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THE FARMER'S ADVOCATE & HOME MAGAZINE

WILLIAM WELD, EDITOR AND PROPRIETOR

THE LEADING AGRICULTURAL JOURNAL PUBLISHED IN THE DOMINION.

The FARMER'S ADVOCATE is published on or about the 1st of each month, is impartial and independent of all classes of parties, handsomely illustrated with original engravings, and furnishes the most profitable, practical and reliable information for farmers, dairymen, gardeners and stockmen, of any publication in Canada.

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Our Monthly Prize Essays.

CONDITIONS OF COMPETITION.

1.—No award will be made unless one essay at least comes up to the standard for publication.

2.—The essays will be judged by the ideas, arguments, conciseness and conformity with the subject, and not by the grammar, punctuation or spelling, our object being to encourage farmers who have enjoyed few educational advantages.

3.—Should one or more essays, in addition to the one receiving the first prize, present a different view of the question, a second prize will be awarded, but the payment will be in agricultural books. First prize essayists may choose books or money, or part of both. Selections of books from our advertised list must be sent in not later than the 15th of the month in which the essays appear. Second prize essayists may order books for any amount not exceeding \$3.00, but no balance will be remitted in cash. When first prize essayists mention nothing about books, we will remit the money.

A prize of \$5 will be given for the best essay showing the relative profits of *Soiling Cattle, Partial Soiling, or Grazing.* The subject to be considered from the standpoint of the older and richer provinces. All essays to be in by the 15th of April.

Prof. Saunders, of the Central Experimental Station, at Ottawa, is distributing, gratuitously, packages of the Ladoga Wheat to all who ask for it. He claims that from the reports he has received, that it is ten days earlier than the Red Fife Wheat, and considers it will be of inestimable value to farmers in the north, and even in the eastern parts of this Dominion. Should any of our readers send for it, we have no doubt but they will receive a package.

Editorial.

A Protest Against the Increased Rate of Postage on Periodicals.

A large and very influential deputation of publishers and others interested, consisting of Messrs. T. R. Clough, J. Dale and W. Weld, who were appointed as a deputation from Ontario, and were met in Ottawa by Messrs. Richard White and L. E. Dawson, of Montreal, who represented the Quebec publishers, were introduced by Colonel Denison, M. P., to the Postmaster-General, Hon. John Haggart, the morning of March 13th. The following members also accompanied the deputation:—Senator Reed, Messrs. Cargill, Cockburn, Small, Corby, Davin, Dr. Roome, Wilson (Lennox), Smith, Madill, Carpenter, Gullet, Marshall, Ward, Peter White (Renfrew), Brown and Hudspeth. The deputation intimated that they viewed with alarm and dismay the effect of the proposed exclusion from free postal carriage of all periodical publications published less frequently than once a week. They brought to the notice of the Postmaster-General the following considerations, in the hope that he would see the wisdom and justice of removing the excluding clause referred to from the proposed amendment:—

1. If it is for the sake of increasing the general postal revenue that a postal rate is proposed to be imposed on periodical publications published less frequently than once a week, then your petitioners would respectfully submit that the revenue could thereby be increased but very inconsiderably, that is, in proportion to the total expenditure required for the carrying through the mails of periodical publications generally.

2. Your petitioners would further submit that the publications that would be affected by the proposed excluding clause are, as a class, more deserving of public bounty than are those that are not so excluded, in the fact that they are in the best sense of the word, *educational*, that is to say, they serve (as no other sort of publication does) to develop, foster and diffuse the best intelligence in respect to the highest interests of the nation, involved in all its efforts towards industrial, social, literary, moral and religious sustentation and improvement.

3. The periodical publications affected by the excluding clause may be described as being devoted each to a special interest, whose true advancement can be secured only by specialized effort, but which when secured reacts upon the well-being of the whole community. These interests embrace nearly every useful member of the commonwealth, and among them may be enumerated: agriculture, horticulture, the apary, stock-breeding, poultry-keeping, architecture, milling, mining, lumbering, manufacture and trade in their several branches, law, medicine, pharmacy, dentistry, the school, the church, and the Sunday-school; and by injuring the publications devoted to these interests the nation would be injuriously affected where it can least afford to be injuriously affected, viz., in the best means which the world has yet devised for diffusing useful information, making known new economic facts, processes and methods, developing a spirit of enquiry, investigation and experiment, and in short for discharging every known function of true education, that is to say, in its periodical literature of a highly specialized character.

