

appeared delighted that he had gotten a bull at fifteen dollars less than he had expected he would. The breeder who sold this calf was possibly the greater culprit. The calf would never have made a thrifty steer, but yet it was allowed to reproduce itself. What is the result? The purchaser, we learned, had ten cows some of which were of fair quality and others mediocre. Mated with this sire, not one of the calves produced were as good as their dams. How could they be? The bull in question was kept in the herd three years, thus leaving three crops of inferior calves for its owner, besides three crops for some eight or ten neighbors, as only seventy-five cents was charged for service fee and this was not always collected. The heifers were neither good milkers nor good breeders, and the male calves brought the lowest price on the market. Why? Because they were small for their age, did not show thrift or quality, and did not have the form on which to pile flesh. This man and his neighbors are to-day grouching because there is no money in farming. They deride the ambitious man who was farseeing enough to spend money on stock which would bring returns. There may be a little frenzied financing in the prices paid for some breeding animals, but considering the breeding and quality of some of the high-priced things the purchasers may not be so foolish as would appear on the surface.

At the sale above referred to there were some well-bred bulls of good lines and quality which sold at around one hundred and fifty dollars. If our friend had purchased one of these, in place of the one he did, we firmly believe that the transaction would have paid him a handsome dividend. The calves would easily have been worth ten or fifteen dollars apiece more. Consider this over a period of three years with steers and for generation after generation with the heifers. There are many three and four-year-old bulls of quality that can be purchased at bologna prices which would do good service for several years longer, and there are good breeding bull calves which bring little more than present beef prices at public auction. We cannot understand why there are so many inferior sires in service when better ones can be secured at a reasonable figure. Is it carelessness, thoughtlessness, ignorance of breeding principles, or just a desire to use anything that will get calves so long as little money changes hands in the transaction? Breeders who will leave inferior males entire and sell them for breeding purposes are no less free from committing a crime against the live-stock industry of the country than is the man who purchases. In fact, the former may be the greater sinner as he has sufficient knowledge of pedigrees and breeding principles to know better.

Let us look at the matter from a business standpoint. If the roughages and grains, commonly fed to live stock in Ontario, will make two pounds of gain per day on good grade steers, the progeny of a desirable sire of one of the beef breeds, while but one pound a day is made on grade steers, the progeny of equally good cows but of an inferior bull, what would the sire of the former be worth as compared with the latter? A bunch of steers, two years old, out of good cows and sired by a typey, nice-quality bull of one of the beef breeds, would weigh around 1,000 pounds each at two years old, and market quotations last November for this quality of stuff was between ten and eleven dollars a hundred. Thus a steer of the calibre which would feed well returned to the owner one hundred dollars and over. At the same time steers of the same age, but sired by a mongrel bull, weighed seven and eight hundred pounds and at eight cents per pound, the price paid for some steers of this quality, the man who used the poor bull and raised the steers got at the outside only sixty-four dollars apiece. Now, these two lots required the same amount of labor and practically the same quantities of the same kind of feeds, yet the returns showed a difference of upwards of thirty-six dollars per head; or if only ten steers were raised, a difference of two hundred and fifty dollars in one year, in favor of the good but higher-priced bull. Figure out what the good sire is worth when used on fifty or sixty cows and kept in service three years. Blood tells in all classes of stock. Grade cows mated with a bull of right quality and conformation produce market-toppers. The grand champion car lot at Chicago last December were a grade bunch, but the individuality of their sire was stamped on them. The market is full of mediocre feeders, stockers, and half-finished stuff, but there is a dearth of steers of export quality. Stockmen have many times remarked on the difficulty of purchasing steers of the quality that will give maximum returns in the feed-lot and stable. This should not be the case in a country like Canada. The scrub bull is largely responsible. For the sake of the cattle industry, let's get rid of him. If that doesn't appeal, consider the dollars and cents side of the question from your own standpoint. Why buy a bull for one hundred dollars that produces sixty-dollar steers at two years old, when a bull three times as good which will produce one-hundred-dollar steers at the same age, can be bought for three hundred dollars? Figure out the difference in returns from your own herd and see if the cheap-price, cheap-quality bull pays.

Grade and cross-bred cattle will always furnish the commercial stock of the country, but make that stock as good as possible. Use the best bull available. The same applies to pure-bred breeders, so that they may have better bulls for stockmen to use on the improved grade herds. Kick out the scrub and do it quick. Not only is he a menace to the country, but he aids in keeping live-stock returns at a minimum, and gives very low returns for feed consumed when compared with the better-bred bull.

