

FARM AND DAIRY

AND RURAL HOME
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OUR GUARANTEE

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Requests shall not give 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, Ltd
PETERBORO, ONT.

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

The High Cost of Milk

ARE dairy farmers who supply city milk trade getting too much for their product? The consumers in many Canadian cities claim that they are paying too much for this necessary article of diet, and that dealers and farmers have violated the Combines Act by making agreements to increase milk prices. The agitation began in Ottawa has spread until cities as far apart as Windsor and St. John, New Brunswick, have started investigations of their local milk supply. Nor is the agitation confined to Canada. The United States Department of Agriculture has started a country-wide inquiry into the milk situation with the object of getting at the facts as to the cost of milk production. These inquiries indicate that the cost of milk for city consumption is not a local question, but one of national significance.

Dairy farmers will welcome an investigation into the cost of milk production. With the present shortage of pasture and the high cost of supplementary feeds, together with the highest priced farm labor in the history of agriculture, it will be found that they are not coining money as fast as the city consumer appears to believe. As to forming combines to unduly enhance the price of milk an investigation will reveal that far from this being the case any concerted action on the part of the farmers has merely for its object the securing of a fair price for their product. If consumers combine to hold down prices they will find their milk supply being diverted to cheese and butter factories, which are able at the present prices for their product, to offer the farmer as attractive prices as he is now realising from the whole milk trade. If city people are paying too much for this morning's milk it is because ex-

orbitant profits are being made somewhere between the farmer's front gate and the consumer's back door.

Our National Debt

CANADA'S national debt at the end of August stood at \$658,000,000. Assuming the population of the country to be 8,000,000, and allowing four to a family, this amounts to \$75 for each of the 1,700,000 families in the Dominion. The increase for the year amounts to \$96,000,000, or \$104 a family. The expenditure for war purposes, which was \$24,000,000 for the month of August, is rapidly increasing, and there is every possibility that by the time the war is concluded and the army disbanded, the total national debt will reach \$1,000,000,000, the estimate made by the single taxers at their recent conference at Niagara. This would mean a debt of nearly \$600 for every family in the country.

These totals, formidable though they are, refer only to the debt incurred by the federal government. In addition, there are the rapidly increasing provincial debts and the municipal debts, many of which are also on the increase. The burden of public debt must eventually fall on the productive industries of the country, of which agriculture being the chief, will bear the greatest share. Farmers are ready to assume their share of the obligation made necessary by Canada's participation in the war, but at the same time they favor the strictest economy in the administration of government affairs. They believe that it is the duty of the federal government to set an example in national thrift. The national debt, even if kept down to the minimum, will prove a heavy burden on industry after the war. If increased by government extravagance, it will prove a greater burden than can readily be borne.

Acreage and the Tractor

THE announcement that a tractor demonstration will be held again this year in connection with the Ontario plowing match has once more directed attention of the possibilities that lie ahead of the tractor on the farms of eastern Canada. It would appear that we are somewhat behind our neighbors across the line in becoming enthused over the tractor as a practical farm machine. During the present season many tractor demonstrations have been held in various states, to the results of which the agricultural press has devoted considerable space. The large number of farmers attending these demonstrations, and the interest shown by them, would appear to indicate that they are on the lookout for a machine that will, to some extent at least, take the place of horses as a source of farm power.

In some of the states the tractor appears to have passed beyond the demonstration stage. In Illinois, for example, it has become so widely used that it has been found possible to investigate the relation between the size of the farm and the size and efficiency of the tractor. Reports were secured from nearly 200 farms on which tractors of different sizes were in use. About seventy-five per cent. of the owners stated that the tractor had been a profitable investment for them. Among the important facts disclosed was that tractors had tended to increase the acreage of the farms on which they were used, this increase averaging about 120 acres. The four-plow tractor was recommended by a larger percentage of experienced owners than any other also, while the investigation revealed that in the opinion of the majority of these owners the minimum sized farm on which such a machine can be profitably used is 350 acres. One of the effects that the introduction of this source of power

would probably have in Canada would be a similar increase in the size of the farms on which it was utilized.

The Farmers' Spokesman

THOUGH it may have been true a few years ago that there was not in Canada a representative body capable of speaking for the farmers as a whole, this is not so to-day. We have in the Canadian Council of Agriculture an organization which represents the organized farmers of four of the largest agricultural provinces, numbering upwards of 60,000. While the farmers are not organized in other provinces, there are many evidences that considerable numbers of them are in thorough accord with the work of the Council of Agriculture. This was shown when the deputation of farmers waited on the government before the reciprocity campaign. It is also shown on all occasions when the voice of protest is heard from the farmers against the conditions against which they labor.

Farmers who have their own best interests at heart should stand firmly behind this organization and urge their neighbors to do likewise. It includes in its membership some of the clearest thinkers on economical and social questions that are to be found in Canada. It is in closest touch with the conditions of the farming population in each of the provinces. With its permanent secretary, its independence of government support, and the ability it has shown in debating issues with the manufacturers of other interests, as at Winnipeg last fall, the Canadian Council of Agriculture has proved its right to be the spokesman for the farmers of the Dominion.

A Progressive Township

STANBIDGE TOWNSHIP, in Missisquoi Co., Que., has an organization such as could be established in many other districts to the advantage of the farming industry. It is known as the Stanbridge Township Farmers' Association and has a full list of officers. The membership is to be composed of those farming tracts of not less than 100 acres within the township who care to join the association and pay the annual fee of one dollar. By becoming a member, a farmer is eligible to compete for the three prizes which the association distributes each year. These prizes, which consist of \$100 in cash, are provided by the income from a fund that has been invested for the purpose. One prize is for the farm which shall be found during the last week of June to be the freest from noxious weeds. Another is for the farm which has been most improved by leveling, draining, or clearing during the twelve months preceding the distribution of the prizes. The third is given for the best ten grade heifers not over three years old, of one of the leading dairy breeds, the heifers to be raised by the competitor in the township and to be the produce of a pure bred bull.

The principal object of the association is to assist in directing and unifying the efforts of the farmers of the township in progress along definite lines of improvement. Hitherto the tendency has been for every one to pull in their own direction, with the result, it is claimed, that the best progress has not been made. The work of the association will be watched with interest. It is simply following out the idea of community work within a definite division of territory. Already interest has been stimulated along the various lines in which prizes will be given, and enquiries are being received by breeders with a view to securing good bulls for the township.

There may be such a thing as the friendship of prosperity, but surely it cannot be compared to the friendship of adversity.