

The Farmer's Advocate and Home Magazine.

THE LEADING AGRICULTURAL JOURNAL IN THE
DOMINION.

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care to abandon until they are unfit for habitation. The community hall and the community school should be combined, and for this reason these two lines of rural upbuilding should be co-ordinated into one scheme.

The Live Stock Expansion Movement.

It cannot be estimated what it would mean to Canada if we were able to supply Britain with a large proportion of her bacon requirements, and be in a position to contribute liberally of beef, dairy products and eggs. There is a wonderful market there, and our possibilities for production are limited only by the number of producers. Western Canada is getting into the live-stock business quickly, and when the vast resources west of the Great Lakes are developed we shall depend almost as much on foreign markets to take care of our live-stock products as we have in regard to wheat. The Maritime Provinces are only waiting adequate abattoir and cold-storage facilities before they will be in a position to forge ahead and enlarge upon their productive enterprises.

The destinies of many countries are being mapped out at the present time, and it behooves us to be up and doing with an eye fixed to the future of Canada and the prosperity of the agricultural industry. Canada's war debt may be paid out of the top six inches of Canadian soil, as the Food Controller has said, but our crops will not represent the best form of collateral until they are converted into live stock or live-stock products. Producers are awaiting information concerning the future program of this country, and the return of the Live Stock Commissioner should be the prelude to a clear-cut, comprehensive statement regarding European requirements and what is expected of us. One thing is certain, quality as well as quantity will be demanded by the British consumer, and to meet this stipulation we shall have to set our house in order, improve our cattle stocks and supply what the market demands. With this in view we are offering a few suggestions in the live-stock department of this issue as to how we might go about it to awaken interest in better live stock and the great expansion movement.

Getting Past the Labor Problem.

BY ALLAN MCDIARMID.

It has been said that for every good thing there is something evil and for every evil thing we can find some compensation coming with it. It seems to be a sort of Universal Law that helps to make this a tolerable place to live in. And at the same time it is the means of giving to each of us a little of the discipline that seems necessary to prevent our getting out of the "straight and narrow way;" that is, after all, the easiest road through life.

What brought these thoughts to our mind was something we have just read in the last copy of our "Farmer's Advocate" on the subject of providing employment for our returned soldiers, and other men out of a job, in the way of Government works and this housing scheme and other things of a similar nature, which, although not absolutely necessary, are looked on as being the best solution of the "unemployed labor" problem.

But the other side of the case seems to have been overlooked. The bad that comes with the good. If the great majority of our laboring men are employed on house-building and different public works, the condition of the farmer will remain as bad as it was at any time during the war. He will still be short of help and unable to run his farm to advantage, or to produce the food that the world seems to be in as much need of as ever. So the result would seem to be that by providing this emergency work the Government is reducing the production of our country and creating at least as great an evil as it is trying to cure. No doubt the Government's intentions are of the best but the outcome may not be just as favorable as they expect.

But there's always a way out of every difficulty and although the solution of the problem may have its good and bad features, still they are generally of minor importance. And the solution in this case would seem to be for us to find something or someone to take the place of our soldiers and other men that we thought were coming back from France and the munition factories, to take up their old work on the farm. If the Government job proves a better drawing card than milking cows and hoeing corn then we'll have to get our help from some other source; or do what we can without help. Which would mean that the leading industry of this country was going back instead of progressing. And when agriculture starts going down hill it won't be long before the other industries are following in her wake. The better plan will be to get help from some quarter and see that Canada's resources are developed and her production kept on the increase from year to year.

Over across the line in the U. S. they seem to have been up against the same thing that confronts us here. But they have a plan whereby they expect to get past it. In the spring of 1918 they organized what they called the Woman's Land Army. Its plan was to organize and place in groups, girls and young women who were willing to work on the farms, and to have them where they would be available at once for those farmers who asked for their services. During the summer of 1918 there were units in twenty different states with a total enrolment of 15,000 farmerettes altogether.

The scheme worked, as also did the farmerettes. They were employed at picking and packing fruit, dairy work, hoeing, truck gardening, grain harvesting and hay-making, silo work, handling tractors, threshing and care of live-stock. And on the whole, they seem to have given satisfaction. So much so that they are going to try it again this year, in spite of the fact that the war is over and the necessity wouldn't seem to be so great. What is more, the United States Employment Service has taken this organization into partnership with it, which makes it practically a Government institution. And its usefulness will also be increased.

