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THE FARMER'S ADVOCATE & HOME MAGAZINE

WILLIAM WELD, EDITOR AND PROPRIETOR.

THE LEADING AGRICULTURAL JOURNAL PUBLISHED IN THE DOMINION.

The FARMER'S ADVOCATE is published on or about the 1st of each month. It is impartial and independent of all cliques or parties, handsomely illustrated with original engravings, and furnishes the most profitable, practical and reliable information for farmers, dairymen, gardeners and stockmen, of any publication in Canada.

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Our Monthly Prize Essays.

CONDITIONS OF COMPETITION.

1.—No award will be made unless one essay at least comes up to the standard for publication.

2.—The essays will be judged by the ideas, arguments, conciseness and conformity with the subject, and not by the grammar, punctuation or spelling, our object being to encourage farmers who have enjoyed few educational advantages.

3.—Should one or more essays, in addition to the one receiving the first prize, present a different view of the question, a second prize will be awarded, but the payment will always be in agricultural books. First prize essayists may choose books or money, or part of both. Selections of books from our advertised list must be sent in not later than the 15th of the month in which the essays appear; otherwise we will make the selections ourselves. Second prize essayists may order books for any amount not exceeding \$3.00, but no balance will be remitted in cash. When first prize essayists mention nothing about books, we will remit the money.

Our prize essay on *Personal Observations on the Effects of the Removal of our Forests*, has been awarded to Mr. Thos. Beall, Lindsay, Ont. Several second prize essays have been awarded; we shall publish as many as we can find space for. Mr. A. E. Lussier, whose essay appears in this issue, has not given us his address.

A prize of \$5.00 will be given for the best original essay on *Improving the Soil by Green Manuring*. Essays to be sent in not later than February 15.

A prize of \$5.00 will be given for the best original essay on *The Farmer's Garden*. Essays to be sent in not later than March 15.

To Our Subscribers.

We have lately received letters containing money in which the senders have omitted giving their Post Offices. Please examine the date label on your paper and see if you have been credited with your remittance. The date on your label shows to what time your subscription is paid. If there be any error, notify us at once, so that it may be rectified immediately.

Editorial.

Scientific and Practical Professors—Sayings and Doings of our Young Philosophers.

We recently attended the annual meetings of the Eastern and Western Dairymen's Association, and made jottings of such matters as we thought would be of interest and practical use to our readers. The gist of the proceedings is nut-shelled in our dairy columns; but those who attended these meetings may feel disposed to insist that we should apologize for not conceding more space to the speeches of our budding philosophers, who occupied about three-fourths of the time devoted to the subjects discussed.

Prof. Jas. W. Robertson, who had recently been elevated to the dairy chair of our Model Farm, and who had just returned from the Colonial Exhibition, where he superintended our dairy interests, received marked attention, which was quite natural from the standpoint of the ability and enthusiasm which he displayed. Considering the short time during which he has administered our dairy affairs, he has accomplished marvellous results for our country, our dairying interests and himself. He is thoroughly practical both in butter and in cheese making, and as a man of business capacity, he has few, if any, rivals in Canada. He is a well-educated gentleman, and has done honor to our country as a representative of our dairying interests at the Colonial and Indian Exhibition. Although still a young man, he is exhaustive and fluent on the platform, and is equally facile with the pen. Possessing all these virtues and all these rare combinations of talent, sustained by an admirable reputation and an honorable business career, we would readily pass over any misgivings wherever the interests of our farmers and dairymen are not at stake.

The work of a professor of dairying at our Agricultural College and Experimental Farm is, or rather should be, largely experimental, and no professor, no matter how profound his learning, how enlarged his practical experience, or how unstained his integrity, if he has no practical experience in experimental science, can succeed, all his other brilliant qualities being more detrimental than beneficial. On previous occasions we pointed out what injuries may be sustained by foisting the results of an investigation upon the farmers without prefacing them with what has been accomplished in the same direction by other investigators. The conclusions of Prof. Robertson which we publish are scientific as well as practical, and they may be safely followed by practical farmers and dairymen; he has won public confidence and respect in the principle he has followed, that of

inaugurating tests in order to ascertain whether or not our native stock "must go"—out of the dairy business. By doing so, he has showed his adaptability for working in the interests of our farmers instead of those of our live-stock manipulators.

In his other investigations, however, the professor has not proved a success. A professor of agriculture having informed him that stock did not require salt, Mr. Robertson set to work to test the validity of this "theory." He showed by his experiments that his cows shrank in their yield of milk when salt was withheld, and gained up again when it was re-supplied. He intends repeating the experiments for the purpose of further demolishing the said professor. We may be permitted to inform Prof. Robertson that he may save himself all this trouble for the reasons (1) that there are many other experiments of more practical value which should engage his attention, and (2) that his experiments, conducted after his fashion, are utterly worthless. This subject has perplexed many of the greatest investigators of modern times. The professor lays great stress on the fact that cows go back in their milk if allowed to fret from any cause, but he does not say whether or not the decrease was caused from fretting after salt. The experiment, to have any value, should be conducted with cows that have not been accustomed to salt; at any rate, if he continues the experiments, he should tell us something about the chemical composition and physical characteristics of the milk from unsalted cows; also give us an approximation of the saline constituents in the food consumed, the succulence of the ration, the quantity of water drunk, &c., and let us know whether the food was cooked or uncooked. We would raise no objection to this investigation at present were it not for the fact that the professor is scattering his theories broadcast as if they were pure gospel. A more superficial experiment could never enter into the head of any man.

He conducted another experiment for the purpose of testing the action of rennet in cheese. It is generally accepted that the action of rennet continues until the cheese is consumed, but he thinks he has proved that it ceases with the coagulation of the milk, natural fermentation performing the rest of the work. This experiment has little practical value; besides, it must be conducted on scientific principles, and his investigation has not been extensive enough to prove anything. He succeeded in securing the approval of Mr. D. McPherson, and an immense deal of valuable time was wasted in the theorizings. Prof. Arnold, who was present and who has made the action of ferments his life's study, could have settled the question in a few words; but the