

THE FARMER'S ADVOCATE AND HOME MAGAZINE.

THE LEADING AGRICULTURAL JOURNAL IN
THE DOMINION.

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Protecting Birds of Plumage.

The Legislature of the State of New York is to be commended for its recent enactment protecting the lives of wild birds of plumage. It is to the effect that wild birds, other than the English sparrow, crow, hawk, crane, raven, crow-blackbird, common blackbird, kingfisher, and birds for which there is an open season, shall not be taken at any time, dead or alive, except under authority of a certificate issued under the act for scientific purposes, and under heavy bonds. No part of the plumage, skin or body of any bird protected by the section, shall be sold or had in possession for sale. Nests of the protected birds must not be robbed or destroyed except when necessary to protect buildings or to prevent their defacement.

Birds or game (except fish taken in the State) shall not be transported without the State, nor be taken or possessed with that intent. Any person who violates any provisions of the act is guilty of a misdemeanor and is liable to a penalty of \$100, and to an additional penalty of \$25 for each bird or part of bird taken or possessed in violation thereof. We hope to hear that the new law will be rigidly enforced. When we consider the rapid increase of insect pests, preying upon the grain, fruit and other crops of the farmer, these birds of plumage must be regarded as his very best friends, to say nothing of the added charm of their cheerful songs and appearance in the trees about the homestead or in the woods. Their slaughter, out of pure wantonness, by boys or young men (so called), or to minister needlessly to human vanity in the form of millinery, ought to be firmly put down by the State. We are satisfied that if women would but give this matter a second thought they would do a great deal to protect the lives of these beautiful friends of agriculture by absolutely refusing to purchase the adornments of plumage for hats or bonnets.

Rural Mail Delivery.

At the recent annual meeting of the East Middlesex (Ont.) Farmers' Institute, the subject of the free delivery of mail daily in the country was discussed and the principle endorsed by the unanimous adoption of the following report from a committee to which the preparation of a suitable resolution had been referred:—

"We, a committee appointed by your Institute to draft a resolution dealing with the question of 'Rural Mail Delivery,' beg to report that we consider the time has come when the farmers and all residents of rural districts should have a daily mail delivery, and we recommend that this Institute adopt this resolution requesting the Postmaster-General to use his influence in that direction; and, further, that a copy of this resolution be sent to the Superintendent of Institutes, requesting him to bring this matter to the notice of other Institutes."

(Signed) J. K. LITTLE,
THOS. KNAFTON, | Committee.
R. H. HARDING,
A. M. MUNRO, Secretary.

Though at first regarded as impracticable on account of the expenditure involved, the rural free delivery of letters and papers in the United States is steadily growing since its first trial in 1886. It now includes 383 distributing points in 41 of the 45 States, the exceptions being Idaho, Montana, Mississippi, and Wyoming, the appropriation increasing from \$20,000 to \$300,000. At the head of the States served by rural free delivery is Ohio, the most favored State, with forty-nine routes, Indiana having forty-four, and Iowa twenty-three. Thus in Texas there are only two rural free delivery routes, while in South Carolina there are twenty-one. In Washington there is one only, while in California there are fourteen, and in Louisiana, Alabama and Florida there are three routes only, while in Maine there are seven. In the opinion of post-office authorities, however, the present system is only in its incipency, and among the plans in view for its further extension is one for rural free delivery of mail by electric cars. One remarkable and salutary effect of the extension of the rural free delivery system has been the great improvement it has brought about in country roads. The extension of the system being optional with the government, the plan has been adopted of favoring those regions in which the roads are best, and as a consequence there has been a general improvement in the condition of roads traversed by rural carriers. This has been especially the case in the west, and it accounts for the apparent preference accorded to Ohio and Indiana, in which States the construction of good roads has been a prerequisite to the establishment of a rural free delivery service. In one county in Indiana the farmers incurred an expense of \$2,600 to grade and improve a road in order to obtain free delivery. Referring to this advantage of the system, Mr. E. E. Rothermel, an Indiana farmer, writes:—

"Being a patron of a rural free delivery route, I know the value of it, and also its advantages. At this time of year it is often very inconvenient for the farmers who live from three to five miles from the post office to get their mail regularly if they must go after it, as they are too busy during the day and too tired at night. Then during the winter it is often very stormy and disagreeable. As the farmer has more time to read during the winter, it is a great convenience to have his papers brought to the door, no matter how the weather is. It is also a great advantage in mailing letters. The farmer very often has stock or grain to sell; if he can get his paper regular he can see the markets daily and will have a good idea of their condition. A great many think if they have free delivery they will be taxed extra to pay for it, but this is a mistake. The farmer has just as much right to demand free delivery as the city people. Rural free delivery has proven such a success that more routes are being established all the time. Some of the requirements to secure free delivery are good roads, the signature of the heads of one hundred or more families on a route of not less than twenty miles. The route must be so located that the carrier can travel it and not double any part of the road. Each patron must provide a suitable box for receiving the mail, and all the boxes must be located on the route, as the carrier does not drive in to houses off the road. Applications for routes must be made to the post office department through your representative in Congress. Rural route No. 1, Richmond, Ind., is about twenty-three miles long. Our carrier gets around very regularly, varying but a few minutes from day to day. The mail comes every day in the year except Sundays and legal holidays. The carrier of route No. 1 receives \$400 a year and furnishes his own rig. He goes in a one-horse buggy and has a change of horses. He never stops for bad weather."

