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EDITORIAL.

Preparing for Seeding.

The unusual amount of snow remaining upon the ground at the end of March in Eastern Canada would seem to preclude the possibility of farming operations commencing at as early a date as in the average of years. This state of things renders it all the more important that everything required to rush the cultivation and seeding as soon as the land is in fit condition should be provided beforehand, ready for immediate use. A sufficient supply of horse power, and that in fit condition to do its best work, is one of the first requirements. To this end the horses will need to be liberally fed, and to receive sufficient exercise to insure them against stocking of the limbs or digestive ailments. The collars and harness should be looked after to see that all are in the best condition, and if the horses can in the meantime be employed at any light work, it will be all the better, as the collars will thus get fitted to their shoulders, and the shoulders hardened a little before steady, hard work commences.

It will hardly be necessary to remind the progressive farmer that the necessary seed, well cleaned, should be ready to take up when required, and that the plows, cultivators and harrows be sharpened, and put in condition to do their best work. Thorough and effective cultivation depends much upon the sharpness of these implements. A dull cultivator, that slides over the hard places instead of breaking them up, may make all the difference between a half crop and an abundant yield, which can only be reasonably expected where the seed-bed has been well prepared, by thorough stirring and fining of the soil.

Fodder Cheese.

The letter from President Paget, of the Western Ontario Dairymen's Association, published in the last issue of the "Farmer's Advocate," urging factorymen and makers against the policy of making fodder cheese, is one that should not be lost sight of. Fodder cheese is made for the most part from the milk of cows either at the close of a long milking period or at the beginning of a new one. They are stabled and fed on fodders which by this time will have in many cases passed their most palatable period. Apart from other defects, the cheese will obviously be lacking in that fine flavor which is a distinguishing characteristic of summer-made Canadian cheddars, which have won a position of pre-eminence in the British markets. A good deal of this "fodder cheese" is supposed to go into quick local consumption, but the surplus finding its way to England must damage the reputation of our cheese to that extent. The fodder cheese problem would seem to be an aftermath of the "winter dairying" campaign conducted a few years ago, as a result of which a good many cheese factories undertook the making of winter butter. It was soon apparent that a good many makers did not take kindly to the extra toil of buttermaking; the supply of milk was not sufficient to make it a paying enterprise, and added to the labor of milking, the skim milk, being very stale, and having been heated for separation, soon became sour and thick, and only fit for pig feeding. However, it had the effect of stimulating silo building, and the better winter feeding of cows. Dairymen found themselves able to produce the milk and increase their revenues by sending the milk in many cases to makers who continued to manufac-

ture cheese on through the winter, or who began making earlier than they did under former conditions. In cheese-factory districts people dislike the labor of home buttermaking, and the temptation when fodder cheese sells fairly well is to continue sending the milk away for that purpose. Our own conviction is that cows will rear better calves, and that all things considered will give a better return for the year when allowed a couple of months rest from milking. Dairymen should raise their own heifer calves, instead of depending upon auction sales, and to start the calf properly it should have whole milk for a few days and then sweet skim or separator milk for a month or so, with such supplemental food as will take the place of the fat removed. By the middle or end of April the young calf will have had a fair start in life, and then let the milk go to the cheese factory, as Mr. Paget suggests.

The Railway Commission's Case.

The decision of the Railway Commission upon the telephone case with which it had to deal, had a very questionable reception by the public at large. The great surprise to the majority of those who follow the deliberations of such bodies, was to learn that its decisions are not final in all cases. The fact that the first of its problems could not receive a satisfactory and cogent solution was unfortunate for the impression it made upon the public mind. No doubt too much was expected of it; and in the light of our saner reflections it must be evident that in matters of law it is well that the judiciary is called upon to make a conclusive disposition of the case. It is not as well, however, that in matters of policy the commission allows a prolonged litigation in higher courts. In the affair of the Bell Telephone Company and the C. P. R., it was found (and all the commissioners agreed upon the point) that there was a legal and binding agreement by which the former was given the sole right to install telephones in the latter's stations at Fort William and Port Arthur. For the commission to have broken this agreement, whether it were just or not, and even if it were in the interests of trade, would have been for the Government to have regarded lightly the force of legal obligations in all matters of agreement within the Dominion, a step at once detrimental to the best interests of the nation, for it would thus bring a stigma upon the name of Canada that every one of her citizens would resent. Such were the final decisions of the commissioners.

