

The Farmer's Advocate AND HOME MAGAZINE.

THE LEADING AGRICULTURAL JOURNAL IN THE
DOMINION.

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JOHN WELD, Manager.

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the best year the farmers of the district ever had their labor income was, in one-third of the cases, scarcely a hired laborer's wage, and in all cases not high enough to attract capital to farming as an investment. This is the best year; what of the bad years or the average?

But, after all, there is something besides money in farming. There is satisfaction, which is more worth while. The farmer is a producer not a parasite. He deals with living things. He works close to nature. Crops and live stock grow and flourish under his skilful management. If he loves the land he has the best job on earth, for his profits cannot be measured in dollars and cents. Health and happiness are the only things which matter. These come with fresh air and freedom of the open fields and the satisfaction derived therefrom. Yes, as an old friend of ours has said: "I have seen many rich and famous men, but never one made happy by riches or by fame. It's character that counts; and character grows strong and clean and sturdy on the land. The farm is the place to raise a family."

Fair profits for all will keep a reasonable percentage on the farms, for people in the country must live and are entitled to as good a living as any under the sun. We have no use for the "hog," no matter what his business is, and maintain that farming, while it harbors a few, is just as free from this undesirable as is any other business.

An investigation carried on by the Dairy and Cold Storage Branch of the Dominion Department of Agriculture revealed the fact that out of 5,620 sires at the head of dairy herds listed, forty-seven per cent. were grades and one-third of the remaining pure-breds of a very inferior order. There is room for more high-class, pure-blooded sires in all classes and breeds of stock. The sire is half the herd when a good one, and all of it when a bad individual.

If this is an "old-fashioned" winter, most people would welcome a return to the latest style.

Government Management of Railways.

EDITOR "THE FARMER'S ADVOCATE":

With your permission I wish to add a few considerations to the subject of the editorial in "The Farmer's Advocate" of Jan 10th, entitled "The Railway Situation in Canada", by the way the most concise and lucid statement I have yet seen. To take over control of the roads not now under government management is, in brief, the proposal discussed. Your readers will, I believe, concede the reasonableness of the contention that for the government to assume and operate the non-paying systems while the one paying ten per cent. dividends and laying by "to the good" large sums, remained the preserve of its stockholders and those in control, would be an absurdity and an injustice to the country. The C. P. R. is so prosperous not altogether by the acknowledged capability of its management but also because of its more favorable position due to benefactions in location and to the immense and valuable land grants, cash subsidies, etc., conferred upon the project by the country. It is rather late in the day to assume that the public must keep off the grass now as we were, in effect, lately advised by the distinguished baron at the head of this particular enterprise. What the state can do in war time it may find it necessary to do at other times and it is not likely that after Great Britain and the United States boldly assuming control of the railways that, in any event, things will quietly revert to their old status quo. And, if the state can will the conscription of men for military service in the common cause, it can summon the service of men for the country in other capacities and it can conscript the lesser things as well, such as the enterprises which men have brought into being. It was counted a rather liberal move that the country should pledge the Victory Loan subscribers $5\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. interest upon their money, which they would help to pay themselves, and the country is concluding that it shall have some voice, at least as to the accumulations in excess of the ten per cent. allowed under its agreement with the company upon amounts actually invested in the C. P. R. Increasing the freight rates will not be reconciled with these swollen dividends. The cry of confiscation and robbery may be raised. But steady! The country has invested many millions in the road which with rates levied on the principle of all the traffic and travel will bear, have made those earnings and dividends possible. Furthermore, the person who bought a Victory Bond knows how many dollars it cost but how many people have any idea how many actual dollars of the holder's are in the "hundred-dollar" share of railway stock or how much of it is something else? If a portion of it is composed of an elusive, free fluid H 2 O. then to pay dividends upon it through levies past and present upon me is just as improper as the other. Under a more polished name it is quite as much robbery as when one patron of the cheese factory where proceeds are pooled on the weight system, dumps a pail of water in his milk can and increases his check at the expense of his neighbor. Turn plain daylight on these expert finances and let us have a square deal all round. And remember the country has a big vested interest in this road as well as the shareholders or the company. Lord Shaughnessy, sincerely enough from his position, assumes a laissez faire stand, assuring the people that there is no need to send out an S. O. S. call for government control or ownership. This the public will interpret as a notice that entrenched interests will "hold what they have", and strenuously resist advances.

In the next place, the public is warned of the danger of getting the railroads into politics. The C. P. R. and others were born in the midst of politics and in some form or other will be in politics until the end of the chapter. That project was—scarcely floated before—the "Pacific Scandal", put the government of the day out of power. In brief, the charge was that the government corruptly granted to Sir Hugh Allan and associates the charter for building the road in consideration of a large sum supplied for election purposes. The record from that time on, speaking generally, has not been creditable to Canada nor have private railway corporations anything to boast of in that regard compared with government ownership. It was so in the United States where the great railway construction period ushered in an orgie of brazen corruption ranging from the wholesale distribution of passes to larger bribes in order to the securing of franchises and subsidies. Finding that the railways had not brought all the expected advantage the public finally revolted against the waste of their resources and the high-handed exactions in railway management. Mr. S. O. Dunn of "The Railway Age Gazette," who opposes public ownership, records that about the seventies, the era of public regulation set in. By means of legislation and the Interstate Commerce Commission, this has been going on ever since with varying degrees of success; but it is hardly too much to say that nearly every step of progress has been resisted as interference with vested interests or as certain to be productive of inefficiency in management. Vested interests have suffered, no doubt, and so did the public fleeced with wild-cat railway schemes for the sole benefit of exploiters. On the whole, it is conceded by capable and dispassionate authority that compared with other countries and considering local conditions American railways have not been hampered to their detriment by government regulation but many unfair and harmful discriminations have been removed. Publicity has done a great deal in curing the corrupting influence of railway lobbyists. To the courage of ex-President Roosevelt and others and to the vigilance of an independent press the American public is indebted for measures of relief. In Canada,

