

# The Farmer's Advocate

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### EDITORIAL.

#### Our Horse Supply.

The active demand for Canadian horses for the South African war, and for the export trade since its close, together with the requirement of horses for the supply of the thousands of settlers taking up land in New Ontario and the Northwest, has had the effect of reducing the available supply for sale to a lower mark than has been the case in many years. In consequence of these drafts from the stock in the older Provinces, prices have advanced to a point where it is difficult to buy a fairly good horse for any reasonable consideration. The financial stringency of ten years ago, and the slack demand for horses at that period, when only the best were salable at any decent price, led many farmers to sell such as they could and to be content to keep what they could not sell. The result was that breeding was for several years largely neglected, and many of the best mares were sold, for the reason that the best only were in demand, and the average prices being paid afforded no encouragement to horse-raising. But a reaction came sooner than was anticipated, and when the stronger demand and upward tendency of prices set in it came so sharply that owners were again tempted to sell those that would bring the most money. The consequence of these combined influences has been a marked scarcity of good horses in the country, and an absence of the usual supply of young stock to grow up to a serviceable and readily salable age. And since farmers have again turned their attention to breeding colts, the supply of good producing mares is found so greatly reduced as compared with the conditions of a decade ago that the country is not in a position to renew the stock nearly equal in size and quality to what it formerly was. There is a real need of more good breeding mares in the country, and breeders will do well to hold on to such good ones as they have, while those who have not suitable mares to breed from may do well to invest in some of the good heavy draft mares being imported, and which can be bought at prices not out of proportion to the value of first-class geldings when placed on the market at a serviceable age; while young stallions and fillies bred from such mares will doubtless bring prices that will give excellent returns for the original outlay. While good prices are going for carriage and saddle horses of desirable type, and those whose fancy runs in this direction may profitably raise those classes, there is no doubt that for the general farmer there is surer profit in breeding and raising heavy drafters, which are always in demand. In these classes there are fewer misfits, and a horse of this class unsalable from some minor unsoundness or other disqualification may prove quite as useful for farm work as the best. The proposed changes in the Canadian customs tariff prohibiting the importation of stallions and mares of less value than fifty dollars and fixing the minimum valuation of horses on which duties must be paid at fifty dollars, is a step in the right direction, and one which will, doubtless, meet with the approval of the people of this country generally, as it will have the effect of checking the importation of scrub stock, and will encourage the breeding and raising of a better class of horses in Canada. There is every reason to believe that horse-breeding will prove a paying and profitable branch of the farmer's operations for many years to come, if good sound judgment is used in the selection

and mating of suitable sires and dams, thereby producing animals of the most desirable class and quality, and Eastern Canada may readily regain its good name as a breeding-ground for the supply of the export trade, not only with Great Britain, but also with the United States, as in former years, when this was our best market for heavy drafters and for the best class of carriage horses.

#### Seed Grain Growing.

The permanent organization at Ottawa, on June 15th and 16th, of a seed-growers' association for Canada is the outcome of the seed-selection competition inaugurated a few years ago through the liberality of Sir Wm. C. Macdonald, and under the general direction of Dr. Jas. W. Robertson, the Agricultural Commissioner. There is a need and opportunity in every agricultural locality in Canada for a few farmers to make a specialty of growing high-class seed in quantity for the purpose of seed, as distinguished from grain for stock feed or human food. All farms and all kinds and conditions of soil are not well adapted to the production of seed of superior quality of all kinds of crops. Grain, and other seeds, for seed purposes should be produced on lands that are free from noxious weeds and capable of producing those crops at their best in quality and in yield per plant.

In all kinds of farm crops the yield per acre may be materially increased, and the quality substantially improved by the use of seed which has been graded up by careful growing and systematic, intelligent selection, continued from year to year. The qualities known as vigor of growth and productiveness in individual plants are transmitted through the seeds to the succeeding crops quite as surely as any desirable characteristics are transmitted to animals from their ancestors.

Experience has shown that there is a fair profit to all growers of high-class seeds who manage that special branch of farming with care and intelligence. Other farmers seek from them the supplies of seed for their general farm crops. The production and general use of seed of superior quality for farm crops may be encouraged and assisted by organized effort, under intelligent direction. The purpose of the Ottawa gathering is that associations of farmers making a specialty of growing grain and other crops for seed purposes on well-kept and highly-conditioned farms be organized as a means of improving their seed and of educating buyers and farmers generally in the value of high-class registered seed.

Hon. J. W. Longley, Attorney-General of Nova Scotia, recently said it would be the greatest blessing "that could be conferred on our public life if, in every one of the 213 constituencies of Canada, there were a hundred men who did not care a button about party, and voted as they thought was right and proper in the interests of the country. Some of them in public life would get hurt, and it would not always work right for the machine, but it would influence those high in the councils of the nation to pursue a course that would command the respect of the best and truest elements in the community."

#### An Economist.

I could not afford to lose a single copy of your valuable paper, as the information in one paper often saves the expenditure of a sum equal to the cost of your weekly paper for a year.

Huron, Ont.

GEO. TAPHAM.

#### The Discontented Farmer.

Every one is familiar with the farmer who is dissatisfied with his lot, and constantly excusing his failures or unprogressive methods by the statement that he was not "cut out" for a farmer. That there are men living on farms who are not naturally qualified to make good farmers cannot be denied, but that lack of natural endowments should be so generally offered as an apology for unprogressiveness, due largely to lack of enthusiasm and a knowledge of the principles of farming, is scarcely excusable. The man who is compelled by force of circumstances to continue farming, or any other vocation, against his natural inclinations, or who is physically or mentally unfit for the work of managing a farm, is deserving of commiseration. But there are a large class who do not make the success they should of their business, simply because they will not avail themselves of their opportunities, or are concerned with almost every other affair in the country and out of it, to the exclusion of their first duties. Examples are numerous of men who consider themselves capable of advising the Government or the judiciary what should be done, or who are constantly concerned about the roads and ditches in every quarter of their township, while at the same time their own farms may be soaked with surplus water, overrun with weeds, or so mismanaged that their fertility is practically exhausted. Others, again, imagine themselves victims of circumstances, that they have not been privileged to follow one of the so-called "learned professions," of which they may have a sprinkling of knowledge, as if in the profession of agriculture there were not scope for the exercise of all professional and business qualifications. Few farm conditions are more unsatisfactory than that of struggling on from year to year, hoping that some economic upheaval may land one high and dry on the road to success by some other route than that of the application of brain and brawn to the problems of the farm. Some men are considered fortunate in having a farm left to them, or becoming possessed of a farm at comparatively little outlay, and, therefore, seem to have advantages quite beyond those of the majority, and though careful and industrious, fail to make a success of their business; while others with fewer advantages, but more self-reliance and faith in their own ability, and more enthusiasm in the pursuit of their avocation, succeed beyond the expectations of their neighbors and make substantial and steady progress.

There is generally a remedy for their unfortunate condition within the reach of those who are not progressing. The first thing to be done is to get into a proper frame of mind. One must recognize his privileges and possibilities, and the potentialities of his farm. He should spend less time over newspapers, however good they may be, and devote more time to the reading of the best farm journals and other reliable agricultural literature, and the study of the conditions existing on his own farm. He must put enthusiasm into his work, and display a confidence in himself, his farm and the future. And to make this easier, he must live well. Many farmers are unsuccessful because they are constantly in the blues, due to the exercise of false economy in the matter of living. Then, the farmer who is making for success should have an object in view, and doggedly follow it. He should plan, scheme and study how to produce the largest possible crops, how to raise the best stock, the largest milk-producing cows, and how to secure the maximum returns