FARM AND DAIRY

AND RURAL HOME

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FARM AND DAIRY

PETERBORO, ONT.

A POSSIBLE DANGER TO OFFICIAL TESTS

Holstein cattle owe much of their popularity to the large and even phenomenal records made by many individual cows of the breed. Individual milk records of any cattle are of distinct value, but the value of any record of milk production, especially those for short periods, is dependent upon the conditions under which such a record is completed. Fortunately there is no reason to question the conditions connected with the making of the vast majority of the official records, nevertheless Holstein breeders have a danger to avoid in the seven-day tests, which are now becoming more common. This danger is well set forth in the following extract from a letter received by a well known Ontario breeder from Henry Stevens & Son, Oswego, Co., N. Y., one of the greatest Holstein breeders on the continent:

"You understand how these 30 lb. "records are made. A cow after calving is dried up as soon as possible, "gotten as fat as it is possible, usually given a long rest between calves "and when she calves the next time "she will give for a little while milk "containing a very high percentage of "butter fat and then is when she "makes her 30 pounds. We do not "believe that this shows any power "in this cow to transmit her high percentage of butter fat. It is simply "the result of an abnormal condition. "As yet no 30 pound cow has shown "any remarkable work through her "progeny. None of the great bulls "are from 30 lb. cows and none of "the great cows are from 30 lb. cows, "and so far none of the 30 lb. cows "have produced any great heifers, "with possibly one or two exceptions. "We believe that this method of handling will ultimately result in a family of excessively short period milkers."

Mr. Stevens is right in his contention. The seven-day tests made eight months after calving, however, are free from this objection. Our breeders, therefore, and farmers as well, should make careful enquiry into the conditions surrounding the tests of animals in which they may be interested. Abnormal tests should be taken for what they are really worth and care should be taken to see that they are not allowed to shake the confidence of the public in official tests and thereby possibly cause a reaction that would be productive of much injury to the breed.

AN INTEREST IN GOOD SEED

The interest taken in crop improvement and in pure seed is growing rapidly. One needs but to know and realize that large plump seed has greatly increased yielding possibilities over even small plump seed, not to mention the small and shrunken seed, to appreciate the value of careful selection, by fanning or by other means, of the largest, plumpest seed available for seed purposes. Increased yields of from five to ten bushels and even more per acre from large plump seed have been repeatedly announced by such careful investigators as Prof. C. A. Zavitz, of the Ontario Agricultural College. Such increased yields are worth striving for, and these days of winter may well be utilized in making the best possible selection of seed from the quantity available for the forthcoming spring seeding. It is not enough to simply put the grain through the fanning mill. It pays handsomely to clean it repeatedly and to take out at least 25 per cent from that which is to be sown.

While a fanning mill selection is possibly all that can be hoped for from the average man, those possessed of the necessary foresight to make even a better selection, such as by means of hand screens, by hand picking, or by following the methods of individual plant selection as advocated by and practised by members of the Canadian Seed Growers' Association, are sure to be well repaid. It is not too much to ask of each one to see that he make a hand selection of sufficient seed to sow an acre or two of the particular varieties of grains grown from which to obtain the stock for next year's seed.

A marked demand exists for good seed of any of the commonly grown farm crops. Those who seek to make the most out of farming will place themselves in a position to supply this demand. Such can be done by growing seed better than the average and placing it upon the market, which of late years has become eager in its demand for reliable guaranteed seed.

CANADIAN-GERMAN TARIFF WAR

After the first of March, 1910, Canadian goods entering Germany will come under the German "Conventional" or minimum tariff rate upon a specified schedule of goods which Canada can ship to Germany. The surtax ceases and German goods entering Canada will come under the general tariff.

The result will probably be a decided trade advantage to Canada, as it places this country in a position towards Germany similar to that occupied by the United States under the recent trade treaty between that country and Germany. Canada, in all probability, will be a considerable gainer by the new agreement. A large number of articles for which we seek good markets can now be sent to Germany without fiscal penalty.

The German market is a good one. Canada has lost considerable in the past seven years of tariff war, which has practically closed the German market to us. Statistics show the Canadian-German trade in 1903 to have been $14,000,000. In 1908 after five years of trade war, it had dwindled to a little over $7,000,000. Our fruit growers, apple growers in particular, will stand to benefit much through the cessation of the trade hostility. Many other branches of agriculture will likely also benefit to a greater or less extent.

WE NEED FEWER DOGS

The recent regulations for the prevention of rabies in Western Ontario, sent out from Ottawa and approved of by the Lieutenant-Governor in Council for Ontario, providing that all dogs within certain counties mentioned must be either securely chained, kept under lock and key or muzzled in a manner satisfactory to the Department of Agriculture of the Dominion of Canada, aside from its effect upon the prevention of rabies, should have a most beneficial indirect bearing upon agriculture. While a good dog, efficiently trained, is a most useful animal, there are few that can be rated as such compared with the many worthless curs roaming through the country in the vicinity of towns and cities and which are a constant menace to live stock, particularly sheep.

The order will bring home to many the responsibility that is theirs when they keep a dog. Dogs unworthy of the attention called for in the newly issued regulations will, let us hope, be destroyed. The country would be much better off with fewer dogs and our live stock interests would then prosper to a greater extent.

UP TO THE GOVERNMENT

The united counties' council of Northumberland and Durham has now laid the matter of the re-forestation of the 14,000 acres of waste land in the united counties fairly and squarely before the Ontario Government. The next move must come from the Government.

The counties' council has asked for power to purchase this waste land. It has offered further to turn this land over to the Government for a period of years to be reforested and it has agreed not to charge any taxes on the land, while it is under the control of the Government. The counties will pay the Government interest on any money the Government may use in this work and ultimately will pay back to the Government the full sum when the timber reaches a marketable size. What fairer proposition could the Government want? The request simply amounts to an application to the Government for a loan for which the counties agree to give satisfactory security and on which they are willing to pay all interest and ultimately the principal.

Hon. Mr. Cochrane intimated to the deputation that he did not think that the Government should be expected to advance money for such a purpose and not reap a share of the resultant profit. Surely the Government does not desire to make a profit out of the people of Northumberland and Durham. If the people concerned are willing to guarantee the Government against loss, and merely desire assistance in a form that will not cost the Government anything, not even the interest on its money, surely the Government is sufficiently public-spirited to be willing to grant such reasonable assistance for such an important undertaking without looking for a profit.

The fact that the Government has not been more quick to act in matters of this kind has been excused in some quarters on the ground that public opinion was not sufficiently advanced to warrant the Government in making a move. Here is a case where the people have moved and are merely asking the Government for assistance that it is well within the power of the Government to give. There is every reason to believe that the Government is in sympathy with this movement, and therefore that the assistance desired by the counties' council will be granted either in the form or in some other manner equally satisfactory. In the meantime it is the Government's turn to move.

Why is it that the Dominion Experimental Farm at Ottawa is not more popular with the farmers of Canada? It has some of the best known and most popular agricultural authorities of Canada on its staff. In spite of this it does not get in among the farmers the way it should. Farmers