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HOME AND FARM.

We have great pleasure in noticing a new agricultural periodical for the Maritime Provinces, published semi-monthly at Sackville, N. B., at the moderate figure of \$1.00 per annum, in advance, by Messrs. Paterson & Gilbert. The *Maritime Agriculturist* is well written, well printed, and got up in a neat reddish-brown cover, somewhat in the style of the excellent *Farmer's Advocate* of London, Ont. This new enterprise, for which we earnestly desire every success, fills a decided want of the Maritime Provinces, in which we have always felt it was scarcely creditable that there should be but one journal of an agricultural character.

We quote the following sound advice to farmers from an agricultural exchange:—"FRAUDS ON FARMERS.—The Ontario department of agriculture has issued a bulletin describing some twenty or thirty varieties of frauds practiced on farmers by unfamiliar travelling agents. The frauds include the seed grain swindle, by which it is said \$25,000 has been taken out of the farmers in Lennox and Addington alone. There is a well known class of frauds in which the articles delivered are suited to the locality, hay forks being one of the favorites. This swindle consists in taking a note from a farmer, who thinks he is signing an agreement accepting the agency for the sale of some useful article. The fraud in question is not unknown in the Maritime Provinces.

The shoddy cloth trick is not confined to Ontario, nor the lightning-rod deceptions. The Ontario farmer is also victimized by agents who induce him to sign his name to some reference or to furnish it for some other innocent purpose, and who three months afterwards finds a note of hand written above his signature, and the document in the possession of an 'innocent holder.' Among the remedial measures proposed is that every county agent shall be required to procure a license from some duly authorized individual on whom will rest the responsibility of seeing that the business is of a bona fide character. Some very sensible recommendations are made to the Ontario farmers which apply no less to the countrymen in other provinces. It is advised that farmers refrain from accepting agencies from strangers, or indeed from leaving their legitimate business on any pretext to engage in trade. Equally good is the counsel to deal with none but well established firms, never to sign documents for a stranger, and never to sign without reading. Most farmers will protest that they do not need to be told these things, and yet the melancholy history of each year, with its long list of frauds, proves that the warning is still needed."

The following exhaustive American report pretty well settles the status of the English Sparrow:—"The English sparrow has come to be a serious problem in the agricultural interests of this country, and has been made the subject of a bulletin from the newly-established division of ornithology and mammalogy of the department of agriculture. The report says that the fact that in Europe the characteristics of the sparrow had been discussed for centuries without any absolute settlement, should have made us cautious in introducing it to America. A thousand times as much money and energy have been expended in fighting the sparrows as were expended in introducing them at first, and the results of the effort in the two cases are painfully disproportionate. It is absolutely necessary that active and comprehensive measures should be taken for the abatement of this evil.

The sparrow does great injury to all kinds of buds, blossoms and foliage from its bud-eating habit, and in every town and state in the union where it is abundant many ornamental trees and vines are damaged by the filth from the birds. There is scarcely a garden fruit or vegetable which does not suffer from the attack of the sparrows, grape-vines suffering the most. In California there is danger of a loss to the state of many thousands, if not millions of dollars from this pest. The sparrow is the only undomesticated bird that eats tomatoes, and its palate even delights in currants. It does much mischief in the garden. In every stage of growth most vegetables are more or less subject to its attacks. Peas, corn, lettuce and cabbages suffer most while in the green stage; peas and corn also when ripening their seed. It is a nuisance to newly-seeded lawns, scratching up the seed or pulling the tender sprouts as they come up through the ground. Wheat suffers from the time of sowing until it is stored in the barns or elevator; and even then they find a way to get at it. Next to wheat, of the grain crop, the sparrow seems to prefer oats, and numerous instances of a serious loss to this crop are reported. They will not touch barley so long as they can get anything better, but there are times when even this crop suffers considerably from their attacks. The sparrow also threatens to seriously damage the field corn crop in the near future. In some parts of the country it has been found very destructive to the seed of different kinds of millet. It is very fond of buckwheat, attacking it under all circumstances.

More than a thousand original contributions and all the available published testimony on the subject lead the department to assert positively that the sparrow molest our native birds and drives them from our gardens and parks. The reports mention specifically seventy kinds which are known to be molested more or less by the sparrow; most of these are kinds which are beneficial to the farmers and gardeners.

In considering the other side of the case, whether the sparrow has any insect-eating proclivities which should be placed to its credit, the reports say that the bird does not prefer insect food; and any instances where it has done service in destroying injurious insects are exceptional and readily accounted for when all the circumstances are known. All seed-eating birds, when insects are extraordinarily abundant, substitute insect food to a certain extent for their natural diet. The injurious insects which the sparrow sometimes destroys are precisely the insects that are also acceptable to other birds, while others which the common birds devour greedily the sparrow never touches. Thus the sparrow does no kind of beneficial work which could