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EDITORIAL.

Increasing the Apple Crop.

The organization of co-operative fruit-growers' associations is doing much to stimulate an interest in apple-growing throughout Eastern Canada. With this increased interest comes special attention to the cardinal operations in orcharding. Experienced fruit-growers have been convinced that, without reasonable effort in cultivation, fertilizing, pruning and spraying, the area devoted to fruit trees cannot give the maximum cash return. Many orchards, comprising 15 to 200 trees, have been neglected for years. As a rule, the trees bear heavily every second year, but it is only once in a long while that heavy cropping and high prices go hand in hand. The result is that farmers have become more or less discouraged, and little or nothing is done save harvest the fruit—and sometimes even that is neglected. The natural question is: Will it pay to spend time and money on keeping the orchard in fit condition for maximum returns? In answering this, it must be remembered that there always is at least a fair market for a product of superior quality. The co-operative associations have proven this point in connection with apples.

Interesting details are given on another page of this issue, in abstracts from a Michigan bulletin, showing the expenses and proceeds from approved methods with orchards that had been neglected for several years. Care was taken to make the orchards pay for their own improvement, and no other part of the general farm work was left undone because of special efforts in behalf of the trees.

A perusal of the figures shows that a heavy crop was produced on the first of the series of five years, and then on alternate seasons, giving him three large crops in five years. In 1904, while the crop was big, the expenses were light, and fruit of inferior quality gave small receipts. But even under these conditions it was noticed that a few carefully-selected packages brought prices sufficient to offset added expense in producing fruit, most of which could be called number one. The consequence was that provision was made for spraying, pruning, cultivation and manuring, with the result that increased expenses incurred brought augmented receipts and encouraging returns when the net profits were taken into consideration. The expenses for the three bumper-crop seasons were, \$19.34, \$179.10, and \$226.43. But this increase in outlay was not lost money. The receipts were, \$126.37, \$404.74, and \$700.74. When a man can make the net profits mount from \$107.03 to \$225.64, and then to \$474.31, from special attention to 52 apple trees, he does not object to having added expenses each year.

What has been done in Michigan can be done in Canada. If a farmer in that State can increase the profits of 52 apple trees from \$107 to \$474 in five years, and have average annual returns of over \$104 per acre from apple-growing, there is no need for further argument. All that was done was the application of intelligence in cutting out superfluous wood, in spraying to keep down fungi and insects, in cultivation, and in manuring to provide a supply of plant food, and in marketing to dispose of the fruit to best advantage.

Make a start this spring, and be thorough in what you do. Intelligent moderation is necessary in pruning. No excuse can be given for further neglect in Canadian orchards.

Stallion Enrollment.

In another column, a subscriber who signs himself "Old Country Joe," submits a contribution calculated to reopen the discussion on the proposition of licensing stallions, waged with such spirit through "The Farmer's Advocate" in the winter of 1906-07. His letter voices several important misapprehensions concerning the essential features of a stallion-license or stallion-enrollment act. In the first place, he assumes that the agitation is born of a few importers whose object is to mulct farmers of additional prices for stallions. Secondly, he disparages somewhat harshly the class of stallions being brought out from the Old Country. In the third place, he implies that a stallion-license act would be an attempt of the legislators to dictate how the farmers of the Province should breed their horses, and that if a license law were enacted a large number of good sires would be forthwith put out of commission.

Now, what are the facts? At the Ontario Winter Fair discussion at Guelph, in December, 1907, the proposition outlined and approved by the meeting was briefly as follows:

All stallions standing for public service to be inspected annually by a county inspector, or inspectors appointed by the Government, and, if complying with the other requirements of the act, given a license, it being provided that no person should be allowed to accept a service fee for an unlicensed stallion. The requirements for a license should be that only pure-bred and registered stallions, free from hereditary unsoundness, and complying reasonably well with the standard of conformation for the breed, should be allowed to stand, 'except that, owing to one-third of the stallions in the Province being found by the Government inspectors to be unregistered, that for three years, grade stallions known to be good sires, and, upon inspection, found to be of good conformation and free from hereditary unsoundness, should be granted a license, to be known as Class 2,' the license for the pure-breds being called Class 1. All printed matter advertising any stallion to include a copy of his license certificate. The fee for securing a license was placed at \$10, out of which the expenses of the inspector should be paid, any surplus collected from each county being returned to the county, to be used for the encouragement of spring horse shows, not more than two of which should be held in any electoral district. It was further held that the practice of syndicating stallions, as generally done, should be discouraged, and some legislation passed to control it.

