FARM AND DAIRY

AND RURAL HOME
PUBLISHED EVERY THURSDAY

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CIRCULATION STATEMENT

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OUR GUARANTEE.

We Guarantee that every advertiser in this issue is reliable. We are able to do this because the advertising columns of Farm and Dairy are as carefully edited as the reading columns, and because to protect our readers, we turn away all unscrupulous advertisers. Should any advertiser herein deal dishonestly with you as one of our paid-in-advance subscribers, we will make good the amount of your loss, provided such transaction occurs within one month from date of this issue, that it is reported to us within a week of its occurrence, and that we find the facts to be as stated. It is a condition of this contract that in writing to advertisers you state: "I saw your advertisement in Farm and Dairy."

Rogues shall not ply their trade at the expense of our subscribers, who are our friends, through the medium of these columns; but we shall not attempt to adjust trifling disputes between subscribers and honorable business men who advertise, nor pay the debts of honest bankrupts.

The Rural Publishing Company, Limited
PETERBORO, ONT.

"Read not to contradict and to confute, nor to believe and take for granted, but to weigh and consider."—Bacon.

Good Roads and Bad Theories

OUTLINING the Ontario Government's good road policy before the annual meeting of the Ontario Experimental Union, Hon. Finley Macdiarmid, Minister of Public Works, stated that one of the benefits to be derived from the improvement of roads throughout the Province was that it would result in settling many more city men on the farms. It had been the experience everywhere, said the Minister, that good roads increased the value of farm land from five dollars to twenty-five dollars an acre. The building of railways had created a tendency for population to concentrate in cities, but it was hoped that the building of good roads would set up a tendency for population to flow in the opposite direction, and that this would result in a marked back to the land movement.

Just how a rise in the price of land would enable city men to buy more of it, the Minister did not state. In our towns and cities, there are thousands of men who would gladly go back to the land but for the fact that this farming business requires capital, and they are short on that particular commodity. If they are to be assisted in their commendable endeavor to acquire a home in the country, it will never be by increasing the amount of capital needed for the purpose.

The only "back to the land" movement worth writing about that has occurred in recent years, was that experienced in Western Canada during the first twelve or fourteen years of this century. In some localities, as high as 60 per cent. of the homesteaders were genuine back-to-the-landers. The reason for the movement is not far to seek. Any one with a $10 bill could establish his claim to 160 acres, and by carefully husbanding his earnings, he could, in three years' time, secure a clear title to the land. If there had existed a barrier of $10 or $20 an acre between them and the land, it would have been as inaccessible to the majority of homesteaders as Paris or Calais is to the Huns at the present time.

By all means let us have as good roads and as many of them as possible, provided they are built with a view to assisting the farmer in getting his produce to market, rather than to allow the idle rich to travel in limousine luxury from one city to another. But do not let us indulge the folly of thinking that good roads will solve the rural problem. There are things that macadam will not do, and the creating of a tendency for population to flow back to the country is one of them.

Seed Grain Centres

IN Farm and Dairy last week, the North Gower Registered Banner Oats Centre, offered for sale 5,000 bushels of improved Banner oats and 3,000 bushels of registered Banner oats. Farm and Dairy draws attention to this advertisement, not as an advertisement, but as an indication of a great new development in the seed growing trade of the country. We believe that advertisements such as this will become more and more common as the years go by. In case there are any of Our Folks who have not followed the development of the seed centre idea, an explanation may be timely.

The Canadian Seed Growers' Association is the father of the scheme. The seed centre is a species of neighborhood cooperation. Districts are selected which are specially suited to the production of high-class seed of some one crop. Interested farmers get together and a variety is selected. All of the members of the seed centre grow that one variety and select their seed according to the rules of the Seed Growers' Association. The North Gower Centre, for instance, specializes in Banner oats, the Manvers Potato Centre on Green Mountain potatoes, and so on through the various centres, of which there are now a score or more organized in Ontario. Having produced their seed cooperatively, these centres sell cooperatively. The scheme has all of the advantages of cooperative production and cooperative marketing, and its extension should result in great benefit both to seed growers and seed buyers.

