

THE FARMER'S ADVOCATE AND HOME MAGAZINE.

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DOMINION.

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Milking by Machinery.

In view of the increasing acuteness of the labor problem, and the difficulty of always securing efficient human milkers, dairymen will read with special interest the contribution in this issue of the "Farmer's Advocate" from our Scottish correspondent on "The Mechanical Milker." The writer has followed the development of the milking machine with close attention from the very outset, and at our request he has now made special enquiries into the subject, and his letter gives the result. It will be found in our Dairy Department, and will bear close perusal. Being what is popularly known as a "hard-headed Scotchman," he does not allow enthusiasm to carry him past the practical considerations that must be faced in perfecting a contrivance that will replace the human hand. From additional information which he forwards with his letter, we learn that the approximate cost of a Lawrence-Kennedy outfit for a herd of from 15 to 100 cows, ranges from \$250 to \$750, driving power not included. There must be a continuous vacuum-producing apparatus; a vacuum-storage reservoir and gauge; piping throughout the stable, with a tap for each double stall. A pulsator—the part of the "machine" that does the milking and receives the milk—serves two cows simultaneously. One machine with one attendant is claimed to milk twelve cows per hour.

A Tribute from Old Ireland.

We enjoy reading the "Farmer's Advocate" very much. It is read by our many friends round this district. It is a very interesting "book," and has put us on a new method of farming in Ireland. Wishing you every prosperity.

GEORGE COPELAND.

Derryboy, Neury, Ireland.

TELL YOUR WANTS

To over 30,000 of Canada's best farmers by advertising in the "WANT AND FOR SALE" column of the FARMER'S ADVOCATE AND HOME MAGAZINE, London, Canada.

Organization of Fruit-growers.

Clearly, to judge from recent issues of the "Farmer's Advocate," co-operation of the fruit-growers is a live question. Messrs. Johnson and Sherrington, representative pioneers of the movement in Western Ontario, have given convincing reports of their experiences of last year, and sensible advice to such as are likely to follow the example of the associations they represent. P. J. Carey, Fruit Inspector, and Mr. McNeill, Chief of the Dominion Fruit Division, have earnestly endorsed the movement, and promised valuable assistance, and our own Minister of Agriculture has done likewise. Even apple-buyers, such as Mr. Thompson, of Ingersoll, have publicly advised co-operative selling. There is every indication that the movement will spread, and that many new co-operative associations will be organized this year. The next move will be confederation of the local associations on the same strictly commercial lines. This being the case, and as discussion of problems and methods is general, now is the time for certain considerations, suggested by a review of the question. Let every reader who owns an orchard look first at the facts:

- (1) Ontario is a fruit Province, with its capacity scarcely tapped.
 - (2) The Northwest and Great Britain offer unlimited markets, and the home market could and should be greatly developed.
 - (3) Prices are unprofitably low in Ontario, and relatively very high in all outside markets.
- That is the situation. What are the reasons of these inconsistencies?

- (1) The fruit, taking the whole provincial export, is of low average in quality, owing to lack of proper tree culture.
- (2) The fruit is not properly harvested, and whether through ignorance, carelessness, dishonesty, or lack of an unvariable standard, is neither graded or packed with that uniformity necessary to secure a good national reputation.
- (3) There are too many varieties. The less profitable should be crowded out by the best. The best cost no more in any way, and the difference in price should be increased profit.
- (4) Cold storage, the greatest boon of the fruit-grower, has not been properly utilized. In consequence, the best of our tender fruits are unknown abroad, and what reaches the British market is deteriorated to a deplorable extent. I know by experience the condition of such fruits when they reach the British market. Harvested green, and, therefore, tasteless at best, our peaches are often partly decayed, and yet, strange to say, they are often sold at five cents each.
- (5) Commission men combine in "rings" to an extent unrealized by the producer, and take unfair advantage and an extortionate share of the proceeds of sales. Consignees are as culpable at home as abroad, and the higher the prices the larger their share. The fruit-grower is in the business for the money, and he wants it. He can get it by co-operating. Such are his problems in detail.

How to organize so as to make sure of settling all these matters? The experiences and opinions of the men already referred to are illuminating. And with an eye to certain principles and methods previously quoted from the experiences of European co-operators, some rules may be suggested:

- (1) Let the good growers meet and form themselves into an association, with the object of handling their crops of fruit in common, according to rules to be formulated; and, to quote Mr. D. Johnson, speaking from experience: "Be careful to include only good growers—better to begin with a few men and grow, than start with a hundred and dwindle." CO-OPERATORS, NOT PATRONS, are wanted.
- (2) Discuss and agree upon full details of methods, and elect directors to enforce them. Then, to quote Mr. Johnson again, "Stand by the directors." He suggests that the directors themselves elect the president, secretary, etc.
- (3) Such an association should have a charter, and should create a corporate financial responsibility, endorsed by every member. This is best arranged, according to Danish methods, by securing guarantees from members for all liabilities assumed for the association by its officers. It is hardly fair or businesslike to leave such responsibilities on the officers themselves for even a short period.
- (4) The members should individually agree to adhere to the regulations imposed by the association and its officers, by giving a bond to that effect, as suggested by Mr. McNeill ("Farmer's Advocate," March 16th). Such a guarantee will ensure smooth working subsequently, and a hearty co-operative spirit.

