

The situation as regards the food supply in these islands is critical, and the Right Honorable gentleman made no attempt to minimize the peril. Everything is being done to increase the production of food, and attention is being concentrated on three staple products: wheat, oats and potatoes. To encourage farmers to break up their grass lands and grow increased areas of these crops, the Government is guaranteeing a minimum price for wheat and oats up to and including the crop of 1922, and potatoes for the crop of the current year. The figures guaranteed are well-fitted to attain the object in view. Wheat is guaranteed at 60s. per quarter for crop of 1917, 55s. for crops of 1918 and 1919, and 45s. for crops of 1920, 1921 and 1922. The guarantee thus extends over a full rotation. The result will undoubtedly be to encourage farmers to break up their medium pastures and to greatly increase the wheat area. But there is much land in Great Britain ill-fitted for wheat growing, but well-fitted for oat growing, and the guaranteed prices for oats are also on a liberal scale. For the current year, 1917, the figure is 38s. 6d.; for 1918 and 1919, it is 32s., and for the three years that follow it is 24s. The potato crop of 1917 is a sore problem. The crop of 1916 was a failure. In Scotland this was especially the case. As a rule Scotland grows many more potatoes than she is able to consume, and she exports heavily to England, and in particular to the Newcastle and London markets. There is a belt of red soil in the Dunbar district of East Lothian, which grows the finest quality of potatoes, and these almost wholly go to England. The crop of 1916 was a failure, and we have no potatoes to export. But besides potatoes required for public consumption, Scotland supplies seed potatoes to England in very large quantities. This year almost all the available Scots potatoes are required for this purpose, and at the moment of writing we in Scotland are experiencing a potato famine. The Food Controller is pleading with the public to observe a potato-less day as well as a meat-less day. Trusting these present perils may be surmounted the Government is taking no risks for the future, and a minimum price of £6 per ton has been guaranteed for the main crop of 1917. This figure is ample, and if the farmer could only secure labor to enable him to get the crop into the ground his trouble would not break his heart. Meanwhile every thing possible is being done to release men from army service who are able to handle the plough. Appeals are also being made to men now employed in the cities who were formerly engaged in rural employment to enrol themselves as volunteer ploughmen. The National Service Corps is organizing as rapidly as may be for this work. Once the land is ploughed and prepared for seeding, there will be a big push with the sowing and harrowing. Corps of women workers will be organized for cleaning and harvesting, and there is reason to hope that present difficulties may be overcome. The most trying time will undoubtedly be from this time until about the beginning of July. It is not the submarine menace alone which is causing the trouble, apart from it there would have been a shortage. There was a world shortage in 1916 as compared with 1915, and every effort must be made to obviate another shortage in 1917. So far the reports regarding the world's wheat sowing are not too rosy. Weather conditions have retarded the preparation of the soil and the sowing of seed everywhere—and there is great need of improvement in this respect.

The London Horse Shows are taking place at this season. The Shire Horse event occupied last week, the week now closing has been devoted to Thoroughbreds, Hunters and Riding ponies. Next week the Hackneys will have their innings. In Scotland there will be very few shows this year. Next week we have the Glasgow Stallion Show, and in the week following comes the Aberdeen Stallion Show. All other principal fixtures have been cancelled, and it will not greatly surprise us should no cattle shows be held in Great Britain or Ireland this year. We have much more important things to think about.

Do you know the District Representative of the Ontario Department of Agriculture in your county? If not, get acquainted with him; find out first hand what kind of man he is; make use of him; give him a chance to do some good, and then draw your own conclusions. This is fair to all parties concerned. Do not condemn until you have tried. If weighed in the balance and found wanting, say so; if found good measure and sixteen ounces to the pound speak an encouraging word.

Sleeping Accommodations to Prevent Pigs Crippling.

EDITOR "THE FARMER'S ADVOCATE":

With reference to the articles which have appeared lately in "The Farmer's Advocate", concerning pigs getting stiff, I might say that if they had an elevated sleeping pen to sleep on they would not cripple. In a pen 8 or 10 feet wide, 12 or 15 feet long, have the feed trough at one end, and a flat right above it, 4 feet high, and a wide plank with slats on it for the pigs to walk up and down on. Have a movable partition in this sleeping pen and give the pigs room enough to sleep comfortably and, as they grow, move the partition over to give them more space. If that method does not keep them right, give them two pens, with a small opening between the two at the opposite end from the feeding trough, and carry out your excellent advice.

