

FARMING

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FARMING

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TOPICS FOR THE WEEK

Everybody Wants "Farming."

Enquiries for copies of the new weekly edition of FARMING are coming in thick and fast. New subscribers are being added to our lists every day, and we hope to add at least 2,000 new names before the end of the year. Will not every subscriber for FARMING help us in this laudable effort? A large number of new subscribers are now being secured through agents and by sending out sample copies; but if every one who is now a subscriber would send in at least *one new subscriber* we would be able to double our present large circulation before the end of 1897.

We do not desire our readers to work for us for nothing, as we are in a position to repay them liberally for their efforts in our behalf. For *two new subscriptions* to FARMING at \$1 per annum we will extend your own subscription one year, and for *one new subscription* we will extend it six months. See also special lists of premiums offered in this issue.

As this issue, which contains the Farmers' Institute Annual Bulletin, will be sent to a large number of persons who are not at present subscribers to FARMING, we would draw the attention of everyone who receives this number to the splendid list of premiums offered on another page. Send in your orders and secure every issue of FARMING. Each issue contains something of value for every farmer, and the fifty-two issues during the year will comprise a fund of practical and up-to-date matter.

We will send FARMING from now till the end of 1898 for \$1. Send in your orders early and get the full benefit of this offer.

A Live Stock Commissioner for Canada.

There is among stock-men a widespread feeling of disappointment that the Live Stock Commissioner for Canada, asked for by them, has not yet been appointed. The Dominion Cattle Breeders' Association, the Dominion Sheep Breeders' Association, the Dominion Swine Breeders' Association, have each, by formal resolution, declared their belief in the necessity and desirableness of such an officer, and have presented their request to the Dominion Government that the same energetic policy which has been so instrumental in increasing our exports of cheese and butter should be pursued for the increase of our exports in live stock and meat products.

The increase in our *annual* export of cheese and butter since the appointment of our Dairy Commissioner has been over ten millions of dollars! Not only has our export of cheese increased by over 100 per cent., and our export of butter changed from an insignificant affair to a very solid and profitable part of our national exports, but our entire *winter dairying* industry has been originated, developed, and brought to its present state of efficiency, wholly within the period covered by the Dairy Commissioner's time of service. "Honor to whom honor is due," say we; and there is no gainsaying the fact that the great development of our dairy industry of late years is almost wholly owing (1) to the action of the Dominion Government in establishing a Dominion Dairying Service and supporting it efficiently; and (2) to the energy and forethought which have been displayed by the officer they appointed, and to the wise use which he has made of his opportunity and powers.

Now what is wanted is the adoption of exactly the same sort of policy with regard to our live stock. While we export to Britain nearly all the cheese we can export, and are rapidly increasing our export of butter, our export of live stock, (including meat products) is not more than one-tenth of what is possible, and not more than a third or a fourth of what could easily be secured if the business were looked after and worked up. With superior natural advantages in every way for the rearing of live stock suitable to the British market, we allow our American competitors to supply that market with three times as many horses as we, with four times as many cattle, and with five times as many sheep; while their supply of meat is many times ours. On the other hand their supply of cheese, for which their natural advantages are quite as good as their advantages for the supply of live stock or meat, is not more than two-fifths of ours. And yet despite their great superiority over us in the supply of live stock and meat, they are not resting satisfied. The United States Department of Agriculture, at this moment, is taking especial pains to instruct the American live stock farmer as to the sorts of horses that Britain wants, and as to the sort of beef, mutton and bacon it will pay best to raise and export to that market.

It may perhaps be thought by some that our Dairy Commissioner in his capacity of Agricultural Commissioner, can so well look after our live stock interests, as well as his special dairy interests, that the appointment of a Live Stock Commissioner will be unnecessary. As reasonably expect a man who looks after a bank efficiently to add to his hours in the day, and look after a big departmental store! It is not wise to expect too much from one man, even although he may be an able one. Besides *our dairy interests are in jeopardy*. Our Dairy Commissioner will have quite enough to do to hold what he has won. Every country in the world that is making any progress in agriculture is imitating or trying to imitate our methods of dairy development. Ireland is trying to do so, Scotland is trying to do so. Sweden is doing so. Denmark, for all her start of us, is doing so. Holland is doing so. Australia and New Zealand are doing so. But, most important of all, *the United States is doing so*. We could fill the editorial pages of FARMING *every week* simply by recording the activities of the United States Department of Agriculture under the direction of that indefatigable hustler, Secretary Wilson. In a little while, if we don't wake up, we shall be like the foolish virgins of Scripture. While we are "slumbering and sleeping" he and his able assistants are filling their lamps and ours are going out.

In these days of keen international competition

the government that doesn't do its level best to secure and retain the trade of other countries for its people is abandoning its duty. We have already got a good reputation for our energy and enterprise in agricultural development; why not keep it up? Canada, for its success in building up its dairy industry in so short a time as eight years, is quoted with approval by every progressive agricultural department in the world. This is very gratifying, but dairying is not our whole agricultural concern. We have other interests equally important. What has been done in dairy products, however, can be equally well done in live stock, in meat products, in fruit, and in poultry and eggs, if the same energy be displayed, and the same, or a similar line of policy be followed out.

However, we have said enough for one article. We shall return to the subject again.

Government Wastefulness.

We are, as every one of our readers knows, an advocate for the full exercise by government of its function of "doing in the interests of the community, as a whole, all those things which the individual cannot well do by himself." This is a true theory of government, in full accordance with the recognized principles of modern political economy. But when governments misunderstand this function, and do things they ought not to do, then, like individuals, they should be reminded of their errors.

We are going to illustrate our point, not by the misdoing of one of our own governments, but by that of the United States general government. About the biggest misuse of a function intended to be beneficial which any government commits is the annual seed distribution of the United States Department of Agriculture. Our purpose in calling attention to this abuse is to put it forward as an object lesson. There are tendencies toward similar abuses in our own administrations, and it is well that the public eye should be on the lookout.

The seed distribution of the United States Department of Agriculture began in the benevolence of an early government commissioner as far back as 1836. From 1836 to 1859 Commissioner Ellsworth distributed, at his own expense, new and rare seeds among the farmers of the United States. In 1859 he procured an annual grant of \$1,000 from Congress for the purpose of doing that at the public expense which for nearly a quarter of a century he had done at his own. This was quite proper. The seeds were such as the individual farmer receiving them could not procure for himself; and they were distributed by a plan that assured their proper use. The object was to secure "the naturalization within the borders of the United States of new and useful products." It was argued, rightly enough, that "the acquisition of a new commodity is of more value to the country than the acquisition of a province."

From this noble beginning has grown, by insensible but constant accretion, the present colossal humbug. Nearly \$3,000,000 has been spent in giving to farmers all over the Union seeds which they could as well obtain from their own seedsmen. Not only that, but the whole thing lacks system and direction. Farmers in North Dakota get cotton seed, and farmers in Alabama get spring wheat. The beneficently planned scheme of Commissioner Ellsworth and the Congress of 1859 has become a wholesale but ill-appreciated system of petty corruption. Secretary Morton said that in 1894, out of 9,000,000 packages of seed sent out to 1,800,000 people, only 940 were even acknowledged! The theory is that the seeds thus