The dairy industry is enjoying a prosperous year so far in Eastern Canada, pastures and prices for the product being good.

Salt Packages.

Through the efforts of Mr. R. Holmes, M. P., member for West Huron, Ont., a bill has passed its third reading at Ottawa amending the Weights and Measures Act as it affects packages of salt. According to this new Act every barrel of salt packed in bulk, sold or offered for sale shall contain 280 lbs. of salt, and every such barrel or sack of salt sold or offered for sale shall have the correct gross weight thereof, and in case of a barrel, the net weight also marked upon it in a plain and permanent manner. It is also required that the name or the registered trade-mark of the packer of this salt, if it is packed in Canada, or the name and address of the importer if it is packed elsewhere than in Canada, shall be marked, stamped or branded on every barrel or sack of salt sold or offered for sale in Canada.

Word from Virginia.

A reader of the FARMER'S ADVOCATE, formerly from Ontario and now in a blue grass region of Virginia, from where he writes, states that the blue grass over which the Southerners go in such raptures is nothing but our common natural June grass. He describes the majority of the farms as ranging from 200 to 5,000 acres, and much of it so worn that it will hardly grow weeds. The majority of farmers are referred to as being lazy and shiftless, depending on the darkies to do the work. It is utterly out of the question for the owner of a farm to do any work. This state of things is attributed to effects of the slave trade, of which there are still relics in the form of old log cabins, etc. The Southerners still harbor a grudge against the Yankees, and are entirely in sympathy with Great Britain in the present war.

The horn and Texas flies are said to be very bad on stock, and the writer refers to having used fish oil and carbolic acid, which he saw recommended in the FARMER'S ADVOCATE as a remedy, and which he has found to work well. As a rule, the farmers there never think of trying any remedy for things of that sort. Our correspondent closes his letter by saying that he finds a good many things in the FARMER'S ADVOCATE that he is able to make use of even as far south as Virginia.

A Holiday Trip in Western Ontario.

(EDITORIAL CORRESPONDENCE.)

A ten-days holiday trip last month among the farmers in the district lying between London and Goderich was an exceedingly enjoyable experience. "The leafy month of June" was a favorite time for such an outing, the country in that section, favored with seasonable showers, looking its best in its new spring dress of green. A tolerably thorough knowledge, from personal observation, of the agricultural conditions and capabilities of the Dominion from ocean to ocean compels the confession that for uniformity of excellence in the favorable lay of the land, the quality of the soil, and the character of the farming seen in the region embraced in the north riding of Middlesex and the "Huron Tract," is unsurpassed in Canada or in any other country it has been our privilege to see. For good roads, these counties hold the record, not only the main lines, but most of the crossroads being systematically graded and gravelled with good material, making it a real pleasure to ride or drive over them, a feature which will doubtless give these districts a first preference when the system of rural mail delivery shall be adopted by the Postal Department, a departure which, we are willing to believe, is not in the distant future. In the strength and capability of the soil, the variety of crops of grain and grass and fruits successfully grown, the transportation facilities and marketing advantages enjoyed, the holders of these lands have a heritage of which they entertain a pardonable pride, while the evidences of thrift and prosperity manifested in broad, well-fenced fields, substantial barns, with stone or concrete basement stables, comfortable and tasteful dwellings, large, well-kept and fruitful orchards, and abundant shade and ornamental trees, are such as are rarely found in any country, and constitute conditions which, compared with those of many other lands, may well be regarded as causes for gratitude and congratulation. These townships, once famous for their fine fields of wheat as the principal crop, are now devoted to a variety of agricultural and live-stock industries in which the creamery and cheese factory play a prominent part, and their natural accompaniment, the raising and feeding of bacon hogs, largely on the by-products of the factories, is at present an interesting feature of their operations, with the price of live hogs figuring around 63 cents a pound at the period in the life of the pig when the greatest gain at the least cost is found. This element, together with cheese at 10 cents in summer and butter at a profitable price in winter, makes this phase of farming fairly safe and satisfactory.

Another and by no means inconsiderable proportion of the farmers of these counties make