Lambton Co., Ontario.

J. L. M.

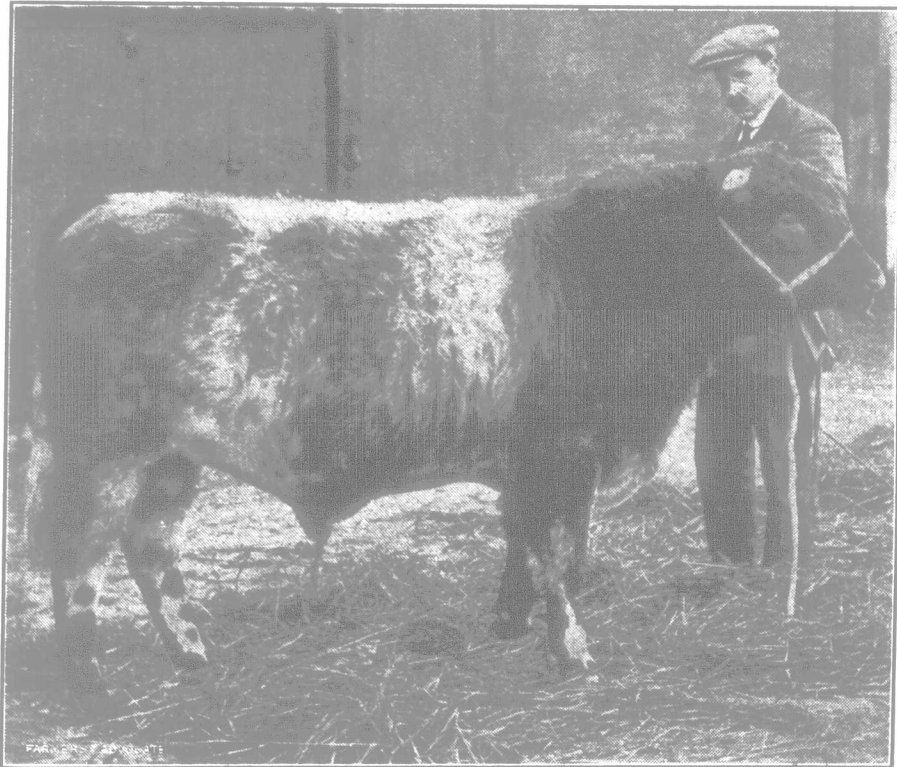
Treating Abortion in the Herd.

EDITOR "THE FARMER'S ADVOCATE":

Are the serums and mythelene treatments for abortion reliable? Will flushing with corrosive sublimate cure cows of the disease when 3 or 4 in a herd of 12 abort? Should the cows be flushed before being bred and the stables disinfected after every abortion? Will cows which have aborted be barren or immune from the trouble in the future?

J. L. M.

Ans.—Actual information, either scientific or practical, regarding contagious abortion is meagre in the extreme. Some opinions, however, are entertained by breeders and experimenters and as many of these are erroneous it has opened the way for some of the boldest quackery known for a long time. Serums and mythelene blue have not been a complete success in the cure or prevention of this disease. Flushing the



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vagina with some coal-tar disinfectant prior to breeding is recommended by one of the best authorities we know. Lugol's solution, 0.25 to 0.5 per cent., gave very good results used in this way. The vagina should be well filled with the liquid so all the folds will come in contact with the solution. The sheath of the bull should also be flushed. A stall should be set apart for parturition purposes and disinfected prior and subsequent to occupation by the different cows. Good authorities claim that cows will not become immune to abortion as one would enjoy immunity from any contagious disease after contracting it. It is thought that as the cow gets older she is more able to throw off or resist the disease. However, a cow which has aborted may subsequently be either sterile or a consistent breeder.

THE FARM.

As You Sow You Reap.

As you sow you reap, is an undisputed fact. There is no possibility of making a grain of wheat produce an oat plant, a wild oat grow a cultivated oat, a buck-horn seed turn into red clover, or a cockle plant produce alsike seed. Wrapped up in the germ of each seed is the embryo plant which will produce after its kind. If the kernel is small and the germ weakened by unfavorable conditions it is unreasonable to expect that it will produce a plant capable of giving the maximum yield. Clean, well-graded seed should be secured if possible; sowing inferior seed is time more or less wasted. No

matter how fertile and well cultivated the soil, or how carefully the seeding is done, that will not make up for poor seed. Seed of every crop must be well selected if the best yields are to be expected.

