

FARM AND DAIRY

AND RURAL HOME
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The Rural Publishing Company, Limited PETERBORO, ONT.

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

Better Cows Needed

IN a certain dairy instructor's territory in Eastern Ontario, there are 1,722 patrons sending their milk to cheese factories. These farmers milk 11,932 cows and their average gross return for the whole cheese factory season in 1915 was only \$42.18 a cow. The average price realized for cheese was 14.92 cents a pound. We may assume, therefore, that with pastures good and cheese high in price, these cows were given a reasonable opportunity to do their best. And yet with all things in their favor, the return of \$42.18 is hardly enough to pay for their feed. Certainly the return is not sufficient to yield any profit to the farmer.

The educational institutions of the land, of which the agricultural press is not the least, have been preaching better cows so long that one would almost think that the three thousand-pound cow would be extinct long ere now. Then along comes a statement like the foregoing, and we realize that we must start our work all over again. Although the subject may be somewhat hackneyed, there is still much need to impress the value of better breeding, better feeding, and better selection—the three basic principles of good dairying.

Joys of the Farm

THE man whose ideal is wealth that may be named in many thousands, perhaps millions, of dollars, should choose some other occupation than farming. As a business, farming yields only moderate returns on the labor and capital invested. Whoever heard of a farmer becoming a millionaire through the production and marketing of crops? The best farm income would look small to the successful broker or merchant.

Such a confession must seem to many like an attempt to give farming a black eye. It is, if we view farming only in its financial aspects. But when we consider the farm as a place to live, our industry more than comes into its own. The farm enthusiast, the man of rural ideals, draws big dividends in joy in his work, his wholesome environments, and the opportunity that contact with nature offers him for creative work. It has been men inspired with this joy of farming who have blazed the way to all modern methods. Many of Our Folks take more pleasure in improving a strain of seed than any broker ever took in cornering the market or any merchant in amassing a fortune. We have many such men among the farmers of Ontario, and verily they are the salt of the industry.

A Warning in Advance

THE seed question of 1916 is complicated by two factors—the shutting out of European supplies of root and vegetable seed and the doubtful quality of our own home-grown grain and clover. Much of the grain in Eastern Canada was injured by the wet weather of last season. In the corn sections of South-Western Ontario, there was a general tendency to softness in the ear, and the quality of seed corn coming from there will not be as good this year as it has been in the past. The clover seed situation is even more serious. There was very little No. 1 clover seed produced this last season.

There is only one way to guard against crop loss from seed of inferior germinating qualities—test your seed and sow accordingly. The farmer who is accustomed to sow oats at the rate of two bushels of ninety-five per cent. germination to the acre, should next season sow nearer four bushels to the acre if he finds that the germination power has been reduced to fifty per cent. The same applies all along the line. With the average seed that will be offered in 1916, there should be heavier planting of corn, grain, and clovers. This will increase the seed bill, but any extra expense incurred at seeding time will be more than counterbalanced at harvest by the superior crop that comes from the good stand. Those of Our Folks who do not wish to test their own seed can have samples tested by forwarding them to the Seed Branch at Ottawa.

A Word in Season

BARNYARD manure has value on the farm aside from that as a fertilizer. It improves the physical conditions of the soil and makes it easier to handle. Its decay produces heat and its presence aids chemical and bacterial processes. Moreover, it absorbs and holds a large amount of water and helps to aerate the soil. The benefits of these indirect aids to plant growth are in some cases worth as much as the fertilizing power of the manure.

When it is added that barnyard manure is worth at least \$2.50 a ton, and that each farm animal produces from five to seven tons per 1,000 pounds of live weight each year, it is easy to see that as a fertilizer the material should not be wasted.

And yet it is. On the average Canadian farm only fifty per cent. of the fertilizing value of manure ever reaches the soil. The other fifty per cent. of value is lost by leaching and fermentation consequent upon improper handling. We have even known seemingly intelligent farmers to waste the manure produced on the farm and then turn around and buy commercial fertilizer to make good the drain on their soil. The best practice is to haul the stuff directly to the fields from the stable. Where this practice is not followed, provision should be made to preserve all the liquid excrement and keep

tightly compacted and moist to prevent fermentation. There is no more important problem at this time of year than the conservation of stable manure.

The Unemployed: The Solution

AT the conclusion of the war four million British citizens will be returning to their home lands, the most of them looking for work. The finding of jobs for so many jobless men is a problem that will call for the best statesmanship. Already many solutions of the coming labor problem have been proposed. The best of these comes from the United States Department of Labor. In that country, like all other civilized countries, the unemployed problem has always been with them, and Secretary of Labor William B. Wilson, in advancing his solution, has thrown precedence to the winds, and brought forward a scheme that will work, because it is fundamentally right.

Secretary Wilson has already tried the commonly advocated plan of establishing labor exchanges on a national basis, but the scheme has failed for the very good reason that there are more men offering than there are jobs for them. He now draws attention to the possibilities of opening jobs for the unemployed on the retained lands. He suggests that the Government retain title to all the public lands it now holds, and also acquire the extensive areas of unused, privately-owned farming lands in all of the States, the tenure to be so adjusted "as to prevent the inflation of land values." In addition to placing the laborers on the land, Secretary Wilson would have the Departments of Agriculture and of the Interior cooperate with the Department of Labor to instruct in farming and marketing and to make possible the establishing of a rotary fund from which loans could be made.

The need for such a scheme in Canada will be even greater at the conclusion of the war than it is now in the United States. Much of our best land has been given away, but much good Government land still remains. This could be extended by expropriating from its present owners the vast areas of unused land in all of the Western provinces, which came into the possession of their present owners by frauds perpetrated on the Government. This may seem to many a radical method of solving the problem of the unemployed, but abnormal conditions demand radical remedies.

Plant that is Undesirable

(Ladies Home Journal)

IT was a shrewd Yankee storekeeper who said to me we were driving along by a farm: "I reckon Will Peyton isn't doing so well." "How do you know that?" I asked. "His barn," he said laconically, pointing to a barn the side of which blazoned forth an advertisement. "When a man lets another paint his barn full of an advertisement we think twice when he comes to the store and wants to buy without money. We are generally out of what he wants."

The comment was shrewd; it is a truth that very few farmers realize. The owner of a farm never advertises the loosening hold on his strings or his poverty more convincingly than when he lets another fellow paint his barn. If more farmers realized this fact there would be fewer barns, fences, and sides of houses made hideous by advertising painting.

"I didn't hear anything at the Institute that I didn't know, anyhow," declared the poorest farmer in the community. Nobody doubted his word. Anybody can listen to good advice. It takes a wise man to profit by it.