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FOR WEEK ENDING JULY 10, 1913

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THE QUESTION: HOW SHALL THE PEOPLE BE FED?

"Amateur Economist," Wellington Co., Ont.

The Answer: By Bringing Land within Reach of the Prospective Farmer. So Answers a Young Man Who Tells His Own Story to Prove His Contentment.

THE time is not far distant when the question that will be most insistently before us all over the American continent, will be, How shall the people be fed?

According to official figures from Washington, the number of the four chief classes of live stock in the United States on January 1st, 1913, was less than on the same date in 1912 and 1911. The decline has been steady. Swine, which numbered 61,178,000 in 1913, numbered 65,620,000 in 1911. Cows in 1913 numbered 20,497,000 as compared with 20,823,000 two years before. Nor is this deficiency in the number of cows made up by an increase in other kinds of cattle. Cattle other than cows numbered 36,030,000 in 1913 and 39,679,000 in 1911. Sheep now number 51,482,000 as compared with 53,633,000 two years before. And the number of people to be fed is ever on the rapid increase.

It was my pleasure some months ago to attend a National Conference held at Ottawa to consider the live stock situation in Canada. If the conclusions of that Conference are correct, the situation in Canada is, if anything, worse than the situation in the United States. At that Conference were gathered all of the best informed live stock men of the Dominion. They were there with the statistics and the results of much investigation. Their decision was that in proportion of population live stock of every class is scarcer than it was a few years ago.

Only one class of Canadian live stock showed an actual increase and that was dairy cattle. And even this has since turned the other way as J. A. Ruddick, Dominion Dairy Commissioner, informs us that there were fewer cows in Canada in 1912 than there were in 1911, but that those cows gave more milk. Our exports of dairy products is rapidly falling off and if the divergence between production and consumption continues to increase, we will soon be importing dairy products.

DECREASES IN ALL LINES

Nor does this indicate that we Canadians are becoming vegetarians and that other lines of agricultural production are increasing as live stock decreases. Proportional production is falling in all lines. If I am not greatly mistaken there is less land actually under crop to-day than there was 10 years ago. The last Dominion census shows that there are 100,000 fewer people in rural Ontario to-day than in the previous census a decade before. The same situation prevails all over Canada. True, the western prairie provinces show great increases in rural population, but there, too, the city population is increasing in much greater percentage than the rural population.

In the olden times the farmer had only himself to consider. Most of the crops grown on the farm were consumed on the farm. If he did not

produce crops sufficient for his needs, he and his family alone suffered.

OUR DUTY TO THE CITY

Conditions are changing now-a-days. Many of the industries that once formed a branch of the farmer's own work are performed in great factories in large centres of population. More and more are we specializing until now the farmer is almost as dependent on the city as is

Why Do They Leave?

Rural depopulation is world-wide. Canada is just beginning to show the symptoms of contagion; and serious symptoms they are. In not one province in Canada has the growth of rural population kept pace with the development of our cities. In every province of eastern Canada but one the decrease in rural population is not only proportional but actual.

In other words, as the need for food increases, production decreases. Why are men leaving the land, when apparently, with higher prices and more efficient machinery, the opportunities for profitable farming are better than ever before?

There may be many factors working to this end. In the adjoining article a young man, a graduate of the Ontario Agricultural College, deals with one of these factors, and tells why he left the farm. High land values caused him to hie to the city. May not the same factor be deterring many others from making farming their life work? Have you a remedy to suggest?

the city on the farmer. It is the farmer's business to provide the food. The city assumes the responsibility of providing the farmer with clothing, household furniture, farm implements, and so forth. There is a constant interchange of products between the two. It is stated that New York City has only food enough in it to last for a few days ahead. The same is true of other cities. If the farmer fails to produce the food the city people must starve.

Is it any wonder that the city press is beginning to view with alarm the continual decrease in actual production and the steady depopulation of rural districts? I was reading a Toronto daily recently when I noticed that they had featured on their market page an article dealing with, "How to Keep the Boy on the Farm."

THE CITY IDEA

In that article they spoke of how a farmer in my own county of Wellington had kept his boy on the farm by buying him a first-class herd of pure bred Shorthorn cattle. The boy became interested and after that you couldn't drive him off the farm. The second remedy proposed in that article was a change in rural education. If agriculture were taught in the public schools of

the country, the belief was expressed that more country boys and girls would stay in the country to produce food for the teeming millions of the cities.

Another Toronto daily has a very drastic proposal for maintaining the city food supply. Its suggestion is nothing less than that it be regarded as a criminal offence to kill a calf until it has reached a certain age. This would certainly be government interference with a vengeance. It is more stringent than socialism. But can we blame city people for advocating even drastic measures? The continuance of the city supply is almost a question of life and death to them.

I was talking over these problems recently with one of my old neighbors who sarcastically remarked: "Well, the city people are so interested in keeping up production, why on earth don't they come to the country and start to farm instead of staying in the city and waiting for us to feed them?"

WHAT THEN SHALL WE DO?

None of the remedies proposed by our city editors will suffice. The remedy suggested by my farmer neighbor is much easier to propose than to carry out. I know this from my own experience.

I was brought up on a small farm. I always liked farm work. I was not taught agriculture in school, but I absorbed the contents of several good agricultural papers and read every agricultural book I could get my hands on. I feel that I got a better knowledge of the principles of agriculture in this way, combined as my reading was with practical work on the farm, than I could have had had I taken a lesson or two a week in a public school.

My desire for more knowledge on agricultural subjects led me to the agricultural college. I had no other intention in the world than to go back to the farm. True my father was still healthy and vigorous and able to manage the farm for years to come. I knew that there was not room there for both of us. But my father had started without a farm, and got one; so I supposed that I could.

CONDITIONS HAVE CHANGED

It was towards the end of my second year in college that I began to realize that conditions in my day and when my father started are vastly different. In the first place, my father secured his land for practically nothing. After working on a farm at a hired man's wages for three or four years he was able to start for himself. His capital was small. He did not need to invest in a mowing machine; everyone used the scythe. Instead of a binder he had a cradle. I do not suppose that all of the implements he had around the place cost him more than \$50 or \$60.

My proposition was different. In order to keep in the game at all a big outlay would first be required for implements. It's a sorry figure that a man would make now-a-days swinging a scythe when his neighbor is riding a mower. The prices of live stock too have advanced. So has the standard of living. I wouldn't care to ask