The fanning mill equipped with the proper set of screens and sieves, and adjusted so that a good blast of wind will strike the grain, can be used to good advantage. The light kernels can be blown over and the weed seeds screened out by the judicious use of the mill. Weeds are a serious problem to contend with in any crop. They are persistent plants, growing and reproducing even under unfavorable soil and weather conditions. Ox-eye daisy in the hay field, sow thistle and wild oats in the grain fields, buckhorn in the clover field, and couch grass, bladder campion or bind weed in any crop decreases the yield and interferes with the general farm operations. They increase the cost of producing the crops, and tend to decrease the value of the farm so infested. The man who sows seed which contains even a few of the noxious weed seeds is making trouble and extra work for himself. With the clovers and small seeds there is a little excuse because it is almost impossible to separate some of the weed seeds from clover and timothy. However, too many allow the price to influence them when purchasing their seed supply. Even good seed in which weed seeds abound is dear at any price. If you do not produce your own seed supply aim at buying the best on the market, not only from the standpoint of freedom from weeds but taking into consideration the plumpness and uniformity of sample together with percentage germination.

An extra time through the mill with a large mesh screen in the bottom will generally pay. Small kernels make better feed than seed, and many of the weed seeds screened out should be burned rather than thrown on the barn approach or fed to the stock. A screen with a mesh 2 by 12 may be placed in the lower shoe and a 2 by 5 mesh in the upper shoe for cleaning oats. A 2 by 10 mesh is serviceable for cleaning barley. When it comes to preparing clover or timothy for sowing, a fine mesh must be used. Many of the troublesome noxious weed seeds may be separated from red clover by use of a 4 by 24 or a 4 by 26 mesh screen. Alsike requires a 20 by 20 or a 22 by 22 mesh, a 30 by 30 woven-wire mesh should be used in cleaning timothy. If the seed has not been selected and thoroughly cleaned, do not put off the task until the land is ready for cultivation. Do it now; and then be prepared to treat the seed to destroy smut spores before the grain is planted.

Why Impassable Roads?

Good roads are an asset to any country. While the steam, electric and water routes are the main arteries of commerce, they would have small patronage and thus be of comparatively little service were it not for the country roads which serve as feeders. A good deal of money was spent by the country in perfecting the transportation systems, while the rural highways were left under the management of the various municipal councils and little money was forthcoming from the Government for road improvement or maintenance. The great need of better country roads is being realized by those in authority, and recently what is known as the "Good Roads System" of constructing and maintaining roads has been put in operation in many Ontario counties. It requires a large expenditure to construct and keep a road in repair. Under the new system there will be a uniformity of construction from one end of the Province to the other. The main roads are being taken over by the Government and County Councils, thus leaving the townships free to improve the cross roads leading to the main thoroughfares.

It is in the spring of the year when frost is coming out that roads become broken up. Frost is irresistible if it has its partner, water, to work with, and it requires special care in the construction of roads to avoid and prevent the yearly depredations of this enemy of public highways. About the first of April many roads become impassable. Farmers in some localities are practically prisoners on their farms for several weeks every spring, at least so far as doing any teaming is concerned. In districts where the soil is heavy clay it is about all a team can do to pull the empty wagon, let alone a load. The bottom goes right out of the roads in places; the holes and ruts made by horses and rigs fill with water which keeps the roads in a "quagmire" until late in the spring. These ruts fill with water every time it rains, thus keeping the road soft and in such a state that the surface becomes flattened out by traffic until in some cases the centre is lower than the sides, and sometimes about on the level with the ditch bottom. But why picture conditions which are a detriment and drawback to any community, when there are counties where the roads do not resemble a hog wallow every spring? Nature has favored some districts more than others by providing natural drainage, and road-building material in the form of stone and gravel. It is easier to keep roads in repair when material is at hand. However, the condition of roads in a measure shows more plainly than words the business ability of the men entrusted with the township and county affairs. Some of the counties or communities with the greatest handicap for material with which to build and maintain roads are the first to apply fundamental principles in road construction. It requires hard work, a united pull and the expenditure of large sums of money, but the result is that their roads are passable while others are not. The people can market their produce and trade can be carried on between different points in the district. This is an asset to country and town people alike.

The cash value of good roads the year round is difficult to compute, but it is noticed that land values