

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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entirely on the state of the atmosphere and their being kept in high condition by constant changes of food. This change is essential to man and beast; and the fact is so well known that in one of the petty continental States where it is forbidden to put felons to death, they kill them by feeding them entirely on veal and red wine. Neither do I think that they (the chemists) make sufficient distinction of sources whence the ingredients are derived. For instance, we know that there is great difference as a manurial agent between the nitrogen derived from ground leather and that obtained from sulph. ammonia; or in superphosphate of lime whether derived from bones or rock phosphate. There may not, chemically, be any difference, but practice proves conclusively that there is.

In working out some of these prepared tables, one is apt to doubt their value when turnips are tabulated in such a ridiculously low place by the chemist and yet the practical feeder well knows their value is much higher than that assigned. Is it not possible that the water in the roots is something more than ordinary water, the same as ammonia in guano is of more value than that found in leather. I have lately had the opinion that roots are much more valuable than the chemist would lead us to believe by reading a paper prepared by Mr. James Black, for publication in the report of the Highland and Agricultural Society. His researches extended over some eight counties, and he gives the system adopted by the most successful feeders in each county from these eight counties: "With considerably less than one-fifth of the whole population of the north side of the border, and not a larger proportion, perhaps, of the cultivated land to the north of that dividing line, contributed to the great London Christmas market some 2,000 of the 5,000 cattle offered for sale in it, and had their own share fully of the highest prices that were reached." A few extracts in my next will explain the system of feeding better than any words of mine. [TO BE CONTINUED.]

A Successful Year for the Western Fair.

The report of the Directors of the Western Fair presented at the annual meeting of the Association, held in London, Feb 17th, was a very satisfactory statement of the year's work, showing an advance in the receipts over the previous year of over \$4,500, fully justifying the erection of the new buildings and the other improvements made which did much to increase the patronage and prestige of the show. Out of the surplus receipts last year, and the balance from the year 1895, the Board were able to apply the sum of \$8,234 towards the new buildings, which are completely paid for, and a balance of \$928 remains.

Capt. Porte, who had been President for several years, devoting much time and attention to the affairs of the Association, retires from the Board, and was presented by the Directors with a valuable gold watch as a mark of their appreciation of his past services. The election of officers resulted in the following being chosen: President, F. B. Leys Vice-President, Mayor Little; 2nd Vice-President,

Allan Bogue; Secretary, Thomas A. Browne; Treasurer, D. Mackenzie; Superintendent, Joseph Hook; Chairman of Finance, A. M. Smart; Chairman of Grounds and Buildings, J. H. Brown.

Takes a Tilt at Mr. Macpherson's Figures.

To the Editor FARMER'S ADVOCATE:

In looking over your paper of February 1st I saw an editorial on Mr. Macpherson's letter, and turning over to the letter I read a very glowing article headed "How Can the Ordinary Farm be Made to Pay." By reading the letter I would judge that the writer has not made all his money by farming, for I fail to see much money to his credit by his statements for the amount of capital invested. Perhaps it is because, as the small boys say, I am only "an old hayseed, moss back, or pumpkin pusher" that I can not see through his statements rightly. Mr. Macpherson says he has a crop value for 1896 of over \$5,000 from 125 acres of land. It sounds large, but I do not doubt it; \$3,396 of that is winter feed, which he feeds to his cattle, hogs, etc., together with \$800 for heavy feed for same, for which he received \$2,640, for milk, pork, etc., sold, or cash \$2,040 for his over \$5,000 crop value. Then his manual labor cost him \$1,500; wear, tear and repair, \$500 per year, which leaves \$40 to live on, or interest on his capital invested. A farm like Mr. Macpherson's would be worth \$40 per acre, or \$5,000; buildings, machinery, and carriages, \$5,000; cattle, horses, pigs, etc., \$3,000; or \$13,000 in all, which, if on interest at 6 per cent., would be \$780, instead of \$40 by farming. Now, what we poor farmers want to know is how to make a small sized farm (a poor one at that) grow a good crop, or how to increase the fertility of it so a man can live comfortably on it, raise his family, and lay a little money by for a rainy day. Now, if you or some of your readers would give a little more information in the ADVOCATE on the above, we would appreciate it more than to read how a large farm, with large capital, yields a very small profit. Mr. Macpherson, in his "suggestions for Governments," denounces the Experimental Farms. I think they are doing a lot of good in testing new and improved seeds, etc., and then distributing the same to us farmers free. In that way we are furnished with new seeds which we would otherwise have to do without, which is worth far more to us than to watch some man's farming who has to get either of the Governments to his back. D. P. CAMERON. Stormont Co., Ont.

Mr. McCulloch Criticises Mr. Macpherson's Methods.

To the Editor FARMER'S ADVOCATE:

