

# The Farmer's Advocate and Home Magazine

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## EDITORIAL.

Keep the hired man over winter.

Start the stock on a light ration.

A stable may be old but that is no excuse for dirt.

This will be a hard winter on the man who likes potatoes.

Keep up the supply of food, shells and comforts to the soldiers.

Bad-fitting doors are not the most satisfactory means of securing ventilation.

It is a safe bet that the freeze-up catches someone unprepared this year as usual.

The man who plowed early even though the land did not work well got his plowing done.

Store bills and promissory notes always come due. A cash system has its good points.

The problem of good seed will be more acute next spring than ever. Buy early or save your own good seed.

The ingenious farmer can overcome most obstacles but the weather this year was beyond his greatest effort.

Go to the Guelph Winter Fair next week and wind up by seeing the Stock-Yards Show in Toronto at the end of the week.

It is not necessary that a stable be hot to be comfortable. Fresh air and frost (without drafts) are better than heat and steam.

Vegetable growers will find some interesting and valuable reading in the report of the Ontario Vegetable Growers' Convention in this issue.

Districts in which clean seed is produced should start "Seed Centers" and Seed Centers should work together for the good of crop production.

Taking butter and eggs "out in trade" gives the dealer two chances at a profit—one on the produce and one on his goods. Besides it is bad for the butter and eggs.

If the farmer is getting more than usual for what he has to sell so is everyone else, including the laborer, the clerk, the office man, the business man, the manufacturer, etc.

People, once educated to pay high prices for everything, go on paying. There are those who believe that most essentials will not be "cheap" in Canada again for many moons.

"Spontaneous combustion" was rather late in commencing this year. The barn that burns in October or November, in a dry year, generally gets a start from some other cause.

Two weeks from to-day the 1916 Christmas issue of The Farmer's Advocate will go forward to our subscribers. Published at considerable expense it goes to every one of our subscribers free. Watch for it. Save it.

## Putting Farming in the Wrong Light.

There is an all too prevalent tendency to give undue publicity to the out-of-the-ordinary, abnormal or above average. This is true of crop production and financial returns, and no paper is immune from it. We all like to read of someone doing well, and, while we may not believe all that is said, we read it, think over it and finally, in most cases, it acts as a stimulant to greater effort. However, to some others not given to looking on the bright side of life all the while, it is rather discouraging, for the returns and yields are so much higher than they themselves get that they are somewhat disheartened. But this is not where the harm is done from accounts of high financial farming returns and big crops. Just the other day we were reading an account of a man making something over \$2,000 from less than twenty acres of beans this year. Our city friends read the same article and the next morning were accusing farmers of getting rich and of being benefited by and responsible for the high cost of living. Had this same article given a true account of the returns from the bean crop the Province over in 1916, no one would have been ready to rise up and say that the bean farmer was making too much money.

The same is true of every branch of the farmer's business. One man has a cow that gives 20,000 pounds of milk in a year and she gets her name and her photograph in the paper and her owner is heralded as a successful dairyman, which he is, but what about the thousands of cows which give 3,000 pounds of milk each per year? If they were taken into account would the newspaper heading read, "Big Money in Dairying"? Perhaps we do not hear enough about poor cows, and certainly the man who knows little about farming but has an idea that farming is a mighty profitable adventure never talks about the 3,000-lb. cow because the papers never tell him anything about her. He doesn't believe she exists. A short time ago we read an account of a bumper crop of wheat on one man's farm in the West, averaging around 50 bushels per acre, but nothing was said about the thousands and thousands of acres frosted, blighted, rusted to such a degree that they yielded only a few bushels of chicken feed. Two or three weeks past we read an article giving an account of the phenomenal yield of honey from a colony of bees. True, this has been a good year for honey, but when a poor year occurs little is said about it. Reports throughout the season have been long on the bumper crop of hay which Eastern Canada produced, but said much less about the short crops of everything else. If a man sells a horse for \$300 or more, the paper has a nice write-up about the money in horse-raising; if he sells a poor horse for which he gets \$40 or \$50, no one hears about it. When the farmer's best brood sow raises him an even dozen pigs, and, through good feeding he is able to make them weigh from 190 lbs. to 200 lbs. each at six months of age, and he gets a price of ten or eleven cents per pound live weight, the paper says: "Farmer Jones is making money," but we never see anything in type when the same sow has five pigs, lies on the three best ones, raises one decent youngster and a runt, and the price is down to from four to six cents a pound. This does not make as attractive reading as the big story of success. No one is interested in small returns, but the everlasting publicity given to the big yield and the big prices, which apply only in the minority of instances, is putting agriculture in the wrong light in the eyes of the average man in the city who knows little of farming and its trials, and depends upon the periodicals which come to his home for the meagre information which he has. It is these, very often over-drawn, accounts of phenomenal success upon which the city man bases his ideas and remarks regarding agriculture. Is there any wonder, then, that he believes the farmer is getting rich, and

that it would pay him to give up a good position in the city and move to the country to grow chickens, vegetables, fruit, and so on. The whole truth in regard to farming is safer in the long run than giving only the part of it which looks best in print. Agriculture is the safest and surest occupation in the country, but it is not all big crops, big prices, and big returns, as he who farms year in and year out knows well. It is averages which count not the highs nor the lows.

## What About Seed?

Each year the problem of good seed grows in importance. In a letter published in the Young Farmer's Department of this issue a correspondent gives as one of three reasons for his good crop in this "off" season, the fact that he secured clean, pure and plump seed, contrasting his results with those of a neighbor, who did not take so much care with his seed. A few years ago, when farms were cleaner owing partly to cheaper and more available labor and the resultant more thorough cultivation, it was not such a difficult matter to obtain fairly good seed in most any locality. Possibly it was because of the comparative ease with which the seed could be obtained that too much carelessness crept in and noxious weed seeds gradually gained a foothold until it was almost impossible, in some districts, to purchase clean seed. Then, too, there has been altogether too much carelessness in regard to the quality of the grain itself. Good seed means not only clean seed, but large, plump, virile seed.

During recent years there have been developed in certain districts local organizations for the production and sale of the right kind of seed. These are known as Seed Centres and as a general thing a Seed Centre specializes in one particular class of seed, making it possible to so breed up and maintain at a high average quality the seed produced that good results are certain to follow. These Seed Centres should prove of great value to agriculture generally because from them it should be possible to get much better seed for many localities than that which can be produced in those localities. We believe that there is room for a great many more Seed Centres and that this winter would be a good time to organize and lay plans for the work. It is well in each case to remember that better success would generally come by working with one class of seed and one variety of that class, than by attempting to run a sort of a departmental seed concern. There are many farms, in fact, whole districts where noxious weeds have gained a foothold, and, if they are ever to be stamped out, clean seed must be sown, and to get the right kind it must be purchased from other districts. It does not take long for a Seed Centre to make a name for itself, and as it does so it increases the output of Canada's farms. Choose the crop which grows best in the locality; select a heavy yielding variety and get to work at once if possible, and for all those who will have to purchase seed next spring we advise that they plan to get it as soon as possible. Any having old grain over from last year would do well, provided it is good seed, to save it for that purpose next spring. Much of the grain in Ontario was light this year and it may be difficult to obtain sufficient high-quality seed to sow the required acreage next year. First come first served. Do not forget in the organization work this winter to discuss the Seed Centre movement.

No one ever seems to think that the high cost of living affects the farmer. He has to live on high-priced food and feed his stock high-priced feed. In both cases he has to buy much and he must value what he produces and consumes on the place at what it is worth on the market.