THE FARM.

Fire Losses in Ontario.

EDITOR "THE FARMER'S ADVOCATE":

No person who has any interest in the prosperity of Ontario, can read the information concerning the fire losses of the Province during the past two or three years without experiencing a great deal of uneasiness. When a British steamer was sunk by a U-boat, there was always a chance of salvaging it—if a man steals your horse, the horse remains in existence and somebody benefits—but when a house or barn is burnt it is dead loss. No good comes to anyone by a fire.

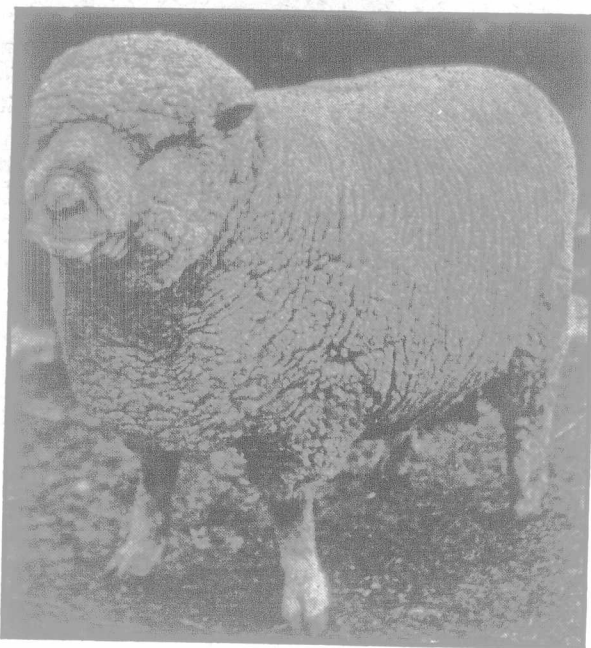
The fire losses in Ontario for 1918 are absolutely appalling. People have got so used to tremendous figures that it seems better to make comparisons with European statistics in order to show how very much greater fire losses are than they should be.

The fire waste in Europe, in ordinary times, averages 33 cents per head of the population; in Ontario, in 1918 the loss per head of the population was \$6.

This astounding state of affairs will, necessarily cause a thoughtful man a certain amount of alarm; any man who is not made uneasy can hardly claim that he is a good citizen. The fire loss for one day (\$40,000) would pay for a great deal of work necessary for the prevention of fires.

What is the great cause of fires in Ontario? This seems to be a hard question, but it can be put in another way: How many of the fires in Ontario during 1918 could have been prevented? The answer is easy: fore-knowledge would have prevented every one of them.

And that is just the point. There are not enough precautions taken in Ontario against fire—if there were, the fire loss per head would be nearer that of Europe. Instead of \$14,856,329 in 1918, it would have been around three-quarters of a million of dollars. Instead of costing \$91,000 a month, Ontario barn fires would have cost about \$5,000. And insurance rates would have been considerably less for 1919. Every fire costs money, and tends to keep up the insurance rates; and it is the duty of everybody to do his utmost to prevent fires—and to help stop them.



A "Shrop." Sire that Has Left Many Good Lambs

On farms the great cause of fires seems to be "spontaneous combustion," and the phrase is beginning to cause a lot of sarcasm now. Too many people have been content to return the cause of a fire as spontaneous combustion, without stating the cause of the spontaneous combustion. It is undeniable that there must have been, in every case, conditions leading to spontaneous combustion, so that in a large number of cases where "spontaneous combustion" has been returned by deputy fire marshals and others, as the cause of fires, the officials in question would have been more informative had they said instead that the cause was carelessness. Spontaneous combustion should be guarded against, even as much as you guard against your stock getting into the crops.

In many cases it has been shown that a straw stack has been too close to a barn; nine or ten days after threshing the stack has caught fire—and the barn has followed. The explanation vouchsafed in such cases is that a spark from the engine has lain in the straw and grown into a fire. But why build the stack so close—and why not keep a good watch? The farmer may have a very good answer to these questions, but it seems to be the impression that officials will not be so easily satisfied in the near future. But, in this connection, there will necessarily be sent to farmers a great deal of information of all descriptions. Farmers should never overlook a chance of beating the Fire-Fiend, which is their greatest enemy. And—do not overlook fire-extinguishers. According to a high United States fire official, there should be an approved fire extinguisher for every 2,000 cubic feet of space in the barn, and every person on the farm should know how to use them.

