

The Farