulty of obtaining funds to meet same. Also in inducing the Government to attempt a general system of forest management. Forest areas that are left untouched are reasonably safe from destructive fires, and the Government should withdraw all its timber lands from the market. Private parties cannot hold same to advantage, whereas the Government can, and should, for the benefit of future generations, thereby regulating the sale and use of timber. Our conditions differ much from those of Germany, but their spirit is correct, and we hope to learn much by studying their methods.

Prof. S. B. Green, who spent some months the past season studying "Forestry Conditions of Germany" and other places, gave a very instructive talk on the above topic. It was not without considerable self-sacrifice that this system was established, for at one time Germany's forests suffered abuse nearly as much as ours. The value of timber, system of protection and taxation were touched upon. Although we cannot expect to adopt these methods, we can obtain many good suggestions from this source to base upon. A notable fact was, that good roads and good forests accompanied each other. Lands not suited for agricultural purposes are planted to forests. Our native jack pine is looked upon by them as one of their most valuable trees for the sandy plains, and seed of same commands a good price. It is a characteristic of the Germans not to lay out money in land unless it pays, and their foresight in the forest plantations is no exception to this rule.

Dr. Leo M. Crofts, of Minneapolis, brought out many facts in his talk on the "Wisdom of the National Park Movement" to emphasize its necessity. Aside from the practical value such a park would be as a forest reserve and the protection of our water supply, no other region presents as many points in its favor on the aesthetic side. Its diversity, beauty and accessibility as a health resort commends itself, and for these reasons something must be done at once if it is to be preserved as such.

Conditions have changed much since the time of the Association's organization, and now, instead of the main issue being the encouragement of prairie planting, it is merging into that great question which demands the best of statesmanship to handle—that of the protection and reforestation of our native timber tracts. Although much good can yet be done in all of these lines, the latter will be pre-eminent in the assertion of its rights.

After the lapse of a quarter of a century since its organization, those interested in the solution of the forestry problems have some reason to feel encouraged by its recent outlook.

The general agitation of these matters and growth of sentiment in their favor would seem to indicate that we have come to that point where the people see the necessity and should demand that forestry receive its due consideration and place. Our legislative bodies must devote more time to their consideration—they must view them fairly and with increasing favor.

The past year has brought out many facts to substantiate these statements, making a year indicative of much coming good to the forestry problems which confront Minnesota.

Chief Veterinary Inspector.

REPLY TO "ENQUIRER."—The Chief Veterinary Inspector for Canada is Dr. Duncan McEachran, Montreal, an attaché of the Dominion Department of Agriculture.