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The Rural Canadian.

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PREPARATION FOR SPRING.

There are many things in regard to which it is desirable to "take time by the forelock," in view of the near approach of what is always, in this country, the busiest season of the year. One of them is taking care that farm tools and implements are in good working order. Another is, provision of seed, always with an eye to getting the best that is obtainable. Farmers too often find themselves in the thick of spring work with an insufficient supply of seed on hand, and are sometimes obliged to sow an inferior article, for want of leisure to look round for a better. Therefore it is wise to provide in time against these emergencies. Ordering fruit-trees, plants, and shrubs is another thing that should be done early. Every spring something should be undertaken in the way of improving one's place by planting, and that it may be done to the best advantage, it should be attended to before the season of hurry comes on. The earlier nurserymen get orders from their customers, the better they are likely to fill them. It is also of the greatest importance that the work of the year should be thoroughly thought out and planned beforehand, as far as possible. It is well to make a map of the farm, study how each field can be cropped to the best advantage, and plan accordingly. Afterthought may lead to some changes, but a wise man will usually adhere to what, on mature deliberation, he has decided to be, on the whole, for the best. Just as a good packer will get more articles into a trunk than one who does the work at haphazard, so a good planner of farm-work will get more into and out of a year than one who lets things "take their chance."

OUR DAIRY ASSOCIATIONS.

The recent annual meetings of the Ontario Dairymen's Associations—the Western, held at Woodstock, Feb. 1-3, and the Eastern at Belleville, Feb. 7-9—were highly successful, both of them. These institutions have been styled "Dairy Parliaments;" but they are, more properly, schools of dairying, in which the principles of the business, from its A B C up to the most advanced principles, are taught, by means of addresses, discussions, diagrams, and answers to questions asked, by members of the audience. They are well-attended schools. Upwards of 300 were present at Woodstock, and fully two-thirds of that number at Belleville, most of whom were actually engaged in dairying. The amount of knowledge given and received in the course of three

successive days of instruction—long days, too—must be very great, and cannot but leave its mark in improved theory and practice hereafter. Indeed, the gratifying development of the dairy interest in the Province of Ontario may be largely attributed to the influence of these meetings.

Addresses on set subjects were given at Woodstock by Hon. X. A. Willard of Little Falls, N. Y.; Prof. Arnold of Rochester, N. Y.; Hon. Harris Lewis of Frankfort, N. Y.; Prof. Roberts of Cornell University, N. Y.; Prof. Wetherell of the Boston *Cultivator*; and the Editor of the RURAL CANADIAN. Prof. Barnard, Agricultural Commissioner from the Province of Quebec, took a prominent part in the discussions, as did Messrs. Ballantyne, Caswell, Richardson, Losee and others. The set addresses given at Woodstock to the Western dairymen were repeated at Belleville for the benefit of the Eastern dairymen, with the addition of two very valuable addresses by Prof. Brown of the Agricultural College, Guelph, on Permanent Pasturage and Forage Plants. The addresses, discussions and proceedings of both Associations have been fully reported in the great Toronto dailies and several of the local papers. They will be given in full in the forthcoming Reports of the Associations, from the manuscripts of the speakers and the shorthand reports taken officially. In this way the information conveyed will be put on permanent record; and as each member of the Associations is entitled to a copy of these Reports, reference to them can at any time be made for the refreshment of the memory on forgotten points.

The dairy interest is evidently growing in the Province of Ontario. Better still, it is improving in quality of product, and consequently its reputation is rising in the British market. Canadian cheese is no longer at a discount, or liable to be branded as inferior because made in this country. There is, however, much further progress which it is both practicable and desirable to make. A better class of dairy cows is needed. Too many unprofitable animals are kept. The cost of keeping a cow which lands its owner in loss, is just as great as that of one which yields a handsome profit for her board and lodging. This important practical subject occupied a large share of attention at the recent dairy meetings of this Province. It did so at similar meetings lately held in the United States. The breeding and rearing of high-class dairy cattle are felt to be matters of present and urgent necessity by all the intelligent dairymen on the continent of America. The importance of more attention to pasturage is felt to be another vital point. Grazing lands, well stocked with a variety of grasses that will give a good bite all the season through, are needed in every dairy district. Next to this, a supply of green forage plants, as a precaution against the failure of pasturage during summer droughts, demands attention. These topics were largely dwelt on by Prof. Brown and other speakers, and it is to be hoped that the earnest words that were spoken in regard to them will bear fruit practically. Careful manipulation in every part of the process of dairying was largely dwelt upon. New modes of manufacture were not proposed, but rather

scrupulous regard to principles and practices, that are known, admitted, and have been tested over and over again. Too many fail by disregarding what may be called the *minutia* of dairying. Close attention to every detail of the business was urgently insisted on by several speakers, and the fatal consequences attendant on little neglects were clearly pointed out. The enviable reputation of some Ontario dairymen whose brands of cheese are eagerly sought for in the British market, was referred to, and they were closely questioned as to their methods by others anxious to emulate their success. These gentlemen seemed quite willing to impart all they knew. Apparently, they had no secrets. Their success resulted from such simple causes as cleanliness, watchfulness, honesty and uprightness, combined, of course, with a skill which some people attain in every line of business, while others do not. This difference, however, is mainly attributable to want of application and perseverance.

The social element was introduced into these meetings in the shape of public banquets. Woodstock set the example, and Belleville followed suit. They were very pleasant reunions to those who, having met together year after year for the promotion of a common object, have begun to feel the ties of friendship and brotherhood binding them together. Sympathy and fellowship are worthy of cultivation, and there is no good reason why they should not be permitted to have scope on such occasions as bring together those whose aims and interests are identical. It is to be hoped, therefore, that this social feature will be continued in connection with future annual gatherings of Ontario dairymen.

BORROWING AND LENDING FARM IMPLEMENTS.

The highest authority has enjoined, "Give to him that asketh of thee, and from him that would borrow of thee, turn not thou away." But these commands are not to be taken in an unlimited sense. And if there is a duty of lending, there are also certain obligations that rest on borrowers. Ownership should be fully recognised. A correspondent of the *Country Gentleman*, writing on this subject, says he has certain neighbours who are wont to ask, "Are you going to use your waggon to-day?" and if a negative reply was given, would take it without further ceremony. He also refers to certain parties who regarded their right to his property as better than his own, positively refusing to return a machine or tool until they are done with it, although he was in equal need of the borrowed article. Such conduct is manifestly unjust. Care of articles kindly lent and scrupulous particularity in returning them without damage beyond inevitable wear and tear, are obvious duties of borrowers. But they are often shamefully neglected. It is a noteworthy fact that it was said to the Jews by their great lawgiver, Moses, "Thou shalt lend, but not borrow." This was prophetic of their state of prosperity and independence. Such a state should and will be coveted by all truly noble minds. There is a neighbourly spirit which all should cultivate, and there is also a nobility of soul above all mean depen-