

The Farmer's Advocate and Home Magazine

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EDITORIAL.

Don't neglect to harvest sufficient ice for the dairy this winter. Read the article on ice harvesting in the dairy department of this issue.

Why not start now the practice of putting manure on the fields as fast as it is made. This practice saves fertility and labor on ordinary fields.

Plenty of good clean feed, exercise and comfortable quarters for the flock will go a long way to bring up the egg yield now that prices are high.

If that orchard is worth having on the farm it is worth taking care of. Plan now to prune, spray, manure and cultivate when the trees need it.

The live-stock industry in Canada will never thrive as it should until farmers can put greater trust in those who handle the product after it leaves their hands.

When the scrub bull campaign finally gets under way in Ontario, what county will be the first to cooperate with the Department of Agriculture for better live stock?

There are hundreds of young men, particularly in the dairy districts of Eastern Ontario, who should take advantage of the herdsman's short course being put on at the Kemptville Agricultural School this winter.

Success in herd testing is not dependent upon long years of experience. This has been instanced during the past few months by the fact that at least two comparatively young and inexperienced breeders have made outstanding world's records.

Don't neglect making use of the opportunity for reading during the long winter months. Nothing so broadens one as plenty of good reading, and books and magazines are too plentiful for any household to be without a liberal supply.

A summary of seed and crop conditions appearing in this issue indicates the advisability of saving any grain or other seed fit for use next spring. This applies particularly to oats and barley among the spring grains. It is gratifying to note that seed corn appears to be plentiful enough to meet the demand.

Plan now to attend the live-stock breeders' meetings held in Toronto during the first week of February. The Horticultural Convention and the Fairs and Exhibitions Convention are also on at the same time, so that a trip to Toronto should be well worth while for every farmer interested in good farming.

The maximum retail price of imported cheese in England was raised from 36 to 40 cents per pound on December 23, by authority of the British Ministry of Food. This should allow of four cents more to the Canadian producer on cheese purchased for Great Britain, unless it can be shown that the cost of handling has increased since early in the year.

We wonder how much of the demand on the part of the railways for an increased tariff for heated refrigerator cars is due to an increased demand for such cars. Not so long ago the Canadian packers were paying demurrage charges on refrigerator cars and using them for storage purposes. At the same time, when the Canadian National Railways had only six available cars on the entire Eastern Division, there were about 600 carloads of apples in Nova Scotia awaiting cars for shipment to Ontario and points West.

Radial Lines.

We are glad to note the recent expression of opinion by the United Farmers' convention regarding the proposed policy of Hydro-Radial expansion in Ontario. Everyone, we believe is agreed that radial lines are a distinct aid to transportation and should be encouraged when the need for them becomes apparent. Certainly, however, there has not yet arisen in Ontario the need for radial lines that will parallel existing steam roads. Canada has over \$3,000,000,000 invested in railways, a good share of which is in Ontario, and it must never be forgotten that every dollar invested in steam roads or in Hydro-Radial lines is a tax on the people. It naturally follows, therefore, that more roads should not be built until the need for them is clearly evidenced.

Not only is this true, but it seems evident to us that good roads are needed worse in Ontario than radial lines, and such being the case the general policy of the Provincial Government should be to take care of this problem first. The need for a better system of roads is clear to all, and it is equally apparent that a greater number of people will be served by an improved road system than by Hydro-Radial expansion. Premier Drury has stated that the finances of the Province are not in such shape as to stand needless drains upon the public treasury, and with this to remember it seems only logical to meet first the more urgent demand for improved country travel. With a system of good roads, automobiles and trucks will become more prevalent, so much so possibly as to render the need for radial service in certain districts less urgent. The extended use of trucks for freighting might conceivably render the radial lines less profitable also.

Undoubtedly certain parts of the Province need radials now, and need them badly enough to warrant the expenditure. If so let them be built, but under no circumstances should the policy of expansion be aggressive enough to prevent road improvement. Let the money spent now serve all of the people all the time, rather than some of the people some of the time.

