

The Farmer's Advocate AND HOME MAGAZINE.

THE LEADING AGRICULTURAL JOURNAL IN THE
DOMINION.

Published weekly by
THE WILLIAM WELD COMPANY (Limited).

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Agents for "The Farmer's Advocate and Home Journal,"
Winnipeg, Man.

1. THE FARMER'S ADVOCATE AND HOME MAGAZINE is published every Thursday. It is impartial and independent of all cliques and parties, handsomely illustrated with original engravings, and furnishes the most practical, reliable and profitable information for farmers, dairymen, gardeners, stockmen and home-makers, of any publication in Canada.
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12. WE INVITE FARMERS to write us on any agricultural topic. We are always pleased to receive practical articles. For such as we consider valuable we will pay ten cents per inch printed matter. Criticisms of Articles, Suggestions How to Improve "The Farmer's Advocate and Home Magazine," Descriptions of New Grains, Roots or Vegetables not generally known, Particulars of Experiments Tried, or Improved Methods of Cultivation, are each and all welcome. Contributions sent us must not be furnished other papers until after they have appeared in our columns. Rejected matter will be returned on receipt of postage.
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agricultural co-operation, if put on the proper business basis, may accomplish in this country—men of business foresight who are not so much interested in saving a few cents, or a few dollars, on small purchases through the association the first year, but who see an opportunity of investing legitimate profits, made on business done on the same basis as business firms operating in the same lines do it, in the association for the future strength of that association and benefit of its members or shareholders. In short, business firms have found price-cutting to be disastrous in more ways than one, and have found that shareholders and all those connected with the business are better satisfied and better repaid for their efforts by charging prices which ensure a fair profit on goods handled or business done. The farmer is just as much human as the man in other business, and, if at the end of the year he is shown that the business done has returned a profit in dollars and cents, and he gets all or a part of his share at that time, he will surely be more satisfied with his co-operative concern than where he saves a few cents a week over the fifty-two weeks of the year. Besides, profits which accrue from a large business done on such a basis make it possible to put a certain percentage of the earnings into the business, and thus increase its scope. Doing business on such a basis ensures the safety of the enterprise. It never totters because of the lack of funds to successfully carry it on. There is always some margin on which to come and go.

There is another point. Price-cutting is sure to antagonize the local dealer, which is not good policy. Where prices are kept up to a fair level he can have no complaint, for the association is simply another firm doing business and bidding for business on the same basis as he is doing himself, only that it is giving the members of that association the opportunity of sharing, in proportion to business done through the association, the profits earned by the enterprise. As time goes on and the association grows, the local dealer may find it difficult to keep his business running, and then the association may make good use of his experience by engaging him to manage the local branch of their business, which is considered by many a good move to make. Of course, this would not come until the association had grown to be a large factor in the business of the section in which it is located. As time goes on and

with a part of the profits made by the association invested in the business, there is nothing to hinder co-operative farmers' associations in Ontario from doing millions of dollars' worth of business each year, from owning their own retail and wholesale distributing houses, and from doing business on the largest possible scale.

We have gone far enough in this article to indicate the line of thought we intend to follow up in other articles, which, among other things, will further contrast policies of cutting prices at the start and dividing profits at the end of the year, which will lay even more stress upon the importance of getting men of ability, vision, and common sense at the head of affairs, which will emphasize the futility of individualism in Canadian agriculture, and which on the whole we hope will show clearly that co-operation, like any other business, cannot succeed as it should unless operated on a sound, business basis.

Out for Farm Help.

We are pleased to note that the Provincial Government is turning some attention toward the supply of farm labor for the coming summer. THE FARMER'S ADVOCATE, more than a year ago, made the suggestion that offices be opened in conjunction with some of the District Representatives who were situated in large towns or cities in the Province, and these offices utilized to encourage some of the men then out of work in the city to try farm work for a time. A plan, which was a modification of this suggestion, was adopted by the Government, and an immigration representative was sent to several towns and cities, and, according to his own words, met with success and many men were given profitable employment, and many farmers secured the necessary help. But the city supply is not this year available. All the men out of work, who would be very much good to a farmer and who could pass the medical examination, have signed up for overseas service, and the farm labor problem has reached the acute stage. Men on the farms of Ontario, at the present time, including owners and tenants, average about one to every 100 acres of workable land. It is plain that if production is to be kept up anywhere near last year's high-water mark help must be forthcoming from somewhere. Working on the assumption that because men were available in Ontario towns and cities last year for farm work, the same immigration officers have opened offices in the bordering cities in the United States and are endeavoring to induce men out of employment in these cities to come to Canada to do farm work this summer. The success to crown their efforts remains to be seen. Some have made the bold statement that no labor is available in the United States, which could be induced to come to Canada to work on farms. We do not feel disposed to make such a strong assertion, but we do not believe that the policy can supply anywhere near the required number of men for farm work during the season of 1916, and the officers in charge should be careful not to bring in undesirable and incompetent men who would be a burden, rather than a help to the perplexed farmer. No policy which will add even a few good men to the numbers available for farm work should be condemned or too severely criticized.