Now as to methods of carrying on the co-operative work of the association:

- (1) Co-operative spraying, with power machines, is recommended by Mr. Johnson. At any rate, as spraying is essential to results, the regulations should provide that every member must spray, "at least four times a year, before and after blossoms fall" (Mr. Johnson); or, as may be necessary to ensure the best quality of all fruits grown.

- (2) A CENTRAL PACKING-HOUSE may be considered absolutely necessary for the best results. Such a packing, uniformity of cases and packing under an experienced expert manager will ensure all other conditions given as essential. For packing boxes the use of the standard grading machine will prove a great

convenience, and may help incidentally to ensure uniformity of size among all co-operative associations following the same methods.

- (3) Cold storage should be established at the packing-house, which should be situated at a railway siding, so that the apples and other fruits conveyed carefully from the trees as soon as picked, may be held if desired as long as necessary, and under proper conditions to prevent deterioration. A central cold-storage warehouse at Toronto would be useful also, but the associations should each have such facilities.

- (4) Refrigerator cars should be everywhere available, and would be, if the associations insisted on such facilities by federated action.

- (5) Until federation simplifies the problem, sales can best be effected by selling direct, as did the Forest Association last year. When federation of several associations occurs, it will be possible to institute a thorough system of distributing agencies, cold-storage warehouses, etc., in the Northwest and abroad, by which retailers may purchase direct from the associations, and by which the growers maintain their independence of all wholesale buyers or commission salesmen.

By such a system as outlined, uniformity—the first essential to a trade reputation—would be secured; the quality of our goods could be put on the highest level, and kept there without violation or variation; the fruit-growers would have the whip hand of those who now tax them so heavily. In addition, if the associations were to establish evaporating factories in conjunction with the packing-houses, and for the matter of that, if they were to establish fully-equipped canning factories for all kinds of produce, there would be an elimination of all present losses, and a universally satisfactory increase of profits all round. Such a co-operative system, even if begun by a few only, will so prove its financial benefits that the most backward will speedily "qualify" so as to share them. In concluding these suggestions, it may be well to add that it is better to sell direct to consumers or retailers, united but in free competition with others from other districts, and trusting to excellence, uniformity and honest packing, than to combine otherwise simply to "fix a minimum price." Also, it is advisable to maintain co-operative independence and liberty of action, even at cost of refusing the governmental assistance that farmers' organizations of an educational nature have been accustomed to receive and to expect. Commercial organizations should pay their own way and solve their own problems as far as possible to do so. Finally, as Mr. Johnson has warned his readers, "Work patiently, and don't expect everything to be perfected the first season."

AUSTIN L. MCCREDIE.

The Speculative Land Grabber.

To the Editor "Farmer's Advocate":

Sir,—My recent letter, published in the "Farmer's Advocate," has apparently found its mark in many parts of Eastern Canada, for I have received communications both from Ontario and Quebec, concerning statements contained therein.

Locally, also, it has had the effect of scratching the backs of speculative land-holders who would fain be left in peace. This local effect encourages me to again address you on the question of speculation in land, for it is a very real evil, and is apparently on the increase. Its injustice to the genuine settler is patent, in spite of the violent contentions of the "something for nothing" tripe, whose patriotism (in a high and noble sense) is negative.

There are men in this district (names can be given) who came to settle on Government lands, but who were compelled to either (a) buy from a speculator; or (b) go so far north, away from roads or other communication, that they could not move in to fulfil their duties, much less take their families; or, (c), either indefinitely postpone obtaining a farm, or leave the district.

Of course land is being taken up very rapidly by settlers, but the fact is unaltered that innumerable farms are held by "grabbers," to the discouragement of the settler and the detriment of the whole district. I do not know whose fault it is, but the situation, apparently, suggests more or less connivance on the part of Government agents, together with a similar apathy on the part of the Ontario Crown Lands Department. Whether the new Government will alter affairs, remains to be seen. The general impression in this district is that radical changes will be made, and the regulations more strictly enforced. From the settlers' standpoint (and after all, the settler is the backbone of the district), such a change will be heartily welcomed, even though it means harder work to comply with such regulations. The only "kickers" will be those who have land and hold it improperly, but such men neither deserve, nor can they claim, any consideration. I hope to see this question well ventilated in your paper, totally ignoring those whose interests "love the darkness better than the light."

As regards the interesting articles you are publishing on "co-operation," cannot some system of financing for farmers, such as that so successfully devised for this country? I am convinced that it would pay commercially, and that the assistance it would give to deserving farmers, and it should be worth considering.

GEO. W. WEAVER.

Temiskaming District, Ont.