

FARMER'S ADVOCATE

AND HOME MAGAZINE

* AGRICULTURE, STOCK, DAIRY, POULTRY, HORTICULTURE, VETERINARY, HOME CIRCLE.*

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VOL. XXXVIII.

WINNIPEG, MAN., AND LONDON, ONT., FEBRUARY 5, 1903.

No. 567

Editorial.

Subsidizing New Railways.

At the next session of the Dominion Parliament, the question of subsidizing new railway lines in Western Canada will be a live one. Throughout the country there is a growing opinion, well founded, that the experimental stage of railway promotion and construction, as a financial venture, has passed, and that the time has arrived in this rapidly developing country when new lines of transportation should be built with but little, if any, encouragement in the form of subsidies or land grants. The country in past years has had thrust upon it, to assist in the building of railways, burdens which to this day taxpayers find grievous to bear. Moreover, these lines have been laid down and the people obliged to make use thereof without having any effective say as to how they should be operated, or the rates which may be collected therefrom. From this experience there is surely a great lesson, the application of which appears close at hand. Believing that its resources have been exploited in the past, the Canadian public is suspicious, and is yet, generally speaking, largely in the dark as to the actual cost of railway construction, operation and financing. Under this head the publicity assured by the promised Canadian Railway commission, when it becomes a reality, will be welcome. Something like \$154,000,000 in cash and 70,000,000 acres of land have gone to aid privately owned roads in Canada. Unless under exceptional difficulties, railway construction in Canada is put at a cost of from \$15,000 to \$25,000 per mile. As a result of public aid, and by means of bonding privileges, in many cases roads, instead of being built at a cost to the projectors, are built at a profit, and then the public have to pay for their use.

Railways are money-making concerns, and none know that better than the promoters of the proposed lines or extensions in the West. No country in the world offers greater inducements for railway construction than ours. If uncertainty of financial success surrounded the entrance of the first transcontinental line, which was a national concern, and heavy bonusing was, therefore, justifiable, there is no need for that policy being duplicated. The problem seems to resolve itself into this: Canada as a whole, and the West in particular, stands to lose without the opening of additional lines, affording adequate service. With their construction, Parliament must secure in their management the interests of the people and preserve the transportation of the country from being monopolized. Railway commission, public ownership, subsidies, no subsidies, subscriptions of stock, loans to be repaid, guaranteed bonds—all these, and other alternatives, are in the air the subjects of discussion. Nobody ventures to suggest grants of land other than that occupied by the road. Too much of our fertile soil is already held in that way. The difficulties ahead of Parliament are great in the solution of the railway problem. Few people outside the West seem to appreciate the real need for additional service, or the demoralizing effect of its lack. This year's inrush of population will be vastly greater than last. The wheat-growing area will expand, and away to the north is another empire of rich agricultural lands to be developed, and its products carried to the Canadian seaboard. A strong transportation policy is the call of the hour, but let us not forget that powerful, conflicting interests are involved, that will tax to the utmost

the capabilities of parliamentarians to handle and yet promote the public weal, and at the same time accomplish this without aggravating the situation by delay.

The Live Stock Convention.

To members of the different Live Stock Associations of Manitoba who have ever attended an annual convention, it is scarcely necessary to point out the advantages of being present at the approaching event of 1903, which will convene in Winnipeg on February 17th. The old saying that "a thing worth doing at all is worth doing well," was never more properly applied to anything than to the breeding of pure-bred stock. To be interested in producing animals of the highest type, and in grading up a herd, means that a man ought to be identified with the association having as its object the development of the highest and best interests of that breed.

Throughout Manitoba there are yet many breeders of good stock who have not become identified as members of the society representing the breed which they favor. This, we believe, is a short-sighted policy on their part. Those who have but a small number, and whose herds or flocks increase but slowly, may feel that on that account they are justified in remaining outside. Others may fancy that the association is not doing the work which it should; that it is in the hands of the wrong crowd, etc. To all such we can only say the importance of improving the stock of this country demands your voice where wise words may be of use. The efforts of the association in the past have been to protect and further the interests of pure-bred stock in Manitoba. They have been able to secure reduced freight rates to the Territories, guide the live-stock department of the principal shows within the Province, disseminate knowledge in live-stock matters generally, and in various other ways assist in placing the live-stock industry on a higher basis.

This year the usual programme, consisting of the transaction of regular business, and holding of other meetings at which addresses by prominent citizens, stockmen and specialists in animal husbandry, will be carried out. In addition, the first live-stock judging school, discussed in the last issue of the "Farmer's Advocate," will begin immediately after the close of the Dairyman's convention, when a series of practical demonstrations in live-stock judging will be given. No young stockman, nor, in fact, breeder of more mature years, can afford to deprive himself of the live-stock educational feast offered during convention week and the few days which follow. Very satisfactory rates have been arranged with the railways, allowing members to enjoy the round-trip at one half the regular rate. Present indications point to a most successful convention.

Every year there comes from the Eastern Provinces a multitude of young men who take up homesteads, where they live in happy but comparative solitude for a few seasons, looking forward hopefully to the time when the admonition of that great preacher who said, "Man should not live alone, but should take unto himself a wife," would be a reality. The east-bound excursions trains have carried, this winter, an innumerable number of these progressive young fellows, and if the smile which they wore in leaving the prairie home could be interpreted rightly it is certain their brightest dreams may soon be realized, and many a young lady from the east will find, next spring, a happy home on Western soil.

Siftings.

It rains alike on the just and the unjust. But for this blessing we no doubt would have a very dry spell.

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Kindness to stock pays every time, both from the standpoint of sentiment and love of gain. A man cannot be cruel to his animals without being cruel to his personal interests.

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There are some people who fool away their own opportunities, and, at the same time, steal the hours of others. Busybodies is the fitting name for that class.

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Now is the time to lay plans for the improvements of next summer. Think out the best course to pursue, and have everything in readiness before seeding begins.

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Unchangeable politeness is a grand virtue, and although it cannot transform a man into a saint it can so change him that to all whom he meets he may appear a lovely sinner.

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Best of all possessions is that grand quality, common sense, and those who can truthfully lay claim to the largest share are the very ones who feel that they have much to learn.

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As land goes up in value, it is up to the farmers to make a better use of each acre than was heretofore necessary. See to it at springtime that a little better preparation is given when preparing the wheat seed-bed.

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It is often necessary to economize while feeding stock in order to make the returns profitable, yet this does not apply to underfeeding, but rather to feeding without waste and having the animals comfortable, so that the largest gains can be realized at a minimum of cost.

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During the present coal famine, those are indeed well-off who have the satisfaction of burning fuel that was deeply-rooted on their own property not long ago, and better still will be their feeling, provided a fair supply yet remains to bud in the spring and later on have the sporting winds of summer play with the leaves while storing up additional heat-producing matter for some future cold spell.

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As the winds whistle round your unprotected dwelling, think of the advantage it will be in a few years to have that wind-break which you are going to set out next spring.

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The most successful and intelligent farmers in this country are those who admit they have something to learn. Get out to institute and agricultural society meetings held in your district; join in the discussions, and let others have the benefit of your experience. If you are a true Canadian you will feel rewarded.

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To the hundreds who by letter have recently expressed their appreciation of the "Farmer's Advocate" we are deeply grateful, and we regret that space will only allow the publication of a few of these testimonials. It has always been our aim to produce a high-class publication, and during the present year we are determined more than ever to strengthen every department so that all intelligent readers throughout Western Canada cannot fail to be our friends.