

FARM AND DAIRY

AND RURAL HOME

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FARM AND DAIRY

PETERBORO, ONT.

THE ALFALFA HARVEST

If there is one crop above another that requires careful harvesting it is alfalfa. Unless it is properly harvested one might as well not have a crop. Much of the dissatisfaction with alfalfa, especially with the first cutting, has resulted from improper methods of harvesting. Coburn, in "The Book of Alfalfa," states that the crop is worth nine times as much as timothy. We have all come to believe that alfalfa is valuable and as such it can well demand a little more time and labor than the average crop.

One of the greatest difficulties in harvesting alfalfa is to preserve the leaves. Since the leaves contain from 75 to 80 per cent of the protein of the whole plant, it is a foregone conclusion that all efforts must be directed towards conserving them. Careful observers have estimated that the loss of leaves in harvesting alfalfa even under favorable circumstances, ranges from 15 to 30 or more per cent.

Generally speaking, the accepted time to cut alfalfa is shortly after the first bloom appears or when about one-

tenth of the crop is in bloom. Cutting should be completed if possible not later than when one-half of the crop has blossomed. The leaves are more readily conserved before that time and if left later the stalks assume a very fibrous nature and their feeding value is thereby depreciated.

In his book, "Alfalfa in America," Wing states that one cannot safely judge of the fitness for moving by the state of the bloom. Usually when alfalfa is ready to be cut, it will be partly in bloom, but sometimes it will be much more advanced in bloom than at other times. His advice is to cut alfalfa when there is noticed a cessation of growth, an appearance of bloom, a dropping off of the lower leaves, and especially when there are noticed shooting out near the surface of the ground, small new sprouts or buds, as if the plant was about to make a new growth. The earlier the crop is cut after these shoots start the better the hay will be and the more nutritious, also the stronger will be the new growth.

According to its protein content and its rating alongside of wheat bran, alfalfa is a most valuable crop. It is worth every care and attention in order that it may be harvested and stored in the barn with a maximum amount of this feeding value conserved.

THE INFLUENCE OF COLLEGE GRADUATES

Last week the colleges announced their annual list of graduates and again an army of young Canadians have stepped out into the world to fight the battles of life. Among others we have the graduates of the Ontario Agricultural College, 26 in all. These young men from Guelph, graduated from Toronto University in the Department of Agriculture, are perhaps among the most noteworthy and their influence in years to come cannot fail to have a far-reaching effect.

Some of these graduates, having taken positions in the United States, will in one sense be lost to Canada for the time being. It may be that they will but complete their course in the country to the south and return in after years more fully equipped for a greater work at home. The others returning to their farms, taking up positions with the agricultural press, or connecting themselves with various lines of agricultural endeavor under the direction of the Departments of Agriculture of the several provinces, each and all will form centres from which will radiate the science of agriculture, which is now becoming so necessary in solving the various problems pertaining to the farm.

Those of us who are acquainted with the work of the Ontario Agricultural College and of her graduates are proud of the institution and of the men. The institution and the graduates are deserving of every encouragement. It is to be hoped that each and every year will see young Canadians in increasing numbers profiting by the courses offered at the college and afterwards spreading the knowledge gained throughout the land, thereby

leavening the masses engaged in agricultural pursuits and bringing them to a higher realization of their calling, through having set examples of how to get more out of the farm and out of life.

The fact in this connection vouched for by the Hon. Sydney Fisher in an address before the Ottawa Canadian Club not long since is not without significance; he stated that the men who were making the greatest profits on the farms of Ontario to-day are graduates of the Guelph Agricultural College. "Who have learned the scientific truths which underlie their business and how to apply them." Of a certainty the responsibility on these young men is great. We know, however, that they will be quite equal to the responsibility.

BETTER SYSTEM OF ROAD MAKING

About one-fourth of the townships of the Province of Ontario have discarded statute labor. One-half of the eligible counties have established county systems of main roads. As a result of continued campaigns of education in regard to roads great improvements have been made. The principle of Provincial aid to road construction has been established. Even where statute labor is retained improvements of an important kind are to be observed. Much of the credit for these improvements is due Mr. A. W. Campbell, Deputy Minister of Railways and Canals for the Dominion, who until recently and for many years was Deputy Minister of Public Works for Ontario.

Now that the usual season of road work is at hand, the various efforts at highway improvement that are being put into operation recalls the counsel of the practical founder of the Good Roads Movement in Ontario, Mr. A. W. Campbell. Something of a permanent nature should be aimed at in all road work. The day of patch and repair, that system, which is so common where statute labor is still in vogue, should make way for a system of permanent construction on a methodic basis that will eventually result in a permanent improvement of our entire road system.

The county road system although by no means perfect, is the most successful that has yet been undertaken. The roads built are not uniformly good, but they have been improved to a degree reasonably commensurate with the expenditure upon them. Counties that spend only \$900 a mile cannot build as good roads as those which are spending \$2,000; but there has been improvement proportionate to the outlay.

These county roads provide excellent object lessons. They should afford the ideal towards which every road commissioner and pathmaster should aim. Good roads are costly to build. It is even more costly to do without them, and even as it is, the sums that are being spent annually in work of a patch and repair nature, would, if rightly expended, in a short period of time build the permanent roads which seem so expensive, but in reality are much the cheapest in the long run.

As citizens we owe it to ourselves

and to the country at large to see that our influence is directed towards having the money and labor expended most wisely on the better system of road making.

THE WEATHER SERVICE

The daily forecasts of the weather as sent out from the Dominion Weather Bureau, Toronto, are available through the daily press and at any telegraph station in the Dominion. These forecasts often may be made of much value by agriculturists. It would seem that the rank and file of our rural population are unacquainted with the advantages of this service and of the fact that it is, to a high degree, reliable. More advantage should be taken of it.

The weather forecasts are based upon strictly scientific methods. Each morning reports of the state of the weather at various points located over the continent are received at the weather bureau. The barometric readings, the prevailing winds and the amount, if any, of precipitation during the past 24 hours, for each of the stations of the weather service are forwarded to Toronto each morning. These are charted on a map and from this map it is possible to forecast with a reasonable degree of certainty what the state of the weather will be in any given locality during the next 24 hours. General storms that are sweeping across the continent can be forecasted with the most remarkable degree of certainty much in advance of the time they will arrive. As soon as the weather map has been made for the day, the forecasts are sent out, and they are available at telegraphic stations shortly after 10 a. m.

Those who enjoy a telephone service are most favorably situated to reap the advantage of the weather probabilities. During haying and harvest seasons, especially, and at many other times throughout the year, it is of much value to know what the weather is likely to be for the next day. Much loss and inconvenience might be averted did we all recognize and take advantage of the weather service.

What is Needed

(Hamilton Spectator.)

Farm and Dairy has it that there are 63,000 fewer farmers in Ontario to-day than there were ten years ago. This is a startling statement and one that should cause the Ontario Government greater concern than it has yet evidenced in this matter.

Most of the agriculturists who have left Ontario in the past decade have traveled to the west and are now reaping the good things in that part of Canada. The fact that they moved does not mean that agricultural possibilities in this province are in any sense below par. On the contrary, there is abundant evidence that old Ontario as an agricultural section of the Dominion, where the worker of the soil is trained and intelligent, stands without an equal.

As a class the farmers of Ontario have not kept pace with the march of agricultural progress. If farming has not paid in some cases—many cases, perhaps—it has not been because the