Lightning is another great cause of fire—and in the majority of cases the lightning rods installed by peripatetic salesmen are either inadequate or wrongly installed, in fact, lightning rods are sometimes installed

so as to increase the probability of fire. Of course, it is difficult for farmers to get competent men to install lightning rods, or to erect flues, but the little extra trouble is worth while. Defective flues are the cause of a very large number of fires—and defective flues should not exist.

There is no doubt that very strong action is necessary to attempt the diminution of fires in Ontario. If by so doing it would reduce the fire loss by 10 per cent., it would pay to employ three hundred inspectors at five dollars a day and five dollars a day expenses, to visit all buildings and give their occupants advice and instructions regarding the prevention of fires. In fact, if you could reduce the fire loss in Ontario ten per cent. you would save \$4,000 a day—and there are a great many things you can do with \$4,000 a day.

GEORGE DODDRIDGE.

Grey Co., Ont.

Paint and Plant to Beautify the Home.

In driving or motoring through a section of country in the vicinity of Caledonia, one will note the number of barns and out-buildings that are painted. The red barn, with the window and door frames painted white, certainly improves the appearance and must be an incentive for the owner and those working about the place to keep the yards and fences neat and tidy, to correspond with the appearance of the barn. It is surprising the effect that a well-kept place will have on the people living there. If buildings and fences are tumble-down and out of repair, it tends to give a depressed feeling and one is apt to become careless. The very opposite results where a start is made towards improvement. There is always that incentive to make things a little better and work toward an ideal in the home surroundings. For a mile or two in a stretch, in the district out of Caledonia, practically every barn is painted red. True, the paint has faded a little on some buildings, showing the wear of time, but there are others which look as if the paint had been applied but recently. If one man in a neighborhood should paint and improve, it would not be long before others would follow suit. In the district above mentioned, it looks as if one neighbor was vying with another in making his home attractive. This competitive spirit along this line works wonders in the appearance of the community. It would be well if the same line of work were started in hundreds of other communities in the Province. It would give a more prosperous and home-like appearance to the individual holdings. We realize that it takes time and money to make these improvements, and to beautify the home. Help is scarce and the farmer and his family are about worked to the limit in the performance of the duties which require first attention in the production of crops and looking after live stock. All the improvement need not be made in one year. It is well to draw up a plan of what is needed to make the place look better. The work could then be done in instalments. There is a certain amount of enjoyment in building and fixing up the home and its surroundings. True, there may be no financial returns derived from labor and money thus expended, but there is a satisfaction which, in reality, is worth more than cash to a multitude of people; to others, of course, the almighty dollar is of more importance. So far as painting the buildings and implements are concerned, the money and time spent return a dividend in prolonging the life of the materials from which they are built.

To go over a large barn with a coating of paint would require considerable time, especially if the brush were used. However, we have seen very good jobs done when the material was applied with a spray-pump. On rough lumber, two coatings are advisable. Paint, trees and shrubs are well worth while on and around the house and barn. Set the example in your community.

The Economic Will-O'-the-Wisp.

EDITOR "THE FARMER'S ADVOCATE":

Much confusion of thought exists with reference to the question of wages. Many people think that if they get higher wages they will be better off, and do not realize that the clamor for higher wages, if satisfied, generally leads to a proportionate increase in the prices of those things for which the wages go out in payment. The mechanic gets higher wages, let us say. This increase furnishes an excuse for the grocer, the shoemaker, the doctor and every other person who produces commodities or gives services to claim an increase in their wages, which they must add to the price of that which they sell. When you have gone round the circle everybody has higher wages and pays more for commodities or services. You are exactly where you started from.

The trouble is that people do not sufficiently distinguish between real and nominal wages. Our wages are nominally measured in terms of money; but our real wages consist of commodities or services which we buy with our money wages. We cannot, therefore, as a people, increase our real wages without becoming more efficient producers, either of commodities or services. The average real wage which the people of any country can get is quite definite, and is the total quantity (of commodities or services) available for domestic consumption or use, divided by the number of users. Of course the question is complicated by the existence of international obligations of a financial character, but the matter is in its essence quite a simple proposition; we can only divide what is produced, or what is gotten in exchange for what is produced; and

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