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and Home Journal

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EDITORIAL

We don't want the West robbed to support a few in the East.—J. H. ASHDOWN to the Tariff Commissioners.

* * *

The Seed Train Special costs the railroads \$10 a mile—but the \$53,000 thus expended is a small matter compared with \$20,000,000 loss from weeds, thinks Mr. LANIGAN.

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The money spent by the Dominion Department of Agriculture, for lectures, advertising, etc., was money well spent and redounds to the credit of those carrying the project to such a successful conclusion.

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It may be sincerely doubted if the agitation to change the location of the Winnipeg grounds is dictated by a desire to improve the fair. There are possibly some choice spots near the city which would become considerably enhanced in value if the exhibition was located close to them. The matter of grounds is a side issue from the public standpoint, a red herring across the track, but promises a big thing to the people strong enough to engineer the change to the location they favor.

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I challenge any man to prove or even assert, with any degree of authority or knowledge, that any banking institution, any wholesale house, or any departmental store, no matter how large, ever added one new dollar to the wealth of the realm. But the farmer who tills the soil and sells one bushel of wheat, or grows a bullock for market, adds to the wealth of the nation. Therefore it is to the sturdy husbandman of this country that we look for that development and that progress that we aspire to make in Manitoba, one of the most important provinces in Canada, as far as agriculture is concerned.—PREMIER ROBLIN.

The Responsibility of Knowing How.

What with the seed train special, farmers' institute meetings, stock judging schools and unprecedented circulation of agricultural literature the present winter season has never been surpassed in the dissemination of information with relation to farming operations. The country seems to have arrived at a condition where greater intelligence is demanded in the operating of a farm, and the people are earnestly intent upon acquiring whatever hints they can, that will be of benefit to them. In the realm of the mind the winter season is seed time. Like every other natural process the results of the sowing of mental kernels is to be seen later, but everyone must cultivate their own mental field. Knowledge is power in farming more than in any other calling, but knowledge alone will not effect any improvement in crops, stock or the general appearance of the farm. If everyone of the thousand of farmers who attend the various means of agricultural grace should carry away all the information the speakers are able to impart, and store it up like so much energy in a dynamo just for the pleasure of mental recreation, the whole campaign of agricultural education would be of no more value than playing at school. All the various schemes for the benefit of the farmers and for which they indirectly pay have the one object in view namely the betterment of conditions through showing the way to that happy end. To some it means the establishment of higher ideals, and to others the key to a different situation, to all it should mean more enthusiasm for the profession, and the development of an indomitable determination to succeed.

It has too often been said of Westerners that their farms are not homes but merely grain ranches. Fortunately the accusation cannot be laid to every door but the ideal condition and the one to which educational campaigns point directly and indirectly is, that wherever there is a farm there may be a home; that work may be accomplished easier because more intelligently performed; that the soil may bring forth the most of which it is capable and that as a result the average standard of prosperity may be raised. With the individual rests the responsibility of bettering his own condition, and with the better knowledge of how to do this comes the greater responsibility. Will you rise to it?

Is There a Prejudice Against Pure-breds?

The tardiness of the general farmer in availing himself of the benefit to be derived from the use of pure-bred sires in the improvement of his stock, is something difficult to understand or explain. Many good farmers, having ample means, appear to actually entertain a prejudice against pure-bred stock, while they continue to feed good food to inferior stock which make poor returns in meat or milk for the food consumed.

The opinion seems to prevail that pure-breds are less hardy, and require more care and more liberal feeding than grade or ordinary stock. This is a mistaken idea. Many pure-breds have stronger and more vigorous constitutions than common stock, consequently have a keener appetite, superior digestion, assimilate their food to better advantage, and make greater returns in gain of weight and quality of product.

Most men acknowledge the superiority of well-bred grade stock over common scrubs, but few appear willing to give to pure-breds the credit due them for the existence of good grades, yet any intelligent man, by doing a little honest thinking, must be convinced that, but for the pure-breds, there would be no good grades, and no improvement over the scrub in any class of stock. And yet, how often does it occur that when, for instance, a grade cow is bred to a pure-bred bull and the produce is a male, it is, owing to its superior appearance, kept entire and used as a sire, with the result that little improvement is made in the herd in comparison with what might have been effected by the continual use of pure-bred sires, which, if well chosen, would have continued the grading-up process until the value of the herd would probably, in a few years, have been doubled.

