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EDITORIAL

Select Seed Grain Now

The advice of the Minnesota Experiment Station that farmers should select their seed in the fall is apt and timely. Especially is the advice good in a year when quality in some sections is below the average. Good seed is the basis of successful farming. It is as important as good live stock. If one had one hundred animals, and wished to keep ten for breeding purposes, he would be considered foolish to open the gate and let ninety run out at random and retain the ten which "just happened" to be left. This last ten might easily include the poorest animals in the bunch. But a similar practice is usually followed with grain. If one has one hundred bushels of grain, and needs ten bushels for seed, it is a part of wisdom to get the ten bushels of the very best out of the hundred, and sell or feed the other ninety. This should be done before a large part of the grain is marketed.

System of Hay Inspection

If the hay industry of Western Canada is to reach its highest state of development, it is necessary that there be a suitable standard of quality and a system of grading and inspection. This was the stand taken by the delegates to the inter-provincial trade conference held at Vancouver a short time ago. It was pointed out that the present standards were most unsuitable, especially for Alberta and British Columbia.

In Eastern Canada there is already in operation a system of hay inspection. This system should be extended and adapted to the Western provinces, and special grades established for their particular hays. Suitable standards of quality for hay are found to be most necessary, such standards to give grades for timothy, clover, including alfalfa, brome, wild native

hay, and other varieties which are necessary for the business of the West. At present it is agreed by all parties concerned that the marketing methods are most unsatisfactory, not alone to the farmer who places the hay on the market, but also to the purchaser. The inspection and sales act at the present time does not deal far enough as regards conditions in Western Canada, and the move made at the inter-provincial conference at Vancouver to have some amendments made to the act should be supported by all interested in the future of the hay industry of Western Canada.

Business, Not Politics

The West, if we are to judge its opinion by what its farmers said to Sir Wilfrid, is for tariff reduction. Sir Wilfrid seems to size up the situation that way, for he intimates that a commission will be named to go into the whole question of the tariff. The commission may be expected to investigate and ponder, and do some speculating and moon-shining and finally report. After that some action may be taken. In one respect the mills of responsible government are like those of the gods, they grind slowly.

However, it is just as well that we should get our opinions in order if a commission is going to listen to our ideas on the tariff. The West wants to consider on what particular lines it needs reduction, and be ready to state them consistently and persistently to any tariff commission that comes along for the information. From the farmers' standpoint the question of tariff reduction is not a political one any more than is the question of the maintenance of the steel bounties a political question for the steel manufacturers. It is a business proposition, not to be confounded with either political party, and should be handled as it has been handled up to present in the agitation going on, in a business-like way. If tariff reduction is in the interests of agriculture, it is in the interest of individual agriculturists whether they are Liberal, Conservative or Independent in their political faiths. Tax gathering is a business, and should never be mixed up in party politics at all.

Commission to Investigate Sheep Industry

The Dominion live-stock commissioner announces that the federal department of agriculture have appointed a commission to study the production and marketing of wool and mutton in Great Britain and the United States, with the view of learning how sheep-raising continues to be successfully carried on in those countries, or at least in parts of them, while in the Dominion, with a soil and climate eminently adapted to sheep-raising,

the industry is in a decadent condition. Dr. Rutherford announces further that this step is but preliminary to the undertaking of a comprehensive policy, having for its object the extension and improvement of the sheep industry in Canada.

Our sheep industry needs to be re-developed and re-established. It was on a flourishing basis at one time, but the way it has been going this last decade or so, wool and mutton production so far as Canadians were concerned were liable to become lost arts, and since no one seemed able from our own experience to offer any reason why the industry should steadily decay, or suggest any means of revival, reasons evidently are to be sought outside our own country. Sending commissions abroad to inquire into the condition of this industry or that has become a common practice. In some cases results have not warranted the inquiries, but in this case no solution of the problem of a decaying sheep industry seem forthcoming from home, and we might as well be acquainted with the factors that contribute to the development and maintenance of the industry abroad.

Is There Anything in Chicken-Raising?

Writes a poultry-raiser: "Broilers bring me 30 cents per pound. I have a market for all I can produce. This summer I have been getting a straight price of 25 cents per pound for all fowls sold." Yes, gentle reader, this poultry-raiser is in Western Canada. She is raising broilers and fattening chickens on the C. P. R. demonstration farm at Strathmore, Alberta. There is something unusual about these prices. Better read this poultry-raiser's letter in this issue and find out the why and wherefore of a quarter of a dollar a pound for dressed poultry. Evidently price is a question of properly fattening and dressing as much as it is of marketing.

The West this year as usual has not raised enough chickens. We are bringing in considerable quantities from the East to make up the deficiency; and the strange thing about it is that our poultry imports seem to annually increase. The more we engage in farming the less attention we seem to give to poultry raising. Naturally it would seem the opposite should hold. Number one northern wheat sells at \$1.06 per bushel at Winnipeg, and number one spring chickens dressed, at 25 cents per pound at Strathmore, Alberta. And yet the country talks wheat, grows wheat and waxes enthusiastic about it, while it buys its spring chickens in the East, pays the raiser there for growing them, the Eastern jobber for buying them, the railroads for hauling them in and the retailer for selling them. Is it not possible there is something we are missing in our rather one-sided system of farming?