

**THE FARMER'S ADVOCATE & HOME MAGAZINE**

THE LEADING AGRICULTURAL JOURNAL IN THE DOMINION.

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**Prize Articles—New Offer.**

In order to afford readers generally an opportunity to contribute to the columns of the FARMER'S ADVOCATE, thereby increasing its interest and value to all, we will give a prize of \$5 for the best, most practical, and most seasonable article received each month, the subject being left to the writer's choice. Articles should be written sufficiently "ahead of time" to enable readers to utilize the ideas contained the same season, and must reach us not later than the 15th of each month. Articles not awarded the prize, but of sufficient merit to use, will be paid for at the rate of ten cents per inch—our regular offer, as above.

**Gambling in Food Supplies.**

The greatest evil of the present day is the ease with which a number of the great monopolists control the different food supplies, in the production of which the agriculturists of this continent are so intensely interested.

Farmers may strive to their uttermost to produce large crops of grain, or, with equal enterprise, go extensively into feeding hogs or beef cattle, and just when these are ready for market the gambler gets in his little game, and it matters not if the product is short or plentiful, by endless scheming he manages to get more than his legitimate profit.

At one time men of moderate capital contrived to get a living by handling the produce of the soil, and grain-shipping and pork-packing was carried on by large numbers of men who, by bitter experience, have been forced to give way to a few larger monopolists, whose whole study is to manipulate markets so that they may turn to account the losses of others less fortunate. Hutchins runs a corner on wheat, Cudahy does the same on pork, somebody else tries his hand on corn, while the Big Four, at Chicago, control the beef and refrigerator meat business of a continent.

There is no greater evil to the trade generally than the running of corners; it has destroyed confidence in our markets, while the wide fluctuations caused by speculators in their endeavors to get produce below cost has killed out the smaller dealers.

Many, on account of their heavy investments, cannot draw out if they would, but it is safe to say that none relish the hourly changes in the value of their stocks on hand. In the earlier days, when there were no "corner" runners, there were fair profits for all and far less worry.

The world is large and the consumptive demand ever increasing, but such gross uncertainty reigns through fictitious values that no dealer knows where he stands.

"Phil" Armour gives his million toward an Institute of Technology, and others subscribe largely of their ill-gotten gains to charity, and the world looks on and applauds.

Statistics may show there is a short crop of hogs, good demand, unprecedentedly low stocks, but if these generous, noble-hearted gentlemen want your stock they will hammer prices down till you have not a dollar left and must let go. Then, when they have it all, to keep stocks low and avoid concentration, they will send large quantities abroad and sell it to foreigners at prices away below home quotations in order to keep the supply short and the market up. They know where almost every pound of stuff is, and just how much squeezing the holder can stand. When he is cleaned out and his pockets turned inside out, then they run it up and clean out the consumers, pausing occasionally to wipe out some of the producers who may have bought again some of the stuff they sold too cheaply.

Ordinarily gambling only hurts the gamblers and their families, but this constant gambling and the excessive fluctuation in the necessities of life reach every citizen with a family, and are making Americans more a nation of gamblers than traders. The gamblers control our produce. They must have it at rock bottom and sell it at the top notch. The producer and consumer are not a consideration to these jolly fellows, who meet together a few hours daily to play shuttlecock with our bread and bacon, and then give a million dollars of conscience money to charities.

**Facts Concerning Apple Spot.**

The main points to be remembered in connection with this malady are that it is caused by a minute parasitic fungus, a low form of plant life, which, by living on the leaves and fruit of the apple, prevents assimilation in the former and the development of the latter. It is not so generally known that the same fungus attacks both the leaves and the fruit. A few facts to be remembered in connection with successful treatment are: 1. That it is perpetuated by spores, which take the place of seeds. 2. That these spores, formed in the autumn, live over winter upon the old leaves, fruit and young branches. 3. That these germinate in the spring as soon as conditions are favorable, which is usually about the time the young foliage is developing. The efficacy of the copper salt remedies have now come to be generally recognized, and the fruit grower who does not use these remedies is neglecting a simple precaution in direct opposition to his best interests. Ammoniacal copper carbonate and dilute Bordeaux mixture (half strength) are now the leading fungicides for apple and pear scab and grape mildew.

**Ram Sales.**

BY D. MCCRAE, GUELPH.

The time has come in the sheep industry of Ontario when a better system is needed for the disposal of pure-bred rams. That which obtains favor with the foremost sheep breeders in Britain is the system of auction sales at convenient centres. This could very well be managed under the auspices of the Dominion Sheep Breeders' Association. The subject is one worthy the consideration of the members of this Association at the coming annual meeting, to be held during the Fat Stock Show in Guelph early in December.

In Britain the system of annual sales has been long in vogue and is very popular. In fact, it is so popular that it is fast taking the place of the old style of dickering at local fairs, and now nearly all animals sent to the weekly or monthly markets are passed under the hammer. This has been an outgrowth of the system adopted at the ram sales. Shearing rams are those principally dealt in, though a few breeders offer ram lambs, but the latter are not in favor, as the breeders have learnt that mature sires are most profitable. With the sales there is usually a show, and it is a good test of the judging and the awards if the public endorse by bidding the awards of the judges. This is not always the case, however, and some well-known lots of old-established breeding will bring far higher prices than their appearance in a show ring would warrant. The top of the tree is held, not by the winner of the first at the show, but by the breeder who gains the highest average in the sale. Every breeder knows that it is not always the highest fed and plumpest animal that he would select as the best breeder. He also knows that at our shows the prize animals are not always the ones the judges themselves would select to pay out their own money for as breeding animals to place in their own flocks. Such a sale might bring out the best from all the breeders, and it would certainly be an admirable method to bring buyers and sellers together. Not only would Canadian buyers be benefitted, but many Americans would no doubt come and see what was for sale, and be purchasers if they got what suited them. As to place for a beginning, the Agricultural College would be as suitable as any, and being a Government institution should be available for such a scheme. The accommodation would be ample, and if found convenient the College authorities could at the same time dispose of their surplus stock. The time is a matter of importance. That most suitable for the majority of the buyers should be chosen; it should not interfere with our large fall exhibitions. The breeders will be well able to name the best time. One day, or two at most, would be ample to do the work, as, if necessary, the selling of different breeds could go on simultaneously. The result would probably be a better class of sheep throughout Ontario.

**The Farmer's Tool House.**

We have often spoken of the convenience and value of a small tool house, which should be found upon the premises of every farmer, in which on rainy days, or whenever there may be a day or part of a day when there is nothing particular to go at, implements and machinery out of repair may be mended and made ready for use. Or in the event of anything happening when in operation, and at times, too, when work is hurrying, we can always have at hand the necessary tools to make repairs immediately, and go on with the work without much delay. We have often heard a farmer say that he had fully expected to have finished a certain field, if it had not been for that stone breaking some portion of his machinery, to repair which he had to send off two miles, when it should have been done by himself on his own premises in half an hour or so. Now, that very implement had shown signs of weakness the preceding autumn, but having no tool house or work shop, and no tools of his own, the necessary repairing was not done, and in the middle of the season, when everything is pressing, the very thing happens that he was afraid several months before would happen, and which he fully intended should be repaired in time for the season's work. It is really impossible to conduct a farm in all its parts as it should be without such a shop, in which so many things can be done at leisure times, especially during inclement weather. Allow us to urge everyone who lacks this important annex to all well-regulated farms to build such a shop and fill it with the necessary tools at once, in order that all requisite repairing may be done before the busy season again opens. Once established such a convenience, and the wonder will soon be how it was possible to manage the farm before without the little workshop.