

THE FARMER'S ADVOCATE AND HOME MAGAZINE.

THE LEADING AGRICULTURAL JOURNAL IN THE
DOMINION.

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JOHN WELD, MANAGER

AGENTS FOR THE FARMER'S ADVOCATE AND HOME JOURNAL,
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4. THE FARMER'S ADVOCATE AND HOME MAGAZINE is published every Thursday.

It is impartial and independent of all cliques or parties, handsomely illustrated with original engravings, and furnishes the most practical, reliable and profitable information for farmers, dairy-men, gardeners, stockmen and home-makers, of any publication in Canada.

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likely last for many years, they ought to be of sufficient strength to carry a great deal more than anything likely to cross them at the present day.

Radical remedies are the only true remedies. All others are mere palliatives or expedients. By radical remedies is meant those which go to the root of a difficulty, correcting or extracting the cause. It is on this principle that Mr. Good argues the beneficence of single tax, even though in its working out it might entail some few apparent incongruities. For instance, the objection that single tax (which means tax on land values only) would touch lightly the rich man who built a palatial residence on a small parcel of land, while bearing harder on the poor man alongside, is met with the reply that single tax would tend to prevent the accumulation of "swollen fortunes," by discouraging the speculative holding of idle land, thereby handicapping industry to enrich the favored and the unscrupulous. Single tax would help to prevent one form of economic injustice which our present system of taxation endeavors feebly to mitigate; and prevention is generally better than cure.

Those who have stave silos should make it a point to go over them carefully, see that they are in good shape, draw up the hoops a little if it was not done in the spring, or loosen them a trifle if they are already so tight as to endanger bursting when the sap of the ensiled corn causes staves to swell. Defective staves should be displaced by others, and if the lower ends of the staves have decayed they should be sawn off evenly to ensure that the whole length of the stave may be sound and good.

Look at the date on the label of your "Farmer's Advocate" once in a while. Then you will know when it is time to renew your subscription

The Reward of Service.

No class of public servants in Canada have worked harder or to more effective purpose than the dairy instructors in the Province of Ontario. This is true alike of the chief instructors and of the local men working under their direction. Mr. Barr, and after him Mr. Hens, in the western portion of the Province, and Mr. Publow in the east, have rendered service that will never be fully appreciated, because its effects have been in large degree negative. Improvement in the factories, appliances and methods of making, in the location of farm milk stands and farm conditions—these are, in some instances, obvious enough, but the perplexities they have helped makers out of; the obscure sources of trouble they have ferreted out; the cuts in price avoided through their helpful guidance and practical work in the factories, and a large degree of betterment due to their patient, tactful, zealous effort, bulk up into a benefit which, could it be measured in dollars, would astonish us. The drives of sixty to ninety miles a day through a blazing summer sun, calling at a dozen factories or so; the chase from office to factories and factories to office; the loyal, conscientious, never-flagging efforts deserve more praise than will be ever bestowed. G. G. Publow has devoted to the dairy business of Eastern Ontario a degree of zeal, energy, principle and capacity that would have made him rich in agriculture or commerce. He is not rich in earthly possessions, because he has worked for a very modest salary, indeed. But if honest, effective public service is a reward, he is rich in the honor of his co-workers and fellow men; and that, after all, is a better reward.

The Fortunes of the Show-ring.

There is ever a zest in the fortunes of the show-ring. While to a casual visitor the arena may seem to contain the same or a similar aggregation of animals each year, to the connoisseur of the show-yard it is a game demanding rare skill, yet spiced with an element of chance, that renders conclusions tentative until the issues have been finally decided by the officiating judicial talent of the occasion. And right here, in the individuality of the judge, lies one of the factors of chance which makes the contest so interesting. The best beast does not always win, and while in the great majority of cases the placing of the top prize at least is such as to command the approbation of observers, it is not always so. Judges differ in their estimation of the relative value of points. A Scottish judge of draft horses, for instance, will probably lay great stress on the foundation, whereas the average American or Canadian would pay more attention to the superstructure, if the expression may be permitted. One judge of dairy cattle may attach greater importance to milk wells and veins and escutcheon, while another may give more attention to breed type, conformation, or the indications of constitution. In judging the beef breeds, one may be attracted by style, or what appeals to him as breed character, and another may be more impressed by a smooth and even covering of flesh, or by the handling quality of hide and hair.

