

The Farmer's Advocate and Home Magazine

PERSEVERE
AND
SUCCEED

ESTABLISHED
1866

REGISTERED IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE COPYRIGHT ACT OF 1875

LII.

LONDON, ONTARIO, DECEMBER 20, 1917.

1317

EDITORIAL.

What about the extra sow?

Canada must watch her step.

Unity means strength—divided we fall.

Do your part to make it a sensible and helpful Christmas. Give useful gifts.

For a December election there seemed to be plenty of mud for both sides to rake.

Shingles or old bags where glass should be are poor light, and openings are poor protection.

Some politicians apparently believe that the end justifies the means. These are found on both sides.

Live-stock prices, both for finished fat stock and choice breeding stock, are high. The outlook is bright.

It took an election campaign to reveal to the authorities the fact that labor was scarce on the farms, and that farmers, their sons and hired men should be exempted.

Setting one section of Canada against another is no credit to the campaigners of either political party, and we are sorry to say both sides have gone the limit in this direction in the campaign just closed.

The shortage of coal in some parts of Canada is changing the line, "Grow old along with me," to "Grow cold along with me." The farm wood-lot comes in handy just now. It warms the owner twice—cutting and burning.

There is about 80 cents per pound between the value of a champion steer and an ordinary first-prize winner. This was revealed at the Toronto Fat Stock Show where the champion went at one dollar a pound, and first-prize winners, almost but not quite as good, at around 20 cents per pound.

Canada has considerably over thirty thousand miles of railways which have cost the people of this country 43,613,949 acres of land, over \$330,000,000 in building Government roads, over \$233,000,000 in cash subsidies, and bonds have been guaranteed to the extent of over \$400,000,000. This does not look like a bad case for Government-owned railways.

If those city people who complain of the H. C. of L. would take a glance over the figures in the 1915 report of the Ontario Bureau of Industries referring to population in Ontario, they would see something of the reason for rising prices of most farm produce. From 1872 to 1912—40 years—the rural population of Ontario actually decreased 34,336, while the urban population increased 1,054,417. If conditions favor living in town the people move to town, as they have done, and fewer stay on the land.

Now that the election is over, the defeated political outfit is absolutely sure that the country will go to the dogs, and the other believes that it has saved everything. When will the public realize that no matter which party is in power the affairs and business of the country go on much as before? To read some political propaganda put out by both sides, the elector would almost think that if the party which the propaganda opposed were elected that the entire country would go straight to oblivion and there would be no use of waking up the morning after the polls closed.

A Problem Which Must be Faced.

Few people realize what a Province of cities and towns Ontario is. We who are interested in agricultural development are still prone to talk about this as a purely agricultural country. True, Canada must always be a country in which agriculture is the industry of first importance, but Canada is a big country and contains provinces which may become more noted for manufactured than for agricultural products. Ontario at the present time turns out more than half the manufactured products of the entire Dominion, and Quebec the bulk of the remainder. In 1912, before the war, Ontario had 272 incorporated towns and villages and 20 cities with a preponderance of urban population over rural of over 400,000. Let us look back a little. According to the Bureau of Industries Report for the Province, Ontario had, in 1872, 406 townships with a population of 1,047,931, and 122 cities, towns and villages with a population of 374,854. Forty years later, in 1912, the change that had taken place was enough to cause anyone interested in the development of the Province to pause and think. Ontario had developed wonderfully. The Province then had 544 townships (138 more than in 1872) but their population was only 1,013,595, or 34,336 less than it was 40 years before. What had happened in the urban centres? In 1912 Ontario had 292 cities, towns and villages, (170 more than in 1872), with a population of 1,429,271 showing an urban increase for the four decades of 1,054,417 while the townships in the same time decreased population by 34,336. Of course, during this time villages and towns with a population of slightly over 140,000 had been added to the urban section of the community from the townships. Even taking this into consideration, it would leave the strictly rural population about stationary for 40 years, while the urban made an increase of nearly one million souls.

What does it all mean? Simply this: Manufacturing has been encouraged and has made a rapid advance. Urban population means a manufacturing people, and Ontario had over 400,000 more urban than rural dwellers before the war. Producers of foodstuffs were numerically inferior. Consequently prices were bound to be high. The difference is even more marked to-day. Ontario is a manufacturing Province.