the Federal Board of Railway Commissioners has rendered the public effectual service and with the experience gained might well, in case of nationalizing all the roads, be made an instrument in management.

It is just as well to recognize the fact that while government ownership would take the railway corporations out of politics it would, instead, introduce questions affecting the conditions, and remuneration of railway labor and the service of officials unless the state safeguard itself, as it ought, by the application of a Civil Service principle. In American centres of legislation and administration, the corrupting corporation lobbyists were succeeded by the equally active professional lobby of the railway brotherhoods. In Canada and the United States government ownership cannot be carried out as it has been in Germany where the public is under an iron military hand. In America the good sense and fairness of the people must be relied upon to regard the government and the railway not as masters but as intelligent agents entrusted to carry on public business with honesty and efficiency. If railway labor, communities, shippers or the travelling public all insist upon their pound of flesh or more and play for it politically, then without a civil service or other regulator, new disorders would inevitably be bred. A fair spread must be maintained between earnings and out-go if roads are not to fall into dis-repair and stagnation. Our public postal service has proved efficient and the Hydro Electric is proving so. The immediate spur of the public is behind them and it will likewise supply a driving force in securing efficient railway service.

It must be admitted that the meddling M. P. would be a real menace to government management of railways. For the good of all concerned he should be relieved of the petty duty of peddling government railway patronage. Railroading is a business requiring a high order of knowledge and experience for which success in the game of local politics is no proper preparatory school. But in a democracy like Canada it is a safeguard to know that flagrant injustice as abuses may be corrected by parliament as well as ventilated by the press. Government and people using the experience already acquired in public ownership of railways should further prepare for its fuller inception, particularly in relation to the personnel that is to direct the actual management in which those who have demonstrated their actual capacity and character shall have recognition and opportunity.

Middlesex Co., Ont.

ALPHA.

A Good Name Can be Acquired.

BY ALLAN MCDIARMID.

One evening a few weeks ago, I was coming out from Montreal on the westbound train, which was pretty well filled with business-men and dealers in different lines of trade. Among the bunch was a cattle-buyer, or drover as we call them. He had apparently been dinking a little and was in just the right condition of mind to be sociable with his fellow-passengers. It didn't take him long to get acquainted with the man who shared his seat and to inform him that his name was Monroe and that his business was the buying and selling of live stock. "I tell you", he said, "the poor man is up against it this winter. The price you have to pay for anything you eat is awful. I had my dinner at a restaurant in the city today and what do you think they charged me for one egg? Fifteen cents. Yes sir, fifteen cents, and everything else in proportion. Meat is out of sight altogether, but what can you expect when we have to pay the farmers the prices that they are asking today. In the car that I sent into the city this week there was a couple of cows that should have died of old age long ago. I bought them for the canning factory but at that I don't think I'd have taken them if I'd got a right look at them first. The stable they were in was dark and the farmer I bought them from said he had been feeding them well, so I took a chance. I got one hundred and thirty-four dollars for the two of them, but if prices hadn't taken the jump they did lately I'd have lost money on them. These farmers are a hard lot. I always said that if you wanted to get a dirty deal go to the farmer for it. I remember one time buying some butter at one of the stores in our town. It turned out to be first-class and when it was done the wife said to me, 'You'd better see if you can get some more of that butter, or some made by the same person, whoever it was. So I went to the store and asked if I could get any more of the same that they had given me the last time. They told me no. It was Mr. So-and-So sold them that, and he was supplying private customers and hardly ever sold to the stores. 'Well what the mischief', thinks I, made him sell to the store that time?' So I made it my business to find out. And I finally did, by way of their hired man. It seems that a rat had fallen into the pail of cream just when it was ready to churn. It was dead when they fished it out but they churned the cream and sold the butter to the store-keeper. And that was what I had bought. I used to like butter all right, but I haven't eaten an ounce from that day to this. No sir, farmers WON'T throw out the cream. You can put your last dollar on that."

After waiting a minute for this to sink in he went on: "Talking about these things reminds me of something that happened near home when I was a young chap. One of our neighbors was having a raising-bee putting up a new frame barn. They had goose for dinner and after we had all satisfied our appetites and were sitting around outside taking a smoke, one of the men said to the farmer's son, a boy about ten years old: 'Say Bobby, what was the matter with you at dinner that you didn't take any of that goose?' 'Ugh!' said Bobby, 'D'ye think I'd eat any of that darned old goose. It was dead for

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