

THE FARMER'S ADVOCATE AND HOME MAGAZINE.

THE LEADING AGRICULTURAL JOURNAL IN THE
DOMINION.

PUBLISHED WEEKLY BY
THE WILLIAM WELD COMPANY (LIMITED).

JOHN WELD, MANAGER.

AGENTS FOR THE FARMER'S ADVOCATE AND HOME JOURNAL,
WINNIPEG, MAN.

LONDON (ENGLAND) OFFICE:
W. W. CHAPMAN, Agent, Mowbray House, Norfolk Street,
London, W. C., England.

- 1. **THE FARMER'S ADVOCATE AND HOME MAGAZINE** is published every Thursday.
- 2. It is impartial and independent of all cliques or parties, handsomely illustrated with original engravings, and furnishes the most practical, reliable and profitable information for farmers, dairymen, gardeners, stockmen and home-makers, of any publication in Canada.
- 3. **TERMS OF SUBSCRIPTION.**—In Canada, England, Ireland and Scotland, \$1.50 per year, in advance; \$2.00 per year when not paid in advance. United States, \$2.50 per year; all other countries 12s.; in advance.
- 4. **ADVERTISING RATES.**—Single insertion, 25 cents per line, agate. Contract rates furnished on application.
- 5. **THE FARMER'S ADVOCATE** is sent to subscribers until an explicit order is received for its discontinuance. All payments of arrears must be made as required by law.
- 6. **THE LAW IS,** that all subscribers to newspapers are held responsible until all arrears are paid and their paper ordered to be discontinued.
- 7. **REMITTANCES** should be made direct to us, either by Money Order or Registered Letter, which will be at our risk. When made otherwise we will not be responsible.
- 8. **THE DATE ON YOUR LABEL** shows to what time your subscription is paid.
- 9. **ANONYMOUS** communications will receive no attention. In every case the FULL NAME and POST-OFFICE ADDRESS MUST BE GIVEN.
- 10. **WHEN A REPLY BY MAIL IS REQUIRED** to Urgent Veterinary or Legal Enquiries, \$1 must be enclosed.
- 11. **LETTERS** intended for publication should be written on one side of the paper only.
- 12. **CHANGE OF ADDRESS.**—Subscribers when ordering a change of address should give the old as well as the new P. O. address.
- 13. **WE INVITE FARMERS** to write us on any agricultural topic. We are always pleased to receive practical articles. For such as we consider valuable we will pay ten cents per inch printed matter. Criticisms of Articles, Suggestions How to Improve THE FARMER'S ADVOCATE AND HOME MAGAZINE, Descriptions of New Grains, Roots or Vegetables not generally known, Particulars of Experiments Tried, or Improved Methods of Cultivation, are each and all welcome. Contributions sent us must not be furnished other papers until after they have appeared in our columns. Rejected matter will be returned on receipt of postage.
- 14. **ALL COMMUNICATIONS** in reference to any matter connected with this paper should be addressed as below, and not to any individual connected with the paper.

Address—THE FARMER'S ADVOCATE, or
THE WILLIAM WELD COMPANY (LIMITED),
LONDON, CANADA.

conformation, with the result that, while we have secured racing machines—horses with almost the speed of express trains—we have an immense number of ragged roadsters, which, under a more rational system of breeding, would have had enough weight, conformation, action and wearing qualities to add twenty-five or fifty dollars per head to their value.

Cattle? The Holstein breed has probably been more modified in American hands than any other, and, so far as big records are concerned, we have beaten the Dutchmen with their own breed. Feed and selection have done it—forcing and high development. But are the generality of American Holsteins to-day as good a breed with which to work as the native race of Holland, where good average production, without forcing, is still the ideal? Are the American herds as healthy, as hardy, as likely progenitors of a profitable race? Perhaps another generation or two will answer. The wisest breeders now favor what they call the milk-and-beef type.

For the opposite extreme, take the Ayrshires, and here it was the Scotchmen who exhibited the greatest folly. For years the most fashionable show herds of Scotland were owned by men who disregarded milk for type, fancy points, the particular set and curve of the horn, the tight milk vessel, the short, corky teats. Sizable teats and capacious udders were discounted, and many of the heifers raised with as little regard for the development of dairy quality as the heifers in some of our show herds of Shorthorns. The Ayrshire breeders chased fads to an outrageous extreme, and, but for the existence of a good many commercial herds, where milk was preferred to style, the faddists would probably have run their breed to the wall. At last, thanks in part to the Canadian demand, they saw the error of their ways, and Ayrshires are now being bred for milk, as they should be. The only caution we would

throw out is that they avoid swinging to the opposite extremity, sacrificing constitution, conformation and substance in a blind craze for milk records. We do not believe they will.

* * *

Take beef cattle. Some of the most ridiculous fads of breeding have been followed by the Shorthorn men in their quest for pedigree, insisting on "pure Scotch" breeding, simply because some Scotchmen bred good cattle, and valuing a bull or a cow largely according to the number of times the names of certain fashionable Scotch strains appeared in its extended pedigree. Individuality has cut all too small a figure; inbreeding, or something very near it, has been condoned and encouraged at the expense of size, constitution, stamina and procreative faculty. Last, and perhaps most supreme folly of all, the milking function has been almost entirely lost sight of. A change, however, is coming rapidly. Shorthorn breeders are awakening to the signs of the times. A record of dairy performance will soon be adopted, and milk records kept. As the Hon. John Dryden predicted a year ago, the breeder who goes in for milk will be in the swim ten years from now.

