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Succeed."

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EDITORIAL.

The present prosperity of farming in Eastern Canada is due rather to good prices than a general and marked advance in farm methods.

At every step, the Education Commission, in its Canadian tour, is unearthing dissatisfaction with the public-school system. When enough people become thoroughly disgusted, it will be reformed.

The institution that Ontario people boasted most about is the very one that has wrought incalculable mischief to the interests of the farm, by driving rising population to the towns, and utterly failing to qualify those who remain for the successful pursuit and enjoyment of the best life that Canada affords. Moral: Reform the rural public school.

Don't forget to drag the roads before they freeze up. If possible, do it soon enough for them to dry before freezing. Not only will it make a better bottom for sleighing, but, by lessening the amount of mud put into cold storage this fall, it will to that degree tend to ameliorate their wretched condition next spring. A combination of frost and moisture is good to prepare a seed-bed, but disastrous to the roads.

If the Directorate of the Dominion Shorthorn Breeders' Ass'n have faith in the milking propensities of cows of that breed, it would appear that, with the substantial balance on hand revealed by the financial statement at their last annual meeting, they might well grant more than the paltry sum of \$45 towards the prize list for Shorthorns in the milking tests at the Winter Fairs, the only important public tests existing in this country. The result of the competition in milk and butter production at the recent London Dairy Show, in which the championship and reserve championship for the highest aggregate of points in milking, inspection and buttermaking went to Shorthorn cows, affords a lesson from which individual breeders and the Association might fortify their faith in their favorites, and which would appear to indicate splendid possibilities for the breed, if breeding for the dual purposes of beef and milk production were intelligently followed, as has been amply demonstrated in English herds.

Someone has observed that the information a newspaper gives satisfies a man on all subjects but his own. In that he discerns the errors and shortcomings, and only an expertly-edited class paper can fill the bill in that particular line. Here is a case in point. An Ottawa journalist visited the Biological Laboratory not long ago, and learned that black-head has been causing much loss among turkeys here and there throughout the Dominion. Black-head is loosely described as a disease of the digestive organs. Dr. Chas. H. Higgins has for some years advised the use of muriatic acid for fowls suffering from various forms of indigestion, and had secured beneficial action from it in one case of black-head. Of course, to the uninformed reporter, two and two made four, so the published interview was concluded with a suggestion to starve the bird 48 hours, and then let it drink from a mixture composed of a teaspoonful muriatic acid to a quart of water. Dr. Higgins' explanation, published in the Poultry Department last week, puts quite a different face on the matter, muriatic acid being recommended, but not with such confidence as the newspaper item would lead one to expect.

Cost of Milk Production.

Some time ago, statements were solicited from farmers through these columns, regarding the cost of milk production. In last week's issue appeared a short article announcing the results of the judging of the essays received, followed by the best one of them.

The question of cost of milk production is one to which Canadian dairymen must give more time and study than they have so far been in the habit of doing. One dairyman in the United States put the cost of keeping a cow for one year at above \$140; a New Hampshire man figures the cost per cow per year as \$121.65; the Professor of Dairying in one of the State Colleges estimates the same bill at around \$90. Undoubtedly, the cost of feedstuffs in different localities, and the varying methods of handling, are factors which greatly affect the maintenance of milk cows. Nevertheless, if the average herd of dairy cows are costing their owner anything like even the lowest of the above estimates, it is a safe venture that they are not profit-producers.

Just as great a variation in the estimated cost of milk production appears in the statements presented by those who have written in this contest. Milk cost per hundredweight from 24 cents to 91.12 cents, and profits, likewise, vary as greatly; and yet these men all labor under Ontario conditions. After making allowance for the difference in price placed upon the same feeds by different persons, there are two other factors from which chiefly arise differences in cost, viz., the individuality of the cows, and the wisdom exercised by the managers in the selection of economic feeds.

A number of ideas useful for general practice stand out conspicuously in these reports, to which attention should be directed. Leading amongst these is the splendid usefulness of alfalfa on dairy farms. Mr. Austin and Mr. Main each used it in such a way as practically to eliminate the use of commercial feedstuffs, and, in commenting upon it, the former says: "No grain was fed except that contained in the silage, while feeding alfalfa, but when that was gone we were unable to feed enough ground oats and barley to keep up the flow to its former level."

Silage, as a source of succulence, occupies a prominent place in the rations fed by the first, second and fourth prize contributors. While roots have been used to an extent, there can be little doubt but that silage is the succulent, bulky food par excellence for dairy cattle. While the individuality of the cattle counts for much, it would appear a fair inference to assume that the liberal use of silage or silage and roots accounts partly for the higher yields, at reasonable cost, per cow in the herds so fed. This is especially true when alfalfa is coupled with silage, and, in the combined use of these two, large economic production may be expected.

There is a tendency among dairymen to underestimate the time consumed in caring for milk cows, and the value of it. A man who values his labor at ten cents an hour has a moderate estimate of himself. By placing such a value on labor, it is easier to compute a profit from one's herd, but harder to make the computation agree with the bank account. Milking, feeding, grooming, cleaning, and all such labor, might fairly be valued at at least a York shilling per hour.

The individual cow must be studied. One man's herd yields about 4,000 pounds each per year, and another over 10,000 lbs. each per year.

What makes the difference? Feeds somewhat, but very largely it is a matter of grading up and selection. As Mr. Main states, his herd is the cream of nine years of careful selection. His case represents a consummation devoutly to be wished on all dairy farms, and shows how it may be accomplished.

The value which shall be placed upon feeds raised and consumed upon the farm is a question admitting discussion. To raise alfalfa at \$1.50 per ton, feed it to cows, and permit all the profit thereby attained to be credited to the dairy herd, is giving the cows a good business chance. Alfalfa hay has a marketable value probably approximating \$15 per ton, wherever its merits are known, at most times of the year. It would seem only just that the cow should pay for it at market prices, as she would have to do for bran or oil meal. The same is true of most other feeds consumed by the cows, and especially when their full manurial value is being credited to the cows in estimating returns. While the owner gets the profit (or loss) in either case, he must not delude himself by unfair estimates.

There are thousands of men who are working on this question of cost of milk production—or should be. The benefits of the experiences of a few are now being presented in these columns. We invite the contributions of the many others who can throw any light on the question.

Bureaucracy.

Divided jurisdiction is retarding the settlement of New Ontario. The exploitation of the district is in the hands of the Bureau of Colonization in the Department of Agriculture, but, once interested, the prospective homesteader must apply for his entry to the Crown Lands agents of the Department of Lands, Forests and Mines. He gets into the country by means of the Government-owned Temiskaming & Northern Ontario Railway, but, after locating on his bush homestead, if he wants a colonization road constructed to give him an outlet, he must get into touch with the Department of Public Works. What endless spools of red tape it must seem to a European settler unfamiliar with the language! Too much bureaucracy and not enough intimate personal touch, is one consequence of the present system. A Government which is not afraid to apply new methods in grappling with new situations should cede a few townships to the Railway Commission, let them organize a Land Department, and settle the Temiskaming country a township at a time. The experiment is surely worth trying.

The Ideal Rural School.

From a recent editorial in that sane, progressive and deep-thinking weekly, the Independent, we culled the following well-turned observations on the country school, and heartily commend them to the attention of the Canadian Royal Commission on Industrial Training and Technical Education.

For some time it has been understood that our rural school was not working to make better farmers of the farmers' boys. They have been taught for the distinct end of mental culture and mental accumulations of knowledge, entirely apart from the application of that knowledge to agriculture.

We do not mean that the children should be taught solely the art of cultivating plants. Rural