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The Farmer's Advocate

and Home Magazine

"Persevere and
Succeed."

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EDITORIAL

Blocks, or Solid Concrete?

Opinion is asked as to whether it is better to build a house of cement blocks, or with solid concrete walls? We have no hesitation in stating that, from the dual standpoint of hygiene and economy of heating, the cement-block wall would prove superior. On account of the numerous air-spaces contained, the cement-block wall is a better non-conductor of heat. In every-day English, the house so constructed will be warmer than if the walls were of solid concrete, and there will also be less tendency for moisture to condense on the inside of the walls. Of course, much the same results may be secured by building an air-space into the concrete wall, though this is less commonly preferred than the plan of building with blocks.

On the score of appearance, taste varies. Some prefer the plain, solid wall, marked off by the mason, objecting to the blocks as being an ineffective imitation of stone. The majority, however, seem inclined to prefer the appearance of a cement-block wall. Some very attractive houses have been built with cement blocks, while the small-sized cement bricks have also been used to produce a very nice appearance. It is not well that all houses should be built alike. Individual taste should be allowed to express itself, but we strongly recommend some mode of construction that will make a wall with a reasonable proportion of dead-air space.

Conveniences for the Housewife.

A deplorable lack on many farms in all parts of Canada is the absence of conveniences that help to lighten the burdens of the housewife and her daughters. Too many farmers, in their anxiety to improve the farm buildings by equipping the stables and pens with labor-saving appliances and devices, and by specially-arranged feed chutes and water systems, to say nothing of lanes, fences and gateways, forget about the many repairs that could be made about the house or the conveniences that could be installed at little or no expense. While improvements in any line are commendable, particularly when the improvement means labor-saving, it should not be forgotten that man's first duty is to reduce the toil and hardships of his wife and daughters to a minimum.

Perhaps in regard to water and wood is the neglect most objectionable. During the winter months, in particular, unsatisfactory arrangements for getting water and wood for the kitchen are dangerous. Women laboring in the house where everything is comparatively comfortable, as far as temperature is concerned at least, frequently become aware of the fact that a pail of water or an armful of wood is wanted. Most generally this fact is noticed when work is rushing and when exertion has resulted in perspiration. The water or the wood must be had at once, and unless the weather is most severe no thought is given of coat or other protection. The consequence is a serious cold, or perhaps worse, is contracted. And there are many simple contrivances in pantry or cellar that would be appreciated by those who labor constantly in and around the house.

In travelling amongst agriculturists, many homes are seen where water is everywhere convenient in stables and pens, but not so in the house. Even cistern pumps sometimes are in the

most disadvantageous location. Very little digging and the expenditure of some cash for pipes and fittings would place the same water in the kitchen. The argument most frequently urged as an objection is the expense. To those who use this argument a surprise would be given in the changes that can be made at a cost of \$25 or \$50 or \$100 judiciously expended.

Nothing could be of more interest or of greater value to readers of "The Farmer's Advocate" than full descriptions and careful estimates of cost in providing these conveniences. Our readers would do a great work in making farm homes more attractive, and in furnishing places in which the girls would delight to spend their days, by giving details of one or more desirable feature in or about the house.

Importance of Reputation.

Thorough business men have learned the value of a reputation for integrity and honesty in all dealings. From the standpoint of farmers, perhaps in no line do they attach so much importance to this feature of business relationships as in the purchase of seeds. The length to which prejudice against unscrupulous vendors has gone, was shown at the convention of the Ontario Vegetable-growers' Association a few weeks ago. Many truck gardeners have been so disappointed in seed purchased that the unanimous decision was that seedsmen should be compelled by law to guarantee the seeds offered for sale.

It is possible that mistakes can occur in putting up seed just as easily as in any other line of work. Where so many small packages are put up in comparatively short time, chances of getting varieties or grades mixed are increased. It cannot be assumed that those in charge of large seed houses, where vast sums of money are invested, would deliberately put on sale varieties wrongly named, or purposely parcel huge quantities of seed that is known to be of low germination percentage without making the purchaser aware of that fact. Due allowance must be made for possible errors in any business.

