

The Canadian Dairyman AND Farming World

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THE CANADIAN DAIRYMAN AND FARMING WORLD
PETERBORO, ONT.

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THE LATE DR. JAMES FLETCHER

The farmers of Canada have suffered a distinct loss through the death of Dr. James Fletcher, Entomologist and Botanist of the Dominion Experimental Farms, who was one of the best known and most highly respected men in the service.

Dr. Fletcher played no small part in founding the Dominion Experimental Farms. He gave great attention, not only to the one at Ottawa, but to the branch farms scattered throughout the Dominion. He furnished much valuable information pertaining to insect and plant life and was recognized throughout Canada as an authority on entomology and botany. He paid special attention to the study of insect pests and to how all those that affected agriculture might be checked.

We are greatly indebted to Dr.

Fletcher for his writings. He was the author of many reports and papers concerning scientific investigation in the Dominion, especially as regards its insect life. The splendid illustrated bulletin "Farm Weeds," was largely written by him. It is one of the latest publications he penned and is the best work of his kind in Canada. It fills a long-felt want in the farming community.

There is much regret at his death, for Dr. Fletcher was a man popular with all. He was always noted as a hard worker and gave to Canada freely of his great knowledge and experience. Evidence of the affection with which those who had the privilege of knowing Dr. Fletcher intimately, regarded him, was given last week at a convention held in Toronto at the time of the Ontario Horticultural Exhibition, when speakers, while referring to his death, were so unmannered they found it difficult to speak. His loss is one that the nation will feel.

A SPLENDID EXHIBITION

Every person who attended the Ontario Horticultural Exhibition, held in the St. Lawrence Arena, at Toronto, last week, must have been impressed by the splendid display of horticultural products that was in evidence. At the first exhibition, held four years ago, the fruit shown in commercial packages was a disgrace rather than a credit to Ontario. The exhibitors apparently had no conception of how to pack fruit properly. Experts claimed that 90 per cent. of the fruit thus shown was improperly packed. Since then, the improvement that has taken place is remarkable. At the exhibition held last week, the judges stated that over 90 per cent. of the fruit shown was packed in first-class manner. So keen was the competition, it was a very difficult matter for the judges to place their awards.

A very large proportion of the fruit shown was contributed by co-operative apple-growers associations. The growth of these associations during the past few years has meant much to the farmers of Ontario. Many more of these associations should be formed.

An encouraging feature of the recent show lies in the fact that it is understood to have been the most successful, from a financial standpoint, that has yet been held. This exhibition has done so much to promote and improve the fruit, flower, vegetable and honey interests of the province, that it is surprising that the Ontario Government has not seen its way clear to encourage the holding of a dairy exhibition along similar lines.

TO INCREASE PROFITS

The testing of dairy cows came up for considerable discussion at the district meetings of the Eastern Ontario Dairyman's Association, held recently. While many farmers in these districts have taken up the question, the great bulk of our factory patrons seem to view the matter with indifference. To any farmer who prides himself on being really wide awake and business-like, the question of cow-testing must present a forcible appeal. Shrewd enough in his ordinary dealings with

business men, should not the commercial aspect of his own dairy herd be thoroughly considered? The income from the herd as a whole may be fairly good, but often the proportion of profit to income remains undetermined. The question of net profit, both total amount and relative proportion to income, is one of primary importance to every dairyman.

Can profit be increased, even while the total cash revenue remains stationary? The man who knows, which in this case means the progressive dairyman, answers with a most decided affirmative, and points with pride to his monthly statement. How does he manage it? One simple way is to lessen expenses by weeding out the poorest cows in the herd. Those that do not bring any profit, those, indeed, which frequently entail a loss to their unsuspecting owner, can be unerringly detected by weighing and testing the milk of each cow in the herd systematically. We hope to see a rapid extension of this co-operative cow-testing work which has been inaugurated by the branch of the Dairy Commissioner, Ottawa.

THE WEED PROBLEM

The spread of noxious weeds over our country has excited unusual interest during the past few years. Not only are farmers thinking about it more than ever, but it is the remark of business men and tourists. In fact, weeds are very much in the eye of all who keep their eyes open as they go about the country.

The weed problem is one not confined to the country alone. In many of our villages and towns, even cities are not exempt, may be found weed life, luxuriating on the vacant lots, not only making them unsightly all the season, but increasing the labors of those who may locate on them, and try to have a garden spot. A great many gardens would be quite clean after a few years' cultivation except for the presence of some persistent perennial that even a mortgage will not hold down. The field bindweed or wild morning glory, is just such a plant.

Even when a man has got his garden spot quite clean, he is in great danger, every time he manures it with stable manure, of getting more or less persistent weeds coming from the undigested weed seeds in foods fed to stock, or from the seeds found in the litter which has been used. Even poultry, which are supposed to manufacture everything that passes through the gizzard, are not an absolute safeguard against helping to spread some very bad weeds such as come to us in the wheat screenings or low grade feed, from the West.

When one takes into consideration the extra labor required to fit some fields for a paying crop, or if he be not able to give that labor, the loss he sustains through the presence of weeds in the crop, smothering out and robbing the desirable plants of both food and moisture, is it any wonder that people are becoming more than ever aroused in these times when labor is scarce and high priced?

Just recently some interesting data came to hand regarding an experiment conducted in the Wisconsin Experimental Station to determine the cost of killing couch grass, on which weed, articles have appeared recently in our columns. The method followed was to plow the ground six inches deep in the fall, after which many of the root stalks were cultivated and harrowed on the surface and burned. In the spring it was plowed a little deeper, and the harrow was used frequently enough to prevent any growth on the surface. During a dry time in July last it was disced and harrowed and effectually killed by smothering with cultivation, at a cost of \$18.00 on the half acre.

Let some would feel leaving their "quacky" farms, rather than clean them at a cost of \$80.00 an acre it may be said that nothing was allowed for the benefit the extra cultivation would do the soil in improving it mechanically, and in liberating a large supply of plant food for the crop to follow. "Let us not be weary in well doing," even in fighting the weed pests of our country.

There is a possibility that the farmers who are supplying milk to the City of Toronto may have another fight with the milk dealers in Toronto over the price of milk. The farmers, through their association, have asked for a winter price of \$1.50 a can. In view of the fact that the farmers who are furnishing milk to Montreal and Ottawa will receive this winter \$1.75 a can, the price asked by the Toronto milk producers is a reasonable one. If the producers do not assert themselves and secure the price they have asked, they will have only themselves to blame, as the officers of the association will not be able to secure the price for the producers, unless the producers, individually and collectively, back up the association to the fullest extent.

Hon. J. B. Duff, who was recently appointed Minister of Agriculture of Ontario, to succeed Hon. Mr. Monteith, was one of the speakers at the opening of The Ontario Horticultural Exhibition in Toronto last week, and at the conventions of the fruit, vegetable and horticultural associations. The new Minister of Agriculture made a most favorable impression. He showed a thorough appreciation of the importance of the interests represented by the organizations which he addressed, and apparently will not be backward in seeing that they are given every possible assistance and encouragement by the department which he represents. In the recent Ontario elections, the government was criticised for not having given more attention to the agricultural industry. If we might venture to give any advice to Hon. Mr. Duff, it would be that he must not be backward in pressing the claims of the farming community. There is no department of the government to which the country is so ready to give liberal financial assistance as to the Department of Agriculture.

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