There is a Camp Management Committee that will take up such questions as recreation, diet, health, sanitation, hours of work and contracts with employers. The Land Army has always stood for a stated number of hours work daily, with any emergency overtime, as in the case of saving the crops, to be paid for by the hour. Wages will be adjusted according to service given and the generally ruling price in the district. Ability and experience will be the main factor, however, in fixing the wage. The Land Army has no intention of competing with or trying to cut down the price of the labor of the "hired man" on the farm. They have no thought of taking any man's job away from him. Their idea is to do the work that without their help would be left undone; to increase the efficiency of the farms and consequently of the nation.

Now it seems to me that there is the opportunity in this country for an organization along similar lines to that of which we have been speaking. And it is hard to see how it could be productive of anything but good. Perhaps the law of compensation would make no exception here either, but a good many advantages would apparently come with this hitherto undeveloped supply of labor from our towns and cities.

It would promote better feeling between town and country, for one thing. It would open up a chance for many women who might be in a position to take up land in some part of the country and manage it on their own account. Or permanent positions might be secured in different branches of farm work by those who had unusual ability along that line.

It is said that wherever a camp or unit was established last year in the United States, that it became a sort of community centre and a community spirit was developed, the worth of which to both the workers themselves and the rural district in which they were located, was beyond calculation.

Above all, the foregoing scheme is practical. It has been tried out and it works. And if it worked on one side of the Line it should work on the other. Conditions in the two countries are very much the same. What we need is a few Yankee organizers. Or have we some, just as good, on this side, that are only awaiting their opportunity?

Nature's Diary.

A. B. KLUGH, M. A.

Nature in Poetry.—No. 4.

It is but natural that the poets should have written a good deal about Spring, for the season of re-awakening is potent enough to put a song in the heart of the average human being. So much is this the case that the "spring poet"—who bombards the editors with more or less doggerel rhymes in which "Spring," "Birds on the wing" and "sing" figure prominently,—has become a joke. But let us see what the poets have given the nature-lover in the way of spring songs. In many of the passages dealing with Spring particular birds and flowers are treated, and in these cases I shall consider them when we come to discuss these topics as found in poetry.

Leland in "Spring" has given us a beautiful verse describing the approach of this season:—

"And softly came the fair young queen
O'er mountain, dale and dell.
And where her golden light was seen
An emerald shadow fell."

Longfellow in "Hiawatha," that delightful poem in which the nature-lover finds so many gems of accurate description, says:—

"Came the Spring with all its splendor
All its birds and all its blossoms
All its flowers, and leaves, and grasses."

In "Spring Goeth all in White," Robert Bridges has given us a very true bit of observation—the predominance of white flowers in Spring, which is equally true in Canada, with our Trilliums, White-hearts, Bishop's-cap, White Violets, Star-flowers, Wild Lily-of-the-Valley, Bane-berry, Dwarf Cornel, Aralias, Blood-roots, Viburnums, Dog-woods, Shad-bush, Hawthorns, and Wild Cherries, as it is in England.

"Spring goeth all in white
Crowned with milk-white may
In fleecy flocks of light
O'er heaven the white clouds stray."

White butterflies in the air,
White daisies prank the ground,
The cherry and the hoary pear
Scatter their snow around."

Whittier in "The Singer" describes the season when:—

"Again the blackbirds sing; the streams
Wake, laughing, from their winter dreams
And tremble in the April showers
The tassels of the maple flowers."

Alan Sullivan in "The White Canoe" has given us a verse which rings very true to the ears of those who love the north country:—

"There's a whisper of life in the gray dead trees,
And a murmuring wash on the shore
And a breath of the south in the loitering breeze,
To tell that the winter is o'er.
While free at last from its fetters of ice
The river is clear and blue
And cries with a tremulous quivering voice
For the launch of the White Canoe."

Another Canadian, Archibald Lapman, in his "April in the Hills" treats the birds of spring very accurately:—

"The crows go by, a noisy throng;
About the meadows all day long,
The shore-lark drops his brittle song;
And up the leafless tree
The nut-hatch runs, and nods, and clings;
The bluebird dips with flashing wings,
The robin flutes, the sparrow sings
And the swallows float and flee."

The description of the song of the Prairie Horned Lark, or Shore-lark as it is often termed, as "brittle," and the line "The bluebird dips with flashings wings" are particularly good. Anyone who has watched a Bluebird feeding in the spring, dipping to the ground to secure some insect which it has seen from its perch on a fence-post, will appreciate the accuracy of the description.

The same poet in "April Night" has given us a wonderfully descriptive line:—"The moist smell of the imprisoned earth."

Bliss Carman in "Spring's Saraband" sings:—

"With color and with music
With perfumes and with pomp,
By meadowland and upland
Through pasture, wood and swamp,
With promise and enchantment
Leading her mystic mime,
She comes to lure the world anew
With joy as old as time."

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