Plant Pathologists Necessary.

A correspondent in this issue calls attention to the need for more thorough and extensive investigation into the cause and control of our harmful plant diseases. He points out that while a single plant disease, namely the Black Stem Rust of wheat caused in 1916 a loss in the Canadian wheat crop amounting to \$150,000,000, to say nothing of the serious diseases to grain and other crops, the question of disease control is receiving but meagre consideration. Undoubtedly this contention is right, and it is putting the case mildly, indeed, to say that very little research work is being done in Canada in this important matter. There is, of course, good work being done so far as limited funds and a limited number of men can accomplish it, but when it is realized that successful research and investigation requires long periods of close work on what seem comparatively minor details of a subject, it immediately becomes apparent that a few men can accomplish only a pitifully small amount of the great mass of work needing to be done.

Moreover, it should be realized by the people generally that a capable investigator or research student is worthy of his hire, and that at a liberal consideration. There are persons, of course, to whom science is a hobby and salaries a purely secondary consideration, but they are few. No man who is capable of solving some part of the big problem of disease control in our important crops should be forced to worry because salaries for this work are insufficient for the necessities of life. The penurious policy of trading on the scientist's love for his work has seen its best days, because good men in science are becoming fewer under its evil influence.

In Germany there may still be a goodly number of those who make a hobby of life, but experience in this country has shown that good work well rewarded is more useful than the pursuit of hobbies. In Germany a professorship is the scientist's alternative for a living wage, but here we tend toward a different standard—it has been proven better to live on an adequate salary than a titular distinction.

We need in Canada some carefully-planned policy of research work in order that we may not always need to endure the embarrassment of receiving fundamental truths about our agricultural industry from other than our own sources. Plant pathology, important as it is, in the study of farm problems, is only one of many lines of research that are badly needed. Let us outline a policy of careful study in agriculture that will draw the good men to research in larger numbers—and then let us keep them in this country with adequate salaries to do the good work for which we have trained them.

The Resolution Habit.

It has always been the habit at farmers' conventions to adopt long and numerous resolutions which were sometimes listened to by the powers that be, and sometimes not. Under such circumstances it did not seem to matter so much if the recommendations were extreme in spots, for they were not looked upon by the public as of any great significance; nevertheless they were, when faulty, sometimes used against the industry which fathered and endorsed them. The Dominion Grange was, perhaps, the most efficient organization we ever had so far as grinding out resolutions was concerned. The memorials were, in some cases, models of composition and rhetoric, and the claims made were, in most instances, just and reasonable, although they might have appeared at the time more radical than the same would today. The habit still lives, and the U. F. O. at their last annual convention started in to adopt resolutions at the rate of one per minute until the delegates found the pace too strenuous and asked that they be given more time to consider the recommendations they were being called upon to sanction. Twenty-three resolutions in all were presented to the Convention, and they were not given the discussion and consideration to which their importance entitled them. Such matters as a uniform rate for Hydro-Electric power throughout the Province of Ontario or the manner in which the National Railways should be managed and controlled ought not to be too hastily decided. They are questions of no little significance, and farmers, we are sure, will take the right stand when they are thoroughly conversant with the facts.

It is not the purpose of this discussion to point out where the convention acted wisely or otherwise in regard to all these resolutions, but to urge upon farmers generally the advisability of acting or endorsing resolutions only after sufficient deliberation has been given.

It was, in fact, a good move to arrange for the resolution committee to meet the first Tuesday in November to consider the resolutions to be presented at the annual meeting following. The clubs will be provided with copies of these resolutions in time to consider them and instruct their delegates how to vote. Even this system is not ideal, for expert advice is often necessary before one can view a question from all angles, and many a delegate might change his mind after coming to a convention if discussion were permitted there. The committee, however, ought to scan the resolutions very carefully and endeavor to limit the number as much as possible. Now that farmers are in a better position than formerly to demand consideration of their claims it behooves them to move cautiously and act wisely.