Payment for Public Improvements

THIS is not a parable, but a parallel. Many, many years ago the cultivated land in Egypt was confined to the borders of the Nile. British engineers conceived the idea of irrigation on an extensive scale to widen the area available for crop production. As a result, the Assouan Dam and other irrigation works in Egypt were constructed at a cost of about $53,000,000. The increase in the value of the land in middle and lower Egypt and the Fayoun provinces, largely as a result of these irrigation schemes, was from $955,000,000 to $2,440,000,000. The total rent on this land has risen from $82,000,000 to $190,000,0000. The increase in ground rent for one year would have paid more than double the entire cost of the dam and other irrigation works, but the Egyptian Government was not wise enough to appropriate this gift for such a purpose. Instead, it followed the Canadian method of issuing bonds to run for many years, and permitted private landlords to appropriate the increased values.

A few years ago good road enthusiasts of the touring car class conceived the idea of a cement highway from Toronto to Hamilton. Taxpayers objected, but in the end the motor owners had their way. The great highway is now under construction. The cost will be stupendous. Already the first estimates have been far exceeded, and in an effort to placate the people, the chairman of the Commission that has the work in charge told us the other day that the increase in land values due to the construction of the road would be more than double the cost of the enterprise. This apologetic explanation will be small solace to the thousands of taxpayers who will have to pay for an undertaking that will enrich a few land owners who will not be called upon to make anything like a commensurate contribution to the cost of the scheme. Apparently, Egyptian darkness in political economy is quite equalled in density by our own.

The Seed Situation

THE seed situation in Canada is not a promising one. If there is not an actual scarcity of seed next spring, our information is already sufficiently authoritative to enable us to state definitely that there will be a decided scarcity of first-class seed. Farm and Dairy has already mentioned the small supplies of good clover and alfalfa seed available, and now it appears that the corn situation, taking the continent over, is even worse. Across the line in Michigan, the agricultural college there has been unable to find sufficient seed corn in the state to supply Michigan farmers next spring, and this scarcity is expected to cause serious trouble when planting time arrives.

As a result of this scarcity, much inferior seed will necessarily be used. There was never a season, therefore, when testing of all seed before seeding was more essential than it is this year. In many cases it may be necessary to seed half as heavily again to get the same number of plants per acre as has been the practice in the past. The first seed ordered will be the best seed delivered, as early orders always get the preference from seedsmen, but whether the seed is ordered early or late, it should be tested for germination.

Shade Tree Butchery

THE destruction or mutilation of shade trees by telegraph and telephone linemen has long been an aggravation to home owners in our towns and cities. There have been similar depredations in the rural districts, but these have not raised the same feeling of bitterness, probably because we have more trees to spare. Many cases have come to our notice, however, of where Our Folks have had valuable trees decapitated or one side cut completely away to suit the convenience of the linemen. This destructive work has been carried on with such an air of assurance, fortified by many specious claims, that people have hardly known just how far they could legally carry their objections. A recent circular from the Canadian Forestry Association settles the question for good and all.

According to the Attorney-General of Ontario, linemen and contractors have no authority whatever and cannot legally remove any part of a tree without the permission of the owner or the municipality, and any person destroying or injuring a tree is liable to a fine not to exceed twenty-five dollars and costs, or imprisonment for not more than thirty days. The next time a lineman comes for slaughter, we can meet his cocksure attitude with one of equal assurance, and "call his bluff."

"The back to the soil trend is a city movement. The real country life movement is a campaign for rural progress conducted mainly by rural people, not a paternalistic plan on the part of city folk for rural redemption. It is defined by one of the great rural leaders as the working out of the desire to make rural civilization as effective and satisfying as other civilizations, to make country life as satisfying as city life and country forces as effective as city forces."—G. Walter Fiske.