* * *

In swine, our American friends have gone to extremes in breeding the lard hog, and have developed great compact masses of meat and fat—principally fat—seriously lacking in fecundity. Already they are after our Yorkshire and other blood to cross on their puncheons of pork, in order to secure satisfactory litters. In Canada, we have done pretty well in evolving the bacon type, though at first we made the mistake of seeking excessive length and neglecting constitution and digestive capacity.

* * *

So it goes in many classes and breeds. Perhaps sheep furnish an exception. Poultrymen have long sacrificed utility to fancy points. To a certain extent this may have been justified, because, in the case of poultry, exterior markings are relied on as the evidence of purity of breeding. There was no excuse, though, for placing upon fancy points so much stress as has been done; neither is it wise to overlook type and constitution in single-eyed concentration on trap-net records.

* * *

In all classes of stock it is high average production by healthy, substantial, thrifty stock, that counts best in the long run. Phenomena seldom reproduce their kind, or, if they do, the chances are that, along with the performing capacity will come weakness of constitution, lack of substance, or defective generative faculties which ultimately tend to mediocrity, barrenness or disease.

The true breeder must be, above all things else, judicious.

EXPERIMENTAL WORK DONE WITH ALFALFA.

The editorial paragraph headed, "A Tip to the Professors," in "The Farmer's Advocate" of February 6th, has elicited remonstrance from the Ontario Agricultural College. It is pointed out that in 1900, an excellent bulletin on alfalfa was issued, the author being Prof. R. Harcourt, of the Department of Chemistry, who early became and has steadfastly remained a staunch advocate of this crop. We are also reminded that a good deal of investigation has been carried on of late years by the College Bacteriologist, experimenting co-operatively with artificial inoculation of this and other legumes, and that a comprehensive bulletin has been in course of preparation, embodying the results of these experiments, and also presenting information as to the value and cultivation of alfalfa. It is also added that experiments with alfalfa have been conducted on the College plots for twenty years, and that many inquiries concerning it are being continually answered.

While none of these facts are new to "The Farmer's Advocate," which has for years given close attention and considerable publicity to the work done with alfalfa at the O. A. C., it is possible that, by omitting (in the interests of brevity) to state them in the above-mentioned article, we may have created an unfair impression in the minds of casual readers, and for this rea-

son we cheerfully avail ourselves of an opportunity to place the facts before the reading public. While on the subject, we may as well anticipate possible protest from another quarter, by explaining that, in 1904, a very good bulletin on alfalfa, by Professors Grisdale, Shutt and Fletcher, was issued from the Central Experimental Farm, at Ottawa, and we would not for a moment leave the impression that the authorities at either Guelph or Ottawa were indifferent to this crop.

But we have long been convinced that, in view of the immense soil-improving virtue of alfalfa, its peculiar adaptability for rolling land, its unrivalled merits as a soiling crop, and its unquestionable economy as a substitute for bran and other expensive commercial concentrates, a great deal more stress might properly be laid upon it than has commonly been done by the agricultural authorities at these institutions. The fact that it is a legume and nitrogen-gatherer, and that its fodder is exceedingly rich in the valuable protein compounds which make it specially valuable for combination with the general run of farm roughage, needs to be emphasized strongly and repeatedly. There are immense possibilities in alfalfa for Canadian agriculture, but there is also much more for us to learn about the culture and adaptability of the crop. There is need for elaborate experimentation with it at all our Canadian colleges and stations, as to soil, culture, fertilization, and feeding. The call is for practical demonstration and experiment on a large scale, and this without reflecting at all on the good work already accomplished.

DR. SEATH DISCUSSES RURAL SCHOOL MATTERS.

We were pleased to observe, in a recent press despatch, that Dr. John Seath, Superintendent of Education for Ontario, had agreed with Oxford County's Rural School Trustees' Association that it would be well to have one of these associations in each county in Ontario. The same despatch represented him as saying that the Entrance Examination is largely to blame for the deterioration of the rural schools. Apropos of this matter, Dr. Seath has expressed himself to "The Farmer's Advocate" as follows, adding that the Minister of Education would, during the present session of the Legislature, explain in detail what his Department intends to do:

"The curriculum for rural schools is not bad, but the trouble is that it is not lived up to. This is partly because the work has been conducted with the object of getting many to pass the Entrance Examination, and partly because the teachers have not been properly trained to teach the course for rural schools. However, we are going to provide the education such teachers will need. School gardens will be established at each of the Normal Schools, and the revised course for the Normal Schools will have several other important improvements. I believe that in a couple of years the number of continuation and fifth classes in rural schools will be trebled; but the urban schools, as well as the rural schools, need improvement. At the University of Toronto, next summer, there will be a course in personal and school hygiene. All the Normal-school teachers who teach the subject will be required to attend the course, and many others who can come will be welcomed."

While Dr. Seath does not expect that the kind of medical inspection being introduced into Toronto will be introduced into rural schools, he expects that there will be inaugurated in the latter schools, some system of testing the pupils for physical defects.

Dr. Seath also draws attention to the amended regulations of 1907, relating to elementary agriculture and horticulture, and school gardens, in village and rural schools:

"1. Any Rural-school Board, or any School Board in a village, that provides and maintains a School Garden, with the accommodations and equipment described below, shall be entitled to an initial grant not exceeding one hundred dollars, and a subsequent annual grant of twenty dollars out of any grant made for Elementary Agriculture and Horticulture by the Legislature, to be expended in caring for such School Gardens and for keeping the school-grounds in proper condition.

"2. (1) The area of the School Garden shall be sufficient for the number of plots required, and shall be at least one-quarter of an acre, in addition to the requirements as to area of the regular