There is, however, the other side to the question. The fact that the Bell Telephone Company has a monopoly of the right to instal instruments in C.P.R. stations is established, but the justice of this privilege cannot be vindicated upon any ground whatever. We find in existence a law that sanctions the betrayal of our rights, and places us at the mercy of soulless monopolies, one of which, the Bell Telephone Company, cannot lay any claim to being instrumental in developing either the latent or potent resources of the country. This is a condition of affairs that the country will not tolerate. It violates the very principles of our boasted British justice, and no arrangement of the affairs of the Bell Telephone Company, the C.P.R., and the municipalities of Fort William and Port Arthur will be considered a settlement that does not abolish the monopolistic principles involved. Nor should either the Telephone Company or the C.P.R. receive a penny of recompense or reimbursement. Both have received payment, and are receiving payment, for all

their services to the country, and their demands for remuneration can only be regarded as a form of legalized highway robbery.

A Provincial Railway.

The second report of the Temiskaming and Northern Ontario Railway commission, which describes accurately all the facts in connection with the 112 miles of railway now under construction in Northern Ontario, contains many facts of interest to prospective emigrants to that portion of the Province. It describes the country between the southern end of the railway and the Temiskaming clay belt at the 103rd mile as being crossed by ridges of rock and interspersed with lakes, containing occasional patches of good agricultural land. This portion is, however, extremely rich in forest growth of pine, spruce, birch, cedar, hemlock, and maple, and gives indication of containing rich deposits of iron and nickel. From the 103rd to the 112th mile, the line passes through a comparatively level belt of fine clay loam, which continues to a width of from 12 to 20 miles along the route of the extension which it has been proposed to run northward from New Liskeard to meet the Grand Trunk Pacific. At the northern end the survey made for this extension enters the great clay belt, which contains about 16,000,000 acres of fertile land. Where the forest growth becomes too small to be very valuable as timber, it still supplies an almost unlimited quantity of pulpwood, and the winters, though cold and steady, are described as being shorter and milder than those of Manitoba. Liskeard, the present terminus, beyond which for 25 miles settlers have already pushed their way, is a town of 1,500 inhabitants. Judging from the report, it would seem that Northern Ontario offers countless homes and incalculable opportunities for industry to the vast army of pioneers who will yet extend the bounds of habitation far to the northward in Canada. The illustrations given in the report furnish an excellent idea of the character of the railroad and the country through which it passes. It is being constructed for the Government of Ontario by a commission of well-known business men: Messrs. Robt. Jaffray (chairman); Edward Gurney, Toronto; M. J. O'Brien, Renfrew; B. W. Falger, Kingston, and F. E. Leonard, London; Mr. P. E. Ryan being the secretary-treasurer. The future of this road will be followed by the public with great interest.

Problems of the Soil.

In the "Farm Department" of this issue we begin the publication of a series of timely and important articles under the general designation of the problems of the soil. This is a line of agricultural study that is very apt to be overlooked in some of its aspects, but it is none the less vital, for the reason that as the country grows older the nature of the soil and conditions change, and practice, while it will necessarily be varied, must be conducted upon sound principles if successful and profitable crops are to be grown. The writer of these articles brings to the discussion of soil tillage a thorough technical knowledge, backed up by extended experience on one of the best Canadian farms. This week his subject is "Proper condition of soil moisture," and next week he will deal with "Preparing the seed-bed." We commend to our readers a careful perusal of the series. Seeding operations for another season's crop will soon be in progress. Let the work be done with understanding and thoroughness.