That some seedsmen enjoy a more desirable reputation than others is easily substantiated among vegetable gardeners. Whether it is due to the fact that the seed is procured from more reliable sources or to stricter care in parcelling or storing, the truth of the statement remains, and while some firms are spoken of favorably, and generally referred to as being reliable, others are branded as unreliable.

Not only in garden and greenhouse seeds is it necessary to exercise caution in arriving at a decision as to where to obtain a supply. The demand for new varieties of general farm crops, including cereals, increases annually. If seed that will not germinate, or that is not true to name, is supplied, a thorough disappointment and a pecuniary loss is the result.

Purchasers cannot exercise too great care in buying seeds of any kind. The seedsman, on the other hand, should take greater precautions than ever to see that an enviable reputation is sustained or made. Reliable houses are trusted by the public generally. Legislation should not be necessary to ensure the placing on the market either of pure or of vital seeds true to name. Adverse seasons in the countries where seeds are grown may result in a low percentage of vitality, but this should be ascertained by the seedsmen before the seed is sold, and the purchaser warned on every package, so that seed in greater quantity can be used.

The Farmers' "Trade Journal."

Editor "The Farmer's Advocate":

In an editorial, some time ago, you gave several reasons why one should subscribe for "The Farmer's Advocate." You referred to the many good things to be found therein, but to my mind you omitted some important ones. Apart from the information contained in it, one cannot be a reader of "The Farmer's Advocate" without becoming more interested in his work and, as a consequence, more contented with his lot. Just now, the problem seems to be, "How shall we keep the boys on the farm?" I have no hesitation in saying that, if supplied with plenty of good reading matter pertaining to the farm, it will help to keep them there. So many are content with just one paper, and they make the fatal mistake of leaving out the one that most of all they should take. The weekly paper, published near home, may be very good. It keeps one in touch with things in one's immediate neighborhood. A city daily may be likewise, as we are kept conversant with what is taking place in the world in general, but, be those ever so good, they can never take the place of a paper like "The Farmer's Advocate," which treats of things pertaining specially to the farm, saying nothing of the Home Magazine department, which is prized by all.

More than once, when soliciting subscriptions, I have been told, "I am taking all the papers now I can read, or, 'I take a weekly paper, and it has some matter relating to the farm.'" The farmer who is taking all the papers he can read, and has not one pertaining specially to the farm, is making a mistake. Apart from the information being more dependable when found in a paper like "The Farmer's Advocate," it appeals to one more, creates more enthusiasm, and, in addition, is much more available for future reference. "The Farmer's Advocate," with its half-yearly or yearly index, is easily preserved; whereas the ordinary weekly, ninety-nine times out of a hundred, is laid aside and lost. It is quite reasonable to suppose that a paper that makes a specialty of any one line can be of more service along that particular line than one which has a little of everything.

It is because of this that the progressive ones in almost every trade, profession or occupation take a paper published specially for them. The grocer has his trade journal, the drygoods merchant has his, likewise the doctor, the dentist, the druggist, the jeweller, the optician, the inventor, and a score of others. The farmer is almost the only one who, in many cases (I do not say all), is content to do without his trade journal or paper published specially for him, and who is there that needs the help that comes from such more than the farmer? Show me one in any trade or profession that does not take one or more trade journals, and, nine times out of ten, he is behind the times, makes less money, and takes less enjoyment in his work.

An editor of a bee journal was making up his list of publications required. His wife, with a woman's curiosity, glancing over his shoulder, remarked, "Why will \$12.90 be necessary for papers and magazines, besides all the exchanges you get?" He replied: "Yes, it was \$18, but I cut out one of the papers intended because I thought I could do without it." And he goes on to say: "I feel certain that a large share of my success can be attributed to the periodicals I have read. Sometimes a little article was worth dollars and dollars to me. Once in my life I was called upon to bear heavy burdens; it was hard work to keep up mentally, physically and financially. About that time I