

FARM AND DAIRY

AND RURAL HOME
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Readers shall not pay their trade at the expense of our subscribers, who are our friends, through the medium of these columns; but we shall not attempt to adjust trifling disputes between subscribers and honorable business men who advertise, nor pay the debts of honest bankrupts.

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PETERSBORO, ONT.

"Read not to contradict and to confute, nor to believe and take for granted, but to weigh and consider."—Bacon.

Recruiting and Labor

IF a census were taken of all the recruits now training in Canada, it would be found that a goodly proportion of them came direct from the farm. The general tenor of recruiting addresses, however, would lead one to believe that the young farmers of Canada are more attracted to war prices for what they can produce on the land, than by the urgent need of their country for soldiers. We recently listened to a recruiting address in which the young men of the rural districts were severely berated for their lack of patriotism. The orator seemed entirely unaware of the fact that over half of his own company were from the farm, and he should have known, if he did not, that he was speaking in a country where the call of the city had long ago reached a good proportion of the young men, leaving the farms in the hands of gray haired men and English emigrants. A large proportion of the latter enlisted at the first outbreak of war, leaving behind them a very serious labor situation. Taking all things into consideration, we believe that rural enlistment instead of being far below what it should be, has been carried to the point where few more can be spared without seriously curtailing production. We say these things, not to discourage recruiting, but to correct a false impression as to the part that rural Canada is playing in the war, and to emphasize further the opportunities of service for the Empire that exist right at home on the farm. The situation as it affects the farmer was well expressed by the British Minister of Agriculture when in an address he said:

"I say to the highest skilled man in agriculture, if you leave your present post to go into the army or navy or into the munition factory, your motive may be good, but your judgment is faulty. You can perform a greater service to England to-day by staying where you are. The munition works and the food producers have all their bit to do. For the soldier who risks his prospects and his life there is naturally more glory and

honor. Still the work of the food producer is equally important and is also honorable if the farmer does it in the right spirit, eschewing unnecessary pleasures and devoting himself wholeheartedly to his work."

Labor Recruiting Schemes

MILITARY and civil officials in Canada have at times given evidence of a comprehension of the importance of maintaining agricultural production. The schemes that they have suggested whereby production may be continued and men of military age be freed for active service, however, do not show any deep insight into agricultural conditions. Two recent suggestions may be cited as examples—that farm help be recruited in the United States and that school boys of fifteen and over be given their academic standing in order that they may spend the season on the farm. Let us consider the former proposal first.

The United States has followed the same policy of depleting her rural districts to build up her cities that we have here in Canada, and as a result labor is almost as scarce on the farms of the United States as it is with us in Canada. If surplus men are found at all to the south of the line, it will be in the cities, and the few hundred that may be recruited for work on Ontario farms will not be of the highest character. In fact, they are more apt to be men as low in morals as they are deficient in farm experience. What farmer would care to take such as these into his own home and have them associate with his family. The labor situation in the country, where the farm hand lives with the family, is essentially different from the situation in the city where the worker lives or boards by himself and associates with his employer's family not at all. The social side of the rural labor problem evidently has not been considered by those who suggest importing labor from United States cities. We believe, too, that the number that could be induced to come, would be altogether too small to have any material effect on the labor situation.

And now for the school boys. Farm trained boys of fifteen or over could be of much service. The chances are, however, that the great majority of these boys have been accustomed to help their fathers on the farms during the busy seasons, even in normal times, and the assistance of these boys would therefore do little to relieve an abnormal situation. Untrained city boys would be even more helpless on the modern farm where labor is done by horse power, rather than man power, than a raw country boy would be in a machine shop. They would hardly be getting acquainted with the work of the farm when they returned to school in the fall. The proposal, we admit, has some merit, but to consider it seriously in the light of the tremendous need for labor in rural Ontario, is almost ridiculous.

Military and civil authorities might as well recognize that economic conditions already have drained the farms of every surplus man, and the men that rural Canada might under their conditions have given for the defence of the Empire are already to be found in our towns and cities, and must be recruited there if at all.

The Herd Sire

A recent dispersion sale in Western Ontario pure-bred bull calves, well bred in dairy lines, were practically given away at prices which would scarcely pay for the milk they had consumed since birth. They would have sold for as much as the local butcher as veal. And yet in that district the average herd sire is a mongrel and the average herd shows its mongrel breeding. We have witnessed the same thing at dispersion sales in many other so-called dairying districts of Ontario. Why is the value of a pure-bred sire so little appreciated? Its breeding value has been demonstrated sufficiently, we

would think, to satisfy the most unprogressive dairyman. Here is one instance related by E. S. Archibald, Dominion Animal Husbandman.

At one of the Experimental Farms in Quebec province a bunch of cows were purchased which, in the hands of their former owners had averaged 3,000 pounds of milk a year. With good stabling and feeding, their average climbed to 5,600 pounds of milk, but this seemed to be the limit of their ability as producers. Their heirs calves, however, from a first cross with a pure-bred Holstein bull, averaged 10,000 pounds of milk in their first lactation period, exceeding their mature dams in production by 4,400 pounds of milk. At present market prices the value of the increased production of one of these heifers for a single season would have paid for a good pure-bred bull calf at the prices for which we have seen some of them sold.

The experiment in breeding just related may have been unusually successful. Probably it was. But results almost equally striking have been secured hundreds of times by practical farmers who are improving grade herds by means of pure-bred sires. The pure-bred sire has been bred in one line for hundreds of years, and he can, therefore, improve a herd in a way that is not possible with the best grade sire. Then why must pure-bred calves be sacrificed when there are still so many mongrels in the country? We give it up.

The Farmer's Widening Horizon

IN the days not so very long ago, when the farmer raised practically everything that was needed for his family, his success depended largely on his ability to perform with skill the ordinary labor of his farm, and to successfully cope with his neighbors in bargaining. To do a good day's chopping or cradling, to drive a hard bargain at the village store, and to keep from coming out second best in a horse trade were reliable indications of his chances for getting on well in the world. The man who could hold his own in the friendly rivalry of the neighborhood was the man who generally baked in the smile of fortune.

Now, when the products of a thousand factories are needed to furnish the farmer's equipment; when his table displays the products of every clime; when the products of his own farm must first be sold, and after passing through intricate and mysterious processes, return to him in the form of breakfast food or worsted, his success no longer depends on manual dexterity or shrewd bargaining. To save his labor by the wise use of horse labor is of greater benefit to him than to save five dollars on the price of one of the horses by keen bargaining. To know how to weed the stalkers out of his herd is more important than to be able to milk five cows to his hired man's four. A knowledge of world markets and of the advantages of cooperative buying and selling is more necessary than skill in the petty haggling of the grocer's counter. His success now depends on his ability to organize and conduct his farm as a business enterprise.

It is now being generally admitted that the best solution of the help problem on the farm is the use of more and better farm machinery. A good tool greatly increases the amount of work which a man can do, and the interest on the investment in tools is less than the cost of deterioration and repairs is then less than the cost of an extra hand. There is no way of becoming more quickly familiar with your needs in the way of tools than to study the advertising columns of Farm and Dairy. In dealing with advertisers be sure to protect yourself by taking advantage of our Protective Policy printed on the editorial page.

Government manufacture of all war munitions should be a plank in all political platforms after the war.