What about all Canada? As a Dominion, Canada is looked upon as strictly an agricultural country. The great West must for all time be pushed forward as a farming district. In the last census decade, between 1901 and 1911, the urban population of all Canada taking cities, towns and villages of 1,500 or over increased 1,073,638, whereas the rural increase was only 761,690, or over 300,000 less. This rapid increase in urban population continued in greater contrast to the rural increase up to the time war broke out in 1914. Canada's manufactured products were worth over one billion dollars in 1911. Canada's field crops in 1917, when they had the greatest value they ever had, were worth the same amount. With millions of acres of the finest farming land in the world, with whole provinces of it, a country essentially, logically and fundamentally agricultural, has developed in another direction for a time and Ontario has put out the bulk of the manufactured products.

What about after the war? True, everyone desires that business continue good, that wages bear a fair relation to the cost of living, and that the country prosper, but at the same time before Canada reaches the stage where production of farm crops meets the increasing demands, more people must be found on the farms, and to get them there they must be assured of at least as good a living as they can get in town. City people say to the farmer: "Pay the price and you'll get the help." What price will keep the farmers' own sons and daughters in the country? Who can answer? What price will keep these, the best of young stock for

the rural or any community, in the country? Simply a reorganization which will give the farmer what is coming to him, and the city consumer a fairer deal without too many living in between. What this country needs is fewer parasites, and then legislation which will ensure fair profits, no more, no less, for all. The returned soldiers are not anxious to go on the land, and no one can blame them. As one was heard to say: "What have we done to deserve such a sentence." While the farm is a healthful and free place to live, the average young man sees little in farming. His actions prove his feelings. After the war agriculture must be looked to to sustain this country over the reconstruction period. If the best success is to be obtained there will of necessity be required a little reconstruction of Government policies toward agriculture. Immediate action may not be possible, but thinking on this subject is quite in order. Will Ontario show a similar state of affairs over the next forty-year period, and will Canada continue to grow much more rapidly in urban centres than in rural districts? This is a problem which must be faced.

The Importance of Agriculture Recognized.

It now appears as if the Canadian authorities were beginning to realize that without at least a few men on the farms it would be a rather difficult proposition to grow more wheat than usual, to feed more hogs than usual, to milk more cows than usual, and to finish more beef than usual. Increased production depends on several different factors, one of which is labor, and labor is at a minimum now. When first starting work some of the Tribunals seemed to operate upon the assumption that troops for the ranks were the only consideration and they refused exemption to practically all the fit men who came before them, whether they were engaged in farming or other industry which many believe necessary to the winning of the war. We have heard of young farmers farming for themselves having been ordered into uniform and given only a very short time to dispose of their business. This may be necessary, but, if it is, little can be expected from the call for increased production. Happily, however, the appeal court to which young men have access has taken a somewhat different view of the matter, and the great majority of farmers, farmers' sons, and bona fide farm laborers, who have applied, have been granted exemption. Moreover, it has been stated clearly by the Minister of Militia, by the Premier, and by their colleagues that farmers and farm laborers will not be taken for the army, and that their efforts at home on the land will render greater service in the fight than if they "joined up." Lived up to, these statements will reassure farmers and place them in a position to lay plans for bigger crops and more live stock next year. If all the young men were to be taken from the farms, of course, production would be curtailed. It has taken a long time to get this point driven home, but now daily newspapers are taking up the argument in favor of leaving some men on the land, and many speakers who never before showed so much interest in the farmer have gone on record as in favor of assuring production of food products by retaining on the land a few men who know how to farm. There is good and sufficient reason why these men should be left to produce. Canadian farmers can produce more surplus food per man than farmers of any other country. Particularly is this true of the grain-growing farmers of the prairies, and the live-stock farmers of the other provinces. We are told that food is scarce. Everyone knows that armies cannot fight without it. It must then be good war business to do everything possible to save men to produce food. The nonsense about boys, old men, women, and the physically unfit being able to operate our farms is passing. The crops of France, and the