While honest opinion legitimately divides upon the wisdom of any forward legislation of this kind, and while there undoubtedly are difficulties and drawbacks to be anticipated, it is worth noting that a system of stallion enrollment is advocated by a large number of astute horsemen and well-wishers of the horse-breeding industry who never imported and never expect to import a single horse. The prime objects are to lessen the evils which result from the present system of solicitation of grooms to secure patronage. It is admitted that an occasional unsound grade may prove a good sire, but the chances are strongly against him. Generally speaking, horsemen concede the wisdom of breeding to sound pure-bred stallions, and a stallion-enrollment law, by compelling each horse to be honestly represented for what he is, would tend to lessen deception and fraud, and discourage the purposeless mixing of blood which has retarded the improvement of our horse stock.

The criticism of the class of horses imported may fairly be left to the importers to answer. While horsemen are only human, and while, undoubtedly, some of them at times palm off third-class horses for a first-class price, we believe that, in the main, they buy the horses they can

sell best, and, if we will not pay the price for the best, how can we expect to get them?

The objection to legislative interference with individual liberty is puerile. Do not legislators in this country derive their just powers by the consent of the governed, and should not the will of the majority prevail? A great number of social ordinances are in a sense restrictions on personal privilege, and it is commonly considered ample justification for such a measure if it can be shown to promote or conserve the highest interest of the greatest number. Stallion-license has been adopted in many States and Provinces, with, we believe, measurably satisfactory results. Is it not time for it in Ontario and other Eastern Provinces?

An Ambitious Programme.

Perusal of the nineteen suggestions offered by the New Brunswick Agricultural Commission, appointed by the incoming Provincial Government early last summer, to inquire into the conditions and needs of agriculture in the Province, prompts a surmise that the commissioners, having freely expended the people's money in their programme of investigation, were resolved to repay it by a profusion of information and advice.

Amid some suggestions that are inconsequential, some that are probably impracticable, and some that are too general and speculative to be of much service, we are pleased to note several features included, and one welcome omission. The omission is the absence of any plea for the early establishment of an agricultural college. The institutions at Truro, N. S.; Ste. Anne, Que., and Guelph, Ont., particularly the former, serve all immediate needs. The inauguration of another now in New Brunswick would be premature, and calculated to invite failure. In fact, it is doubtful whether one will be needed at all for many years to come. Present indications are that a common Maritime Agricultural College at Truro would meet the needs of the Atlantic Provinces better than a separate one for each political division.

On the other hand, it is most gratifying to note the emphasis placed upon education for agriculture in public schools. The radical and sensible suggestion is made that teachers should be suitably trained in nature-study and domestic-science subjects; to teach practical nature-study and school-garden work in the rural schools. For the technical study of agriculture, one or more agricultural high schools are advised for each county, where young men and young women could go for at least a winter term. Various agencies for the prosecution of agricultural extension work are proposed, a stallion-license law advised, and also the appointment of a Provincial horticulturist. A complete change in Departmental policy relating to dairying is recommended, involving direction of effort to the production of milk and collecting of cream to butter-manufacturing centers. Expert advice on the fertilizer question is recommended, and a system of illustration farms, as outlined by Dr. Robertson, and explained editorially not long since in "The Farmer's Advocate," is approved by the commission. Encouragement of 'immigration' is favored, but special effort advised, to stimulate colonization of the Crown Lands by native-born New Brunswickers. This is a good suggestion. Exhibition grants, special fairs and shows, field-grain competitions and good-farms competitions, all come in for a word of support, while the nineteenth article draws attention to the need for further legislation to regulate automobile traffic.

The agricultural policy thus mapped out is certainly ambitious enough. Whether the Prov-