4. And from the fact that these periodical publications which would be affected by the proposed excluding clause appeal only to the more intelligent members of their several constituencies; it follows that their circulation is comparatively small, and also incapable of much increase. Hence, too, their advertising patronage is small, and thus their chief source of revenue is in an almost inexhaustible subscription list. In fact in many cases these publications are not wholly supported by the income derived from their publication. Their working expenses are frequently charged to other departments of business in the houses by which they are published, and their editorial supervision is oftentimes largely gratuitous. Thus it follows (so your petitioners believe) that the expense necessary to

maintain in efficiency these periodicals is proportionately far greater than that necessary to maintain publications issued more frequently. So that the proposed impost will affect injuriously those publications which are not only most deserving of public bounty but which also at the same time are least able to exist without it.

5. Should the proposed postal rate become law there can only be one result: the deterioration of the educational quality and hence the deterioration of the educational value of the publications. It will be impossible to increase the subscription price. Every publisher knows this cannot be done. And the profits now made are, as has been said before, in many instances merely hypothetical. Hence the publications will be either decreased in size or cheapened in respect to their editorial and contributory production, and hence, too, their influence for good upon the nation at large will be greatly lessened.

6. One class of periodicals which would be most injuriously affected by the proposed rate would be those prepared for the use of Sunday school children and teachers. These publications have to compete with the publications of the immense denominational publishing houses of New York, Philadelphia and Chicago. The imposition of a postal rate on our Sunday school publications would not affect the transmission of American Sunday school literature through the Canadian mails, since this would still be carried free of cost. The result would be that the proposed rate would act as a prohibitory tax, detrimental alike to our own established industries, our naturally conservative ideas of morality and religion, and the growth of our own national patriotic sentiment.

7. Another class which would be most injuriously affected would be those periodicals which appeal to the critical, literary and artistic taste of the people. We have few of such publications in Canada, and they have all to compete with the magazines, reviews and general periodical literature of the United States. These latter would still be carried through our Canadian mails, without revenue to our own Post Office department, and our own periodicals of similar character would have to compete with them. When it is remembered how few periodicals are which appeal to Canadian general culture, and how disastrous have been the failures of many such that have been started and run for a while, it may reasonably be asked: Is our Government doing a patriotic thing when it places still further hindrances on their production and allows foreign periodicals that incite foreign ideas to promote the growth of a foreign sentiment, to pass our Customs line free of duty and be carried on our own postal routes free of charge?

8. Furthermore, should this rate be imposed the effect would be that such periodicals as did not go to the wall because of it would try to evade it by issuance weekly, thus putting the Post Office department to extra expense and trouble without compensating gain.

9. Lastly, your petitioners would respectfully call your attention to the manifest injustice of this proposed clause. Every argument that can possibly be adduced in behalf of the free transmission of daily and weekly periodicals can be advanced with increased weight in favor of the free transmission of periodicals published less frequently. The one class is as essential to the interests of the state as the other. If the one class educates so does the other; if the one class conveys news so does the other, and news of much greater value to the intellectual, social, material and moral well-being of the nation. If the one class is capable of being abused by large private advertising houses, so is the other, and the remedy in either case would rightly lie in maintaining a discretionary clause, as in the present act.

For these considerations, and for others, especially that vested interests would be jeopardized and a blow be struck to an important part of the great publishing industry of the nation, they respectfully urged upon the Postmaster-General the removal of the clause.

After the deputation had stated their case Mr. Peter White, M. P. for Renfrew, remarked that in the first place the Governor-in-Council should not be authorized to fix the rate of registration; it should be done by act of Parliament. He objected to the increase in the rate of registration on the ground that it would bear heavily on the farmer and small merchant, they having frequent remittances of small sums to make. He suggested that if the rate of postage was increased to two cents on drop letters it should apply only to places where