The skill with which an animal is shown counts for much. To begin with, there is the condition and fit, and no less an authority than Mr. Stericker tells us that condition is over half the horse—that is, half the appearance he makes. Just how much avoirdupois, yet not too much, and how to attain that by the date of the show, is a problem calling for the exercise of nice judgment indeed.

The attendant must know his business, and know his beast. Deficiencies and tendencies to weakness must not be conspicuously presented by permitting an entry to stand out of form. In cattle, for instance, a lowered head levels up a slack back; again, if a beef bull carries his lines out level and parallel, it is only fair to see that the judge has a chance to obtain a good side view. The skill of the shepherd in trimming his sheep is a matter of common knowledge, and while it may not deceive an expert judge, it certainly does tend to produce a favorable first impression, which counts for something. The poultrymen have exhibited down to a fine art, with "their ways

that are dark and tricks that are vain." For example, if a cock's comb does not present the right number and modelling of serrations to conform to Standard requirements, it can be made over. A little thing like an imperfect comb seldom stands in the way of a premium. And so it goes.

Through it all there is an element of uncertainty that renders prejudgment unsafe, except in outstanding cases. The longer one attends the shows, and the more intimate his knowledge of what constitutes excellence in the respective breeds the more interested he becomes in the battles of the ring. It is an old story, withal ever new, because even with old players who have often entered the lists against each other there are the elements of fresh material, different judges, new attendants, and opportunity for unexpected scores and turning of the tables through perception and practice of the fine arts of the game.

Weed Robbers.

The phrase often used in speaking of children, "They are growing like weeds," voices the popular idea as to the thrift and vitality of these pests. Weeds are plants which, in the struggle for existence, have survived where others have perished. Being inured to hardship, they will cling to life under adverse conditions and reproduce their kind, but when conditions improve, as, for instance, on the cultivation and enrichment of ground they have occupied, the rapidity of their growth is amazing and disconcerting. The multitude and vitality of their seeds are such that wherever ground is unoccupied by useful crops, even for a short time, hosts of these intruders appear and take full possession. There seem to be varieties of weeds suited for every condition of soil, of climate, or of crop. Thus we have mustard and wild oats in spring grain; false flax, cockle and red root in fall wheat; dodder in clover and alfalfa fields; ox-eye daisy in grass lands; burdock, blue weed, yellow dock and the like in waste places, and multitudes of annuals ready to spring up in hood crops and choke them. Many of our worst weeds are not particular as to conditions, but thrive almost anywhere that they have taken root, as witness Canada thistle, perennial sow-thistle and bindweed. On the other hand, nearly all of the useful farm crops, with the single exception, perhaps, of June grass (Kentucky blue grass), require specially favorable conditions in order to develop properly. They require the fostering care of the farmer, and without it would soon become extinct. Their power of extracting nutriment from the soil appears to be so much inferior to that possessed by weeds, that given an equal chance they are inevitably much weakened. The percentage of plant food that may be appropriated by weeds is probably much greater than we suppose. While they are comparatively valueless as food, some of them are richer in the three main plant-food elements of the soil than is a wheat crop, which is known to be exhaustive. The following table shows the pounds of these elements per ton of material, and the amount contained in an average acre of wheat:

	Nitrogen.	Phos.	Acid.	Potash.
	Lbs.	Lbs.	Lbs.	Lbs.
Wheat, 20 bush, with straw	35	20	35	
Mustard (entire plant).....	65	26	37	
Wild oats	30	18	30	

Where the whole crop is removed, as is the case in the Canadian West, it can be readily seen that soil impoverishment may be greater where grain has been light, owing to presence of weeds, than if a full yield of grain alone had been harvested. In the east, where the coarse products are retained on the farm, and afterwards returned to fields as manure, there would not be this loss of fertility, but the diversion of valuable food elements from the useful to the useless is pure waste, so far as the current season is concerned. It would not be right to say that this waste is increasing, for, in spite of the increasing number of weeds, farms in general are cleaner than they were, but the loss is certainly enormous. So long as grain fields can be seen yellow with mustard, or meadows white with daisy; so long as corn fields with inter-crops of various weeds breast-high can be noted anywhere, so long, at least, should the fight against these soil robbers be maintained and intensified.