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THE FARMER'S ADVOCATE & HOME MAGAZINE

WILLIAM WELD, EDITOR AND PROPRIETOR.

THE LEADING AGRICULTURAL JOURNAL PUBLISHED IN THE DOMINION.

The FARMER'S ADVOCATE is published on or about the 1st of each month. It is impartial and independent of all cliques or parties, handsomely illustrated with original engravings, and furnishes the most profitable, practical and reliable information for farmers, dairymen, gardeners and stockmen, of any publication in Canada.

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Our Monthly Prize Essays.

CONDITIONS OF COMPETITION.

1.—No award will be made unless one essay at least comes up to the standard for publication.

2.—The essays will be judged by the ideas, arguments, conciseness and conformity with the subject, and not by the grammar, punctuation or spelling, our object being to encourage farmers who have enjoyed few educational advantages.

3.—Should one or more essays, in addition to the one receiving the first prize, present a different view of the question, a second prize will be awarded, but the payment will be in agricultural books. First prize essayists may choose books or money, or part of both. Selections of books from our advertised list must be sent in not later than the 15th of the month in which the essays appear. Second prize essayists may order books for any amount not exceeding \$3.00, but no balance will be remitted in cash. When first prize essayists mention nothing about books, we will remit the money.

Our prize of \$5.00 for the best original essay on *Soiling and Soiling Crops*, has been awarded to Mr. Thos. Macmillan, Constance, Ont. The essay appears in this issue.

A prize of \$5.00 will be given for the best original essay, on *Farm Accounts*. Essays to be handed in not later than Feb. 15.

A prize of \$5.00 will be given for the best original essay on *Spring Management of Cows*. Essays to be handed in not later than March 15.

Now is the time to subscribe for the *Farmer's Advocate*, the best agricultural paper in Canada.

Editorial.

Royal Commissions.

Amongst politicians the mania for Royal Commissions is becoming chronic. An abuse of some kind is forced upon the Government for redress, and the politicians, fearing a falling off in "vote and influence" from certain quarters, court the policy of delay, and meanwhile a Royal Commission is appointed to investigate the matter at the public expense.

It will be remembered that last summer the Dominion Farmers' Council invited the Royal Railway Commission to sit in this city. The invitation was accepted, the result being that scarcely a farmer was examined, and the evidence was chiefly taken from those who received special favors from the railroads, and were therefore not in a position to refer to any public grievances. The farmers are perfectly well aware that they are ground to dust by all sorts of soulless corporations, many of which they bonused out of their own pockets, and no Royal Commission is required to convince them of this fact. We blame the farmers for not giving their evidence when the commissions are once appointed, but we blame them still more for tolerating such nuisances, which aid so largely in burdening the country with taxes, and are too frequently established for the purpose of opening up jobs for worn out politicians, or other menials who are too proud, or too high up in the social scale, to make a living by honest toil.

There is now also a Royal Labor Commission, appointed by the Dominion Government, scouring the country to furnish employment for disappointed partizans, and to ascertain whether the workingman is able to live comfortably on the wages which he is receiving. We would not be the least surprised to see a Royal Commission appointed to investigate the condition of the farmer, and demonstrate to him that he is rapidly rolling up wealth under the paternal guidance of the Government. There is only one way in which a government can aid industrial pursuits, and that is to leave them alone.

Our Creamery Industry.

The Ontario Creamery Association, which is now receiving Government aid, is rapidly increasing in numbers, and it is well to inquire if this fact is compatible with usefulness in the interests it was organized to promote. The Association is intended to be to our butter what the Dairymen's Association is to our cheese. Both associations were organized on the same basis, are subject to the same influences, and the precedents of the older should prove useful to the younger organization.

Granting that our Dairymen's Associations have been largely instrumental in promoting our cheese interests, yet they have been productive of much folly and injury, and these failings our creamery men should make strenuous efforts to evade. We have not had the opportunity of attending all the meetings of the Creamery Association, organized about two years ago, but judging by what we have seen, the same old omnipotent and omnipresent demon is working just as assiduously and insidiously here as in all other organizations of the same breeding.

The first failing which engaged our attention was the participation of our salt boomers in the discussions of the Association, and a lot of energy has thus been wasted which should have been applied to questions of much greater urgency. A bystander would imagine that the life or death of our butter industry depended upon the man who manufactured the salt. The only gain is in the amount of free advertising obtained by the salt agents, which should certainly not have been accomplished at the public expense. The most valuable investigation we have ever seen on the salt question was conducted by Prof. James, lecturer on chemistry at the Ontario Agricultural College, who analyzed the leading brands of salt, and also pointed out the physical properties to be considered in the judging of this article for dairy purposes. On the contrary, Prof. Robertson, lecturer on dairying at the same institution, wasted a lot of public money and valuable time in his attempts to ascertain the relative values of the different brands of salt. His experiment has proved, as all such merely practical experiments must always prove, a failure. If the best practical butter experts cannot classify the butter on the basis of the salt used, the experiments have no practical value. The fineness and shape of the salt granules, with the percentage of impurities as ascertained by chemical analysis, should form the basis of judging, unless it can also be clearly proved that two samples of salt having the same chemical analysis, and the same size and shape of granule, may differ materially in solubility or in any other important quality. Our advice is, let the salt question drop meanwhile, give the persistent agents a cool reception and initiate work of more practical utility.

At the meeting of the Creamery Association recently held at Guelph, the salt agents and their allies, encouraged by previous encroachments, again participated in the discussions, but we desire here to illustrate how one evil leads to another. Taking advantage of the doors opened for all manner of agencies, the live stock boomers wended themselves thither, and met with a cordial reception. They may answer this soft in-