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Bright Outlook for Agriculture



THE outlook for agriculture keeps bright. In live stock alone there is sufficient encouragement to warrant a farmer in taking the most rosy view of the future. True, the scrub or medium type of animal is somewhat hard to dispose of; but first-class stock, in nearly every class, is selling better than for years past. There are not enough first-class horses of the right type to supply the demand. In beef cattle the demand for breeding animals and store animals has not been equalled for years. This season up to the present time breeding animals to the value of \$17,000 have left this province for the Canadian West through the Live Stock Associations. Only last week Secretary Westervelt received an order for two car loads of Shorthorn bulls to be shipped to British Columbia by June 1st.

And so the good work goes on, and the demand for Ontario stock keeps growing apace. Our breeders are now beginning to reap the benefits of that vigorous inter-provincial trade policy and movement for reduced freight rates begun a few years back. In addition to this feature, and the rapidly expanding trade with the United States, a new element has entered into this branch, viz., the shipping of Canadian pure-bred stock to South America. A car load of the very best Shorthorns that this country produces left for the Argentine last week. They are not being sent there on a speculative venture, but were purchased in this province by a representative of one of the large breeders in that country.

In the other classes business is good, and the outlook encouraging. When have our farmers been able to realize \$7.25 per cwt. for hogs? Not for several years. Though the sheep industry is, perhaps, not experiencing the boom that some of the other branches are, yet we are pleased to be able to report a steady growth and a healthy trade in this line also. True, the wool market shows little signs of improvement in prices. But with our leading sheep men wool is only a secondary consideration. The lambs are the chief source of profit, and the farmer who engages in sheep husbandry with that object before him is sure to meet with success. Indeed, the horse, the cow, the sheep and the hog are rallying around the farmer in these early days of the century as they never did before. He has no better money-maker than these, and their interests should in no wise be neglected. We would advise the farmer who is not making some phase of live stock husbandry a special feature, to get into line right away. This movement is not a mere transitory one, but is characterized by a degree of permanency which we believe will keep it to the front as a money-making business for many years to come in this country.

As to the other branches of agriculture there is nothing discouraging in the outlook, while there is every cause for hopefulness. The dairy business has, no doubt, received a slight setback in the rather unexpected and unfavorable ending of last year's cheese trade. But in this the farmer came out on top, and it is only the dealer who held on to his high-priced goods too long, who is suffering. Of course this reacts upon the producer in the business of the new season upon which we have just entered. But even here the outlook is good, and at 8c. to 8 1-4c. for early May cheese the farmer has little cause to grumble. The activity displayed at the opening of many of the cheese markets a week ago would seem to indicate that things are not so dull in this trade as some dealers would lead us to believe. In fact, the cheese situation, when stocks of old goods and supplies of new cheese are taken into account, indicates a rather healthy condition of affairs.

In the line of cereals the least can be said. But our farmers are not so dependent upon these for a cash revenue as they were a few years ago. In fact the days of the purely grain farmer in this country are ended. And if crops are good, and he can raise plenty of feed for his stock, the farmer is in a large measure independent of the price of wheat and kindred crops. Corn is an important factor in stock-feeding, and our farmers are paying more attention to this crop than ever before.

A glance at the other branches of farming, such as poultry, gives a most encouraging outlook. The expansion in this line is just beginning, and farmers should adapt themselves to the needs of this trade by rearing better fowl and feeding and caring for them properly. Another feature that contributes largely to the rosy outlook before the farmers, more particularly of this province, is the sugar beet industry. There will, without doubt, be several large factories in operation within a couple of years, and in this new industry the farmer has an additional source of revenue that must yield a rich reward for intelligence and labor.

The Hog Market Active

There is a very active movement in hogs just now, and prices for first-class singers have reached a pretty high level. Last week select bacon hogs sold on Toronto market at \$7.25 per cwt., and still higher values are looked for. It would not be at all surprising, owing to the increased demand for hogs and the scarcity of the supply in the country, to see values advance to \$7.50, and even higher. A year ago at this time select bacon hogs sold on this market at \$6.25 per cwt., so that present prices are \$1.00 in advance of a year ago. At no time during the past year have prices been at a low ebb, and everything has been favorable to the producer.

As to the permanency of these prices, it is