

The Farmer's Advocate and Home Magazine

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EDITORIAL.

Feed carefully at first.

Free speech and fair play go hand in hand.

Breed that extra sow, if you have kept one, soon.

First of all we must remember that Canada is in this war.

Those who have bought their share of the Victory Loan feel better for doing it.

It is no credit to any who seek to interrupt free speech at any public meeting.

Remember the boys at the front. They still need support and all kinds of comforts.

Damp pig pens are cold and promote rheumatism. A straw loft might help in some.

Let the sheep run outside in fine weather. They do not do well in close confinement.

Organize the Literary Society for the winter now. Put off too late, much valuable time is lost.

Making light of such a serious matter as sending men to the army is not good form on the part of any.

Keep ahead of the times. Long winter evenings are about the only time the busy farmer gets to read.

Next week our annual Christmas Number goes forward to subscribers free. There is a treat in store for you.

Late November gave us a taste of real winter at a time when most farmers could have made good use of a few more plow days.

It requires men to produce on the farms. Those who call for greater production seem to take a long time to see the point.

The Minister of Militia promises that bona fide farmers and farm boys who work on the farms will not be taken into the army.

Some people believe that the man who has gone over the fence is safer than the one astride the top rail. It depends upon what he has left and what he is into.

A drafty stable means poor-doing stock. Put in new lights where needed and stop up the holes. Controlled ventilation is always more satisfactory than the drafts.

The working out of the Tribunal system has not left people of one mind. There is some unrest and dissatisfaction, but the right of appeal enjoyed by the military authorities and also by the applicant for exemption should straighten things out. A wholesale getting off at one place and wholesale getting in at another does not tend to please.

There are always plenty of people ready to tell the other fellow what to do. Some tottering old men never fail to tell their younger friend that if they were his age they would be at the war, while the younger man retorts that if he were their age he'd mind his own business. Both may be right or wrong, at any rate it is wiser to attend strictly to one's own affairs.

Free Speech a First Principle of Liberty.

The safety of the people of this country rests upon the right of free speech and the freedom of the press. A muzzled press and a muzzled platform means a muzzled people. We have contended that the names of the owners of publications issued in Canada should be periodically published that the people who read might fully understand the situation and the power behind the press. This would be a good thing for all concerned. It would be reassuring to some readers in whose minds doubts may arise if they knew positively that the press was not controlled by any interests, cliques or parties, as should be revealed by full publicity of the owners in each case. There is, however, another serious situation which has developed out of the present political campaign. Some of Canada's leading men have not been allowed to state their case from a public platform in what should be enlightened places. It is also hinted that in certain parts of this country speakers who would oppose the general views of the people living in the district would not be given a hearing. This is bold effrontery again to one of the first principles of liberty. There should not be a platform in Canada which is not free to any who wish to discuss fairly the issues before the people at the present time. It is a retrograde step when mob rule is allowed and free speech is choked off. It is a discredit to any community where such an occurrence is allowed, no matter whether the supporters of such a movement belong to one political following or another. A free and fair discussion of the points at issue is urgently needed. Unfortunately considerable of the discussion in times like these is not fair, but the right of free speech must be upheld.

Stretch Out Short Courses.

During the coming winter there will doubtless be held a number of short courses in agriculture, with a view to further fit farmers and the few farmers' sons left in the country to grow larger crops and produce bigger yields with less help. It will be necessary, if these courses are to accomplish most, that they be outlined to meet present needs. In the first place, it will be advisable to take the course to the farmer, rather than ask the farmer to come to the course, because on most farms there is only one man, or at most two men, left, and it is necessary that they be where chores can be attended to and the course taken as well. This will mean more three-day courses, taken right to the farmer's nearest village, if they are to be attended as they should.

We have from the beginning believed that the short course was doing good, and at the present it cannot very well be elaborated upon in the way of increasing its length. When the course is broadened in scope it must of necessity be held at some centre, and those who attend must leave their farms and give up their entire time to study for the entire period of the course. When conditions again approach the normal, it might be well to consider the advisability of putting on more short courses of several months' duration, something after the style of the three-months dairy course now held at the Ontario Agricultural College. The problem of the Agricultural College and of the Agricultural Department is to do the greatest good to the greatest number. Long courses, taking two or four years, cannot meet all the requirements although they are necessary, and short courses of from three days to two weeks give only a smattering on any particular branch of agriculture taken up therein. When the war is over and the boys return to the farms, plans should be all matured for giving them, if they so desire, short courses complete in themselves extending for two or three of the winter months, when the men can best get away from the farm work. All farmers' sons cannot leave the farm for a two-year or four-year college education, but a great

many more, in normal times, would avail themselves of an opportunity of taking two or three months at an agricultural school, college, or even at a county centre.

Medical Inspection In Schools.

People have generally believed that children raised in the country are healthier and stronger than those raised under city conditions, but, according to the findings of the doctors when men are called up for the army, basing our estimates on United States conditions, those defective or in need of medical attention are from seven to twenty per cent. higher in numbers in rural districts. The reason given for this by leading physicians is the lack of medical inspection in rural schools. There is no doubt but that the general conditions in the country where there is no crowding and where the child has more opportunity to take plenty of exercise in the fresh air, and where wholesome foods, such as milk, either alone or combined with homemade bread, and other things are usually in abundance, should be conducive to better health in the children of the country than in those of the city. However, according to physicians who have looked into the matter the complaint is made that seventy-five per cent. of the rural schools are unsanitary and that the children who are obliged to attend these schools are brought up spending a large part of their time under conditions which finally cause an alarming number of instances of poor eyesight, bad teeth, under weight, flat feet, etc. It is said that defective eyes, ears, teeth and throats among the youths of rural communities have been found to be due largely to conditions in the rural schools, and that improper desks and eats have caused much spinal curvature and closely-related trouble. Evidently there is room for some improvement in the general health of the rural community through better conditions in rural schools. If proper medical inspection will give the country from seven to twenty per cent. more children in perfect health, the quicker it comes the better. It should at least do that much for that would only be equalling city conditions, and surely the country is a more healthful place to live than the city.

Steer a Steady Course.

For the past three years the farmer has been advised by all classes of people as to what he should produce and how he should do it. Those engaged in occupations in no way connected with agriculture have come forward with their own ideas as to how the man on the land should meet the situation with which he has been brought face to face, and in a great many cases those who have advised most knew least of the farmer's work and his problems. We are pleased to know that farmers have, through it all, worked away, sanely and steadily, and with excellent results toward increased production, which has been brought about only through their own good sense in not being greatly deviated from their own careful plans by others who have sought to bestow knowledge broadcast upon producers. There will be, from now until the end of the war, and possibly for some time thereafter, all kinds of schemes put forward and changes in our agricultural practice advised, but the careful farmer will always look before he leaps, and thinks twice before he jumps at conclusions. Farming is a business which cannot be radically changed upon a moment's notice. The farmer who would jump from wheat to pigs, and from pigs to beef, and from beef to sheep, and from sheep back to wheat, with a few potatoes and some poultry and a little dairying and fruit as a specialty, every time someone advised him to would be playing leap frog every week in the year. He would get nowhere, would produce less and that at a loss, and would finally call down upon his head more abuse than he has already experienced, because then he would fall