

The Farmer's Advocate and Home Magazine

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EDITORIAL.

What you don't know about food ask Hanna.

In one more month the Exhibitions will be started. Will your stock be ready?

It will be profitable individually and nationally to speed the plow this fall.

Everybody's question to the farmer just now: "Well, John, how's the crops?"

Buy all of your needs you can close home and save commissions and cost of transportation.

It appears that certain patent medicines have a real claim to the name "medicated booze."

Economy is nothing more nor less than good management. It is bad managing when waste occurs.

Threshing from the field saves some labor, but in catchy weather is scarcely fair to all the neighbors.

A few phases of advancement since the war began—woman suffrage, prohibition, democracy and prices.

Those who sold wool before the prices received for that part of the clip sold at Guelph were announced are sorry.

We hope that the party splits we read about do not cause a doubling of campaign literature. Enough is going forward now, such as it is.

The man who in the spring preached production and has since practiced Weary-Willie ways may or may not be an effective preacher—most likely not.

The Allies are anxious to get more of their fighters up in the air to bring down enemy fighters already up, and to rain havoc on German military bases of importance.

Germany cannot concentrate superlative hate on more than one country at a time. It is said that the United States is hated by the Central Powers even more than is England.

About the only difference between food speculators and plain, rough-and-ready every-day gamblers is that the latter take some chances while the former are always absolutely sure of the coin.

Democrats and autocrats, monarchists and republicans should all be satisfied in China, for the form of government changes there sometimes monthly, sometimes weekly and sometimes daily.

There is nothing like practical experience to open eyes. Some city vacant-lot gardeners who paid from \$4 to \$5 for a bag of potatoes to plant a small lot, the cultivation of which for planting cost \$3 or \$4, and who have hoed and hoed and now find Paris green is 60 cents per pound, are beginning to figure that their work has been patriotic, for from their \$7 to \$10 outlay, to say nothing of interest or rent of lot and labor, they are likely to get from 7 to 10 bags of potatoes and maybe potatoes will not be more than 75 cents to \$1.00 per bag next winter. It is a great experience. Growing stuff for sale to others is no easier. The farmer doesn't journey out to the field and pick up money. Neither does the backyard gardener. And yet both are doing good work.

Luxury.

Despite all the talk of economy and thrift, despite the many warnings that the world faces famine and that saving is necessary, who can remember when luxurious living was so common as at the present time? There is more evidence in Canada of fat returns and much wealth than there is of any cutting down due to the H. C. of L. Profits are high. Wages are high, and while prices are abnormally high everybody seems to have more money and everybody buys. Stand on the corner of the busiest streets in our leading cities and watch, for a few minutes, the great, the near great, those who think they are great, and the imitators of the great, go by. Note the dress and the swagger; note the limousines, coupes, sixes and "just cars" pass. Drop into a fashionable restaurant or grill. Look over the menu. Veal and spring lamb may be absent, but dozens of other luxuries are present. The table of the average citizen is well laden with nourishing food, as it should be, and in emulation of the rich the luxuries are there too. Our tables all carry much that we could get along without. Right out in the rural districts there are many luxuries enjoyed besides the beauties of nature, fresh air, gorgeous sunsets and wonderful landscapes, that our city writers rave about. Watch the traffic on your own concession. Smith, Jones, White and the rest ride in their own "flivvers." The farmer no longer is recognized as a "Rube," for he dresses as well as his city cousin and as much like him as possible. Think for a minute—compare the amount of citrus and other tropical fruit consumed in your home now with that used ten years ago. When you were a boy fifty cents was a little fortune to be allowed for "spending money." Your boy would think as little of \$5. Oh, yes, this is an age of luxury, and yet well-earned luxury is nothing more than any honest, law-abiding citizen is entitled to. However, if famine is just around the corner, it might be well to take thought as to the morrow—save, serve, and cut out waste.

Uncertainty.

