

The Farmer's Advocate and Home Magazine

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SUCCEED

ESTABLISHED

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Vol. XLIX.

LONDON, ONTARIO, DECEMBER 24, 1914.

No. 1161

EDITORIAL.

Merry Christmas.

Buy your seed corn early and buy it on the ear.

"Your Christmas Number eclipsed all others" writes a subscriber.

Conserve the feed, but do not stint the stock below a maintenance ration.

All speakers at Guelph Winter Fair urged more attention to live stock.

Let us have seed centers established all over the Province, yes the Dominion.

Agricultural education must be taken to the farmer. Help us to accomplish this end.

The threshing machine stands condemned as one of the greatest spreaders of noxious weeds.

Horses may not be so numerous at the big shows as formerly, but they still attract the crowds.

The breeder of good seed is doing a work equally important with the breeding of high-grade live stock.

Co-operation makes greatest strides when members are few in number, but energetic, honest and enthusiastic.

Planting corn by the check-row method makes for clean farming if the proper amount of cultivation is afterwards given.

A comparison of live-stock conditions with those in the United States shows much room for improvement in this country.

Unauthorized and fake newspaper canvassers are still doing business. We ask all our subscribers to beware of these "crooks."

A steady stream of products to market means a steady flow of money to the producer's pocket. Rushes are costly, and the seller is the loser.

Now for the most profitable winter's reading yet. We invite practical farmers to discuss all matters pertaining to farming in our columns.

"Never before in the history of the live-stock industry was the future brighter than right now." These are the words of a prominent live-stock man who should know.

It must not be forgotten that Canada's boys and girls are her most important crop, and that education in the calling to which they are to engage is the best cultivation for the crop.

A correspondent called the other day and told us that our Questions and Answers columns had saved him several dollars. He is a careful reader, and also stated that by preserving his copies he had been saved the trouble of writing us many times by seeing the same question previously answered.

Variety in Crops.

There was a time when on the average farm little attention was paid to variety in crops, but that time is gone forever. And yet we have too many varieties in nearly all our most commonly-grown crops. Take corn for instance. Most any corn-growing farmer could name off-hand two dozen varieties, and yet of flints and dents only seven are recommended, as follows: flint—Compton's Early, Longfellow, Salzer's North Dakota, and dent—Bailey, Wisconsin No. 7, White Cap Yellow and Golden Glow.

Potatoes are another crop with altogether too many commonly-grown varieties. They number up near to the hundred mark. Ninety-five varieties have been grown on the Experimental Farm, Guelph, in a single year. Could growers not get along better, and would yields not be larger if, for early, efforts were confined to one or two varieties like Early Eureka, and for late such varieties as Empire State, Rural New Yorker No. 2 and Davies' Warrior. This is saying nothing against many other good varieties, but we have too many.

Likewise other grains. If one takes the trouble to look over Field Crop Competition awards he generally finds Dawson's Golden Chaff at the head of winter wheats. Then, why not more Dawson's and fewer other kinds? The same is true of oats where we find O. A. C. No. 72 and Banner leading. In six-rowed barley O. A. C. No. 21 is surely outstanding, and should replace most other varieties. Our aim should be to reduce the number of varieties and improve the few selected.

Home Made Sugar.

Among the many articles in the Christmas issue of "The Farmer's Advocate" attracting a keen and general interest was that relating to the Canadian sugar industry. The sharp advance in prices, which has been levied for months past upon consumers of a product so heavily and universally used, has awakened no little complaint, because of the feeling that beyond the exceptional demand it was uncalled for. It is not easy to forecast what course the trade may take later on, though easier prices for "granulated" have been predicted after the New Year. Farmers, and their name is legion, who are the fortunate possessors of maple bushes, can relieve the situation as far as they are personally concerned, and also bring a wholesome product into more widespread use at very fair returns, by preparing to extend and improve their sugar and syrup operations next spring. These products, while they do not actually take the place of the fine, white, refined sugar are pure and wholesome sweeteners, and may well be used as substitutes for the yellow grades. Maple syrup ought to enter into more general use in Canadian homes, and a campaign on its behalf might not be an inappropriate sequel to the apple campaign of the Minister of Trade and Commerce. When it is remembered that Canada annually consumes about 600,000,000 lbs. of sugar, including some 25,000,000 or 30,000,000 lbs. of the fine beet product, and the output of the maple industry in sugar or its equivalent in syrup is approximately but 22,000,000 lbs. produced by some 25,000 farmers, there is surely room for expansion. The sugar shanty should, therefore, be put in good order, and the evaporating and finishing outfit overhauled during the winter. If not done so already the boiling

arch can be repaired during the first spell of mild weather, and if the outfit is out of date and repair it should be replaced by something better so that when the first run comes the sap can be properly cared for, and operations conducted upon such a scale warranted by the number of trees and help available. The new Dominion legislation enacted as a safeguard both to producers and consumers should lend security to the industry by preventing the improper use of the word maple as a cover to the sale of imitation products. "Business as usual" and a little better, ought to be the working motto in every maple syrup and sugar plant the coming season.

Canada Under-Stocked.

According to figures given in an address by Prof. Barton, of Macdonald College, at the Guelph Winter Fair, Canada is far from being over-stocked. Canadians, and justly so, pride themselves on having a great live-stock country, and some of the best live stock in the world, but there is not enough of it. Just think, we have only 1-63 of the world's cattle, 1-47 of the horses, 1-28 of the sheep and 1-58 of the swine. United States with a smaller area, has $\frac{1}{2}$ of the world's cattle, about $\frac{1}{2}$ of the horses, 1-12 of the sheep, and almost $\frac{1}{2}$ the swine. Even on a per capita basis, the United States outdoes Canada in this respect. This great contrast should serve to stimulate our stockmen to greater effort. Everyone recognizes the natural aptitude of this country from east to west for live-stock production; everyone is agreed that our foundation stock is right; and all are sure that we have as good live-stock breeders as any in the world. Then let us have a live-stock boom, a little more activity, a little more demand for good stock and an increase in number as well as in quality.

The Seed Center.

What the live-stock breeders' associations and breeders' clubs are to the live-stock industry, Seed Centers are destined to be to the seed industry. Perhaps no other equally important branch of the farmer's business has been so neglected as breeding and selection of pure, clean, sound, plump, virile seed grain. While a man would search the country for the best bull to head his herd and the best stallion to mate with his mare, he would at the same time sow any seed that he could get at least expense and least trouble and take chances as to the crop. The result has been poorer and poorer seed and smaller and smaller yields, with an increasing quantity of noxious weeds and a lower grade of grain all around. The Seed Center should remedy this condition. All that is needed is a band of men in each locality, (those with experience tell us twelve is enough) to get together, decide on a specialty of one class of grain or seeds and one variety of that class, and then co-operate to improve that seed until it is pure-bred and registered, and just as worthy of a pedigree as the most fashionably-bred Shorthorn or Clydesdale in the world. It is being done right now, and a success is being made of it. One young man at the Guelph Winter Fair told how when a Seed Center had been established in his locality and registered seed produced, they had on his own farm increased the yield of winter wheat by ten to twelve bushels per acre, and the price of this wheat forty cents per bushel above the current market price for ordinary wheat