We do not advise farmers generally to go into the breeding of pedigreed stock as a special business. We do not believe it would be in their best interest nor that of the breeds, for the reason that all are not qualified by training, taste and judgment to take up the work, and that probably but a small proportion would make a success of it, owing to the lack of qualifications named; but in this age, with the superior advantages which young farmers enjoy for the acquirement of knowledge concerning improved methods of feeding and management of stock, it is passing strange that many more do not make a commencement in a modest way with pure-breds, and that the rank and file of farmers do not make it a point to improve their stock in all lines by the use of pure-bred sires. The satisfaction of seeing good stock in one's stables and pastures itself adds much to the pleasure of farm life, and when we consider that, from the practical dollar-and-cents point of view, it is certainly more profitable to rear and feed the improved class, there appears no sensible reason for neglecting to effect the needed improvement in the only way by which it can be done, and that is by the use of a good class of pure-bred sires. If the cost of such were unreasonably high, it might be considered a valid reason for postponement, but the reports of public sales and the experience of those who correspond with breeders, proves that useful sires can now be secured at prices the general farmer

can well afford to pay. It is practically certain that a pure-bred sire will add sufficiently to the value of his offspring over that of a grade in the usual term of his service in a herd or flock to more than recoup his cost and keep, and in many instances may be sold for nearly if not quite his original cost at the end of his term.

In discussing this question, the mind naturally turns to cattle—a class of stock that nearly every farmer keeps, either for breed or dairy purposes, but the doctrine of the value of pure blood, as a fact as well as theory, applies equally to horses, sheep, hogs and poultry. The potency of the pure-bred sire in effecting improvements has been so clearly proven in observation and experience as to be beyond question, and the better he is, in individual make-up, and the higher the standards of his recent ancestry in character and record of production, the more likely will he be to impress those desirable qualities upon his progeny in a high degree. We counsel farmers all to take advantage of the opportunity now presented of improving the quality of their stock, and prepare to profit by the good market prices, present and prospective, for farm products in all lines a little better in quality than the common. Our markets are expanding, and will continue to expand at home and abroad, and the best quality of product will always command a premium. Let us, then, not be content with slow-growing, common stock and the inferior prices they inevitably bring, but be ambitious to produce the sort that sells quickly at the best prices going. Bear in mind the fundamental doctrine of this article, that the value of the pure-bred is not simply a matter of theory, it is one of the best and most widely-attested facts of experience.

Distribution and Co-operation.

The question has frequently been asked us why we devote so much of our space to the subject of producing wealth and seldom refer to the question of distribution which in this country means very largely the transportation and marketing of wheat and stock. Probably the reason why our policy has been as it is, is because we are ministering to a producing clientele and we can speak with greater authority upon this branch of economics than upon distribution. The work of distributing products requires, and receives the undivided attention of specialists, and the remuneration for the services of such distributions is supposed to be regulated by competition. That transportation companies do not always give good value for their charges has been demonstrated over and over again in older countries, and as newer countries become settled there is always a disinclination to decrease charges, although there is generally a willingness to improve the service. Dissatisfaction with transportation facilities as provided by private corporations has resulted in Government ownership of railways in some countries, and has been the cause of many heated discussions in all parts of America, even to the suggestion that the governments of the two new western provinces undertake the building of a road to Hudson's Bay. Should the provinces do this it will be but a step in advance of that which has become familiar to Canadians of late, namely a government guarantee of bonds, but besides this it requires able financial ability to push a railway through.

Apart from the transportation of products there is the marketing of the same by what are commonly called middle men. The middle men with which western farmers are mostly concerned are the grain elevator companies, live stock exporters, grain commission men, and the produce houses. At the present time, among prairie farmers, there is a strong conviction that the middlemen are too well paid for the services they render in placing farm products upon the markets. The conviction has taken tangible form in the effort to organize a cooperative grain growers'