SIR, - Some years ago it was no unusual thing to hear of farmers making plenty of money, and even in later years we still find a few who, by taking up some of the improved methods of farming, and by good care and management, hard work, and practice of economy in their farm and household affairs, have left their neighbors behind in the race and have made a financial success of their farm operations; but to be suddenly swept down upon by such a cyclone of unequalled success on every hand as that shown by Mr. Macpherson in his letter in your February 1st issue, and that, too, while so many farmers are crying "hard times" and "farming don't pay," almost paralyzes us, and whatever little success we had ourselves attained, when compared with his, seems only as a drop in the bucket, and scarcely worth mentioning. But on a careful perusal of his letter, many things are not so dazzling as they seem to be with first impressions. Now, we ask you, and also Mr. Macpherson, to suffer a little criticism of his plans, and though some of it should be somewhat adverse, we trust that it may even then be a help to my brother farmers, many of whom are struggling for an existence on an impoverished farm. We have at present to face small prices for all farm produce, but even with this there is a ray of hope, as nearly everything we have to buy for our farm or household use is lower also. But there is a great mountain in the way of success to most farmers, in that our farms have become impoverished by continually selling fertility off them, and they will not produce as in past years, and the problem for us to solve is, How can we increase the fertility of our farms? Not by putting large capital into them, but without the expenditure of large sums of money; not by the waiting of five years for a dividend, which time would suffice to land most of us in among farmers now without trying such an experiment, but so that we may live on our farms and at the same time follow such a system as will gradually, if slowly, increase their fertility. Now, the system outlined by Mr. Macpherson may be all right for those who can afford it, but the ordinary farmer is not a capitalist, and therefore can not put capital into his business. Neither can he afford to wait five years, nor yet one year, for the return from it; and what benefit would it be for the majority, even if the Government should bonus convert their farms into gardens at the expense of the whole country, if after all the example given in theory could not be brought into general practice. I am heartily glad that our Ontario Government is not experimenting on such a line, but that our farm superintendent at Guelph, Mr. Rennie, is trying to show to our boys, and to the farmers of the whole country, that it is possible to improve the fertility of our farms by putting into them that

with which they were filled when the land was new, and of which they have been gradually robbed, viz., a "supply of vegetable matter in the soil." Now, Mr. Rennie, and also Mr. Yuill - one of our best farmers and dairymen - both give us plans for doing this: by growing clover crops and green crops of one kind and another for manure, by using a short time rotation (three or four years), instead of an eight year course as advised by Mr. Macpherson, and this can be done at less cost, little by little, in a way far more suitable to the "ordinary farmer," than by the purchase of fertility by so extravagant a system as that we are advised by Mr. Macpherson. I thoroughly believe in intense farming, and that most farmers work or half work too much land, and do not keep near as much stock on their farms as they might do. I have full faith in the dairy cow and her possibilities, and that it is far better to sell beef and pork and dairy products than to sell grain and hay off our farms. In this I think Mr. Macpherson is on the right track, as his great success goes to prove, yet I think that even this plan can be followed on a much smaller scale, so as to be within the reach of those with smaller means, as I think Mr. Macpherson's plan is drawn on too large a scale for the "ordinary farmer," and also too speculative for "canny going men," and very few would make it a success, not forgetting that it is safer to "grow" into than to "go" into any business. Three tons of hay to the acre over an area of thirty-nine acres is a good yield even on rich land, and we may not always get it; also, twenty-nine tons of ensilage corn to the acre over a patch of twenty-six acres is surely more than we can hope for, but if we can we would strongly advise Mr. J. G. Snell to consider his problem of feeding his beef cattle at 4 1/2 cents per pound in the light of twenty-nine tons of ensilage to the acre, and it may help him in the solution, but this, I fear, is somewhat of a speculative crop, at least if outside the corn belt, and when quality of ensilage is at all considered, and due allowance made for grubs and cutworms, which often follow in the wake of a five years' term in grass. We notice that much of the results given is estimated and prospective, and we think that any farmer in presuming to do better work than the Government farms are doing should give actual results, as they do, so that we could compare. The expenditure for labor is high, but perhaps not too high for amount of work done, but is quite a surprise to most people, who think themselves about forced to do with as little help as possible in order to cut down expenses.

We notice that in figuring on the profits from cattle bought, Mr. Macpherson expects to more than double the purchase money. Now, I believe this can be done, if bought low enough and sold high enough, and all things favorable; but I still think that this is a somewhat speculative business for the "ordinary farmer," and might easily lead to great loss under adverse conditions. I think a much safer plan would be to raise a few steers of our own, with so much ensilage and cheap food, and we would be working on surer ground if not going quite so fast.

Mr. Macpherson answers the question as to whether these results can be made general by saying that it takes "long time," "large capital," and "high skill," and this is to practically answer "No" to the question. As we have already said, few have any capital to invest, and as few can afford to wait for "long periods for a return"; but as to the "skill required," if a man has lots of money and time given him, it should not require a great amount of skill to make some money; but where the result of skill and good management is most seen is where men start with no money and gradually grow from year to year, as we have seen men do, until they have become well-to-do, or at least have a competence; or, again, where men "with small means" take hold of a run-down farm and gradually improve it from year to year, at same time live on it and support a family. These are the lines upon which we may look for exhibitions of skill in future; and as skill is something which we may all attain in a greater or less degree, and as it is, along with good care and management, the secret of success in farming, as in everything else, it becomes us to take advantage of every chance afforded us of acquiring skill in our business and thus place ourselves in a position to help ourselves, instead of looking to the "Government" or any other source for capital or help to do for us what we can do for ourselves by using our brains and hands and the means of education afforded us by our agricultural papers, such as the FARMER'S ADVOCATE, and the help given us by our Government in experimental work and the securing of a market and shipping facilities for our farm produce, and through the medium of our Farmers' Institute system, which brings all these means of education within the reach of the "ordinary farmer," and at a trifling cost. Peel Co., Ont. R. McCULLOCH.

Breeders' Association Meetings.

The following dates are announced by Secretary Hodson for meetings of the Directors of the various Breeders' Associations. The meetings will be held at the Palmer House, Toronto, at 1 p. m. sharp on each day: - Dominion Cattle Breeders' Association, March 23rd. " Sheep Breeders' " " 24th. " Swine Breeders' " " 25th. Ontario Provincial Winter Show, " 28th. Each director is urged to attend, as business of unusual importance will be transacted.

[By Richard Association "Watch over head well."

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