Of all occupations other than that of the out-and-out chance speculator, farming is perhaps the most uncertain. Even the speculator who ultimately makes good and pulls out for all time with the swag, generally is the one who leaves little to chance or uncertainty. The man who takes long chances sometimes collects big piles, but rarely does he stop at that, and on the next long shot someone else collects. But farming has so much uncertainty about it that even in normal times no one can predict what will be the reward for the labor and expense. The average farmer is sure of a fairly good living, of long days, of plenty of advice, of taxes (direct and indirect) but the maximum production of the land is limited and will continue to be limited by weather, by financial conditions, by labor scarcity and by the uncertainty as to demand and market conditions. Right now the farmer faces a more serious proposition than for many years. Uncertainty grows as the months pass by. Labor is scarce. Wages are high. He is told, and he realizes, that he should produce for food is needed, but at the same time there is a chance that his hired help, his boys, or even he himself may be called to the colors. It is not definitely settled. It is uncertain. The help he has may not be available next year, but he is asked to prepare to increase his crop acreage. A Food Controller has been appointed. Everyone hopes that his work will be satisfactory to both producer and consumer, and yet there is in the minds of those on the land uncertainty. They are not assured of prices that will leave them a safe margin of profit on production. They feel a little nervous about what may happen. No one knows what the condition of affairs will be when the war is over; no one can foretell the year or month that peace may be proclaimed

and what its effect will be. It is reasonably certain that food products will be scarce for some time, but what the effect of a world changed to meet the conditions of peace will be no one knows, however anxious we all are to see the day of a permanent cessation of hostilities. Financial conditions are looked upon with a degree of uncertainty by the farmer. Labor is ever uncertain and more so now than ever before. And the weather behaved badly last year and has not got back to normal yet. At best it makes results uncertain. Yet with all these uncertainties the Canadian farmer has done much good work for which he has received, in the past, little credit. What other business has as many uncertainties to face and is yet called "a safe proposition?" If all those who criticize the farmer could go through the mill as the farmer has gone through it, there would be less complaint of farmers making all the money, of farmers being unpatriotic, of farmers failing to do their bit. We would hear less about saving the calves, vastly less about too much grass and too many uncultivated fields, and more about legislation which would enable the farmer to compete in the labor market for the help he needs, and to buy at lowest possible cost the machinery and implements he requires to work the land.

If it is necessary for Governments to exhort farmers to produce, it is just as necessary that they show their good faith by aiding in different ways to dispel some of the uncertainty by guaranteeing a supply of labor and machinery to the farmer at a reasonable price, and at the same time seeing to it that prices for farm products, if such price-setting is to come, are placed at a point to leave a reasonable profit on labor and investment. At the present moment things are extremely uncertain, and it is important that the air be cleared in time for the preparation this fall for a big crop next year. The farmer is just the same as any other honest, industrious, patriotic, business man. He desires to play safe and at the same time would like to do his level best for the nation, and can be counted upon to do so if assured of a supply of labor and a reasonable profit. Some other industries ask more. They want unreasonable profits before they promise to touch anything. War profits of great magnitude have not been made on the land. We have better reason for believing that munitions plants, packing plants and some other plants which do not grow on the farm have received the big share, and with a part of their increased earnings they hired the farmer's help at prices he could not touch and left him in a more uncertain position than ever.

There is room right now for some bold strokes by our legislators who, late in the day, seem ready to start something. Give the farmer the legislation which will make his position a little more certain and results will soon be apparent. He wants a fair field—legislation which plays no favorites. He must have men, he must have implements and machinery at reasonable prices, and he must have reasonable assurance that the market will pay him a price which means a fair profit on what he produces. Remember he has not piles of money to back him up if he goes heavily into his enterprise and it turns out a failure. Remember he has been bitten before and hasn't forgotten it. Remember that he is human and appreciates help more than advice or exhortation. If this country is as badly off as those who are always talking to and about the farmer would have us believe, then it is high time something were done to organize its resources and give to each its proper place as the present crisis would indicate. Talk is cheap and evidently much easier than action. And so long as it goes on as now the average farmer will do the best he can with the facilities he has, will plan his work according to his own ideas, will remember the uncertainty, will put the expenditure absolutely necessary into increasing immediate production, but will more than likely go on with his plans as before, cutting down