It must cause some of the practical men who have pitched timothy hay, filled barnyard manure, mowed away sheaves dumped in piles by the slings, in fact any who have ploughed, sowed, harrowed, reaped, and mowed to smile when they read some of the statements, ridiculous in the extreme, made by some of our modern educationists in regard to the proposed scheme of placing 15,000 High School boys and Collegiate Institute pupils on the farms for the vacation. One prominent Toronto educationist, in a letter to the press, recently asserted that production in Canada could be increased if the proper organization were brought into being, even though every man between 18 and 40 now on the farms of this country enlisted and went to the front. He would call out all the retired farmers, together with teachers and ministers, who have been brought up on the farm, and would take all the boys from the schools to the farm and would teach the young women on the farms to drive teams and do much of the farm work. It is not hard to find someone, who is not a farmer, and who knows little of farming to solve all the problems which agriculture must face, but there are few who would go so far as to hint at increasing production by replacing all the competent men now on the farms with old men, teachers, ministers, schoolboys, and the few girls available. True, there is farm machinery which

can be depended upon to help the farmer over many difficult places, but, even so, stalwart men are needed for a great many of the heavy jobs on the farm which include work altogether too heavy for the farmer's own sons of school age and much more so for the boys, city bred and raised, unaccustomed to labor of any kind. We fear that some of these lads would find difficulty in ploughing, pitching, handling farm machinery, even in milking cows and doing some chores, and by the time the farmer had gotten them accustomed to all classes of farm work, or in fact to a few jobs which they could do well enough to be of very much value to him they would have to pack their grips and start back to school.

We may frankly state that we do not yet see that anyone has solved the labor problem. All these may help some. A few men may be brought in from the United States. A few of the city school boys who go out to the farm may show ambition and capacity to do farm work. Undoubtedly all retired farmers who can will help in some way with the crops this year, and a few teachers, and a very few preachers may do a little toward garnering in the harvest of 1916, but it is absolutely essential that at least one, able-bodied, practical, experienced farmer remain on every 100 acres in this country if production is to be maintained and if agriculture is to take its place in our national efficiency, which means more now and will mean still more to this country during the period of readjustment at the conclusion of the war than it has ever meant. Every industry in Canada must be worked to its fullest capacity, that business may go on and the country be in the best possible state to stand the strenuous time coming at the end of the war. No, the labor problem is not solved. We are pleased, however, to note that it is being considered and that some movements have been made in an endeavor to supply some help to farmers. And farmers, provided they can get satisfactory help, must be prepared to pay a little higher wages. We conclude with the following lines from a speech by the Hon. George E. Foster, made on the floor of the House a short time ago. "I take it that our great and supreme struggle—that which will try us most and tax our best powers—is yet ahead of us, has yet to come to the front, will come into action the day our soldiers are called off from war and the tremendous work of readjustment commences in our Empire, in this country, with our Allies and with the world."

These words are worthy of some thought and those who understand agriculture and agricultural conditions, as well as those who do not, should weigh carefully what the basic industry of this country means now to its welfare and what it shall mean in the days of reconstruction to come.

Growing Better Plants.

A popular account has recently been published of the life and work of Luther Burbank, of California, the famous plant improver. Being prepared by the Secretary of the Burbank Society, Dr. H. S. Williams, the record may be taken as authentic and naturally puts in the best light the multitudinous achievements of the Santa Rosa experimenter. Accepting these at their face estimate, one could not, however, fail to be impressed with the thought that while by artificial cross fertilization, budding and grafting many fruits, flowers and vegetables of surprising charm, novelty and value have been produced, Nature herself is no mean wizard in these achievements. Many plant varieties in field and garden, of outstanding merit, measured by utility, are the result of natural creative potency directed and energized beyond our ken, coupled with wise selection and nurture on the part of the grower. In the realm of flowers, for example, there have been marvellous achievements with dahlias, gladioli, the poppy, the daisy, etc., but for exquisite perfection of form and tinting the lady slipper orchid growing wild in some Canadian swamps will vie with almost any of them.

A GIFT OF NATURE.

When a boy on a Massachusetts farm, Burbank picked a seed ball from a mature Early Rose potato plant. He saved the 23 seeds, and next season from each he grew a hill of tubers. Two hills produced big clusters of exceptionally large and smooth potatoes of excellent quality, which he sold to a gardener, who named it the Burbank potato. The prize of \$150 which the originator secured for it enabled him to migrate to California, where he began his career as a nurseryman, and later on as a full-fledged plant specialist in improving old varieties, and more particularly in the creation of new ones. Up to 1906 the Department of Agriculture estimated that \$17,000,000 worth of these potatoes had been grown in the United States. This popular tuber was a natural creation, and the alert Mr. Burbank discovered it. Forty years of subsequent effort in hybridizing failed to produce a variety superior to the one presented by nature. Mr. Burbank had succeeded in grafting the stem of the tomato plant on the roots of the potato and contrariwise, but the potatoes