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Farmer's Advocate and Home Journal

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EDITORIAL

The New Year and Its Work

Another year has passed into history and already a start is made in 1910. How many have planned to make this year different from those that are gone as far as farming operations are concerned? There is no sound reason why each succeeding year should be viewed by the farmer as the same as the ones that are spent. A stricter attention to details and initiating something new are prime factors in adding enjoyment to a life's work. Business men and office clerks change their systems to facilitate work, to ensure thoroughness, or to relieve the monotony. Why should not farmers do likewise?

This century finds farming one of the foremost industries. Business methods are a necessity; changed systems and plans to meet new conditions that constantly arise are essential to financial success and to maximum pleasure in going about the daily duties. Those who work along business lines and intelligently investigate in order to ascertain what methods are worth following are numbered among the prosperous; they are the men who never are heard to pronounce farming a failure or a drudgery.

Now while the year is young, and while actual work demands less attention than at other seasons is a good time to make a start along new lines. Among the important details that prove to be profitable and interesting are: The procuring of a book in which is kept an account of receipts and expenditures; the setting apart of reasonable time to read uptodate and practical agricultural journals and books; the making of preparations for special attention to one or more operations in connection with crops or livestock, and the determination to plan ahead

so that all work will be done with thoroughness and dispatch. These are simple details; on many farms they are not considered worthy of thought. However, a review of the situation on farms in any country shows that those who do not consider such points lightly are the farmers who are numbered among the prosperous in a community—the men to whom neighbors go for advice.

Clydesdale Ideals

In discussing the waning popularity of Clydesdales in the United States on another page of this issue, "Our Scottish Letter," points out most clearly what type of horse is now wanted by the trained judge. No Clydesdale breeder, he says, desires to breed an undersized animal; he wants to breed them as big as he can, but he will not sacrifice, in showyard judging, mere weight, which is secondary—because more easily obtained—to wearing properties of feet and legs, which are all-important and difficult to obtain. In the showyard emphasis is placed on what is most valuable and most difficult to obtain in a draft horse.

This summing up by "Scotland Yet" is close to the point. He admits that the exportation years ago of inferior specimens—animals that owners wanted to find dead on the ocean in order that they might get insurance money—this breed was done an injury that most likely will last for all time. Americans wanted a heavy horse, but when they found one with the necessary weight and more quality than was found in the Clydesdales seen by them they pinned their faith to the dual characteristic.

In Canada—particularly the Western provinces—a few years more would have found conditions similar to those existing in the United States. An annual influx of Americans and their stock spread the gospel of weight and quality in horses. Newcomers from the Old Land were not slow to point out that Clydesdales would fill the bill. But for many it was a difficult task to find the kind wanted. The result is that Percherons have risen in general popularity. Recent years, however, have found more discretion in selection of animals for importation to this land. It has at least been realized that it is not safe to jeopardize the popularity of a great breed by injudicious selling of breeding stock.

Farmers in Western Canada must have big, strong horses. They care little whether they are Clydesdale, Percheron, Shire or other breed, as long as they wear well. But if they can find greater quality—cleaner bone and more style—in one than in another, it is an easy matter to guess where the preference will be placed.

Deploable Shortsightedness

Speaking at the Ontario Winter Fair at Guelph, Dr. Rutherford, Dominion Livestock Commissioner, reminded his hearers that breeders of pure-bred stock, the class of men who ought to be most interested in the fight against bovine tuberculosis, were the ones from whom most troublesome opposition was encountered. This is deplorable. While much faddism and extremeness has been given play in connection with tuberculosis and the tuberculin test, still tuberculin is the best means of diagnosis we have, and should be resorted to, in conjunction with healthful conditions and wise breeding, with a view to eradicating the dread disease from our herds and keeping it out. Every stockman can and should do this voluntarily in his own interest, apart altogether from anything the law may compel. It is not good business to breed tuberculosis, and neither patriotic nor honorable to knowingly or carelessly disseminate it throughout the country in pure-bred breeding stock.

Winter Cattle Feeding

Discussion is offered in this issue of the subject of winter feeding—cattle feeding especially. Of late years we have been getting away from the ideas formerly held on winter feeding. New methods have been advocated, outdoor feeding has been introduced and the value of care and good stabling discounted. It is as well to remember, however, that the progress of the cattle industry, will, in future, be along lines suited to the requirements of the mixed farmer. The rancher, we are told, has sung his swan song and must perforce disappear. The mixed farmer is succeeding him in the cattle business, and cattle feeding as adapted to mixed farming must prevail.

Winter feeding in yards, in bluffs or in sheltered locations of one kind or another has advantages. Tests at Experiment stations and the experiences of individual feeders, indicate that it is rather more profitable than feeding in stables. Less labor is required, low temperatures do not seem to affect the laying on of flesh, more profitable gains have been made feeding outside with the thermometer around minus twenty or more, than were made in expensive stables. But outside feeding has disadvantages from the standpoint of the mixed farmer, and after all it is from his standpoint that the solution of the question has finally to be found. We are glad, therefore, to offer what information we can on this side of the feeding business.

It is difficult to write of winter cattle feeding without running up against the question: Does it pay? Frankly the farmer who embarks in the cattle feeding business these days takes quite a chance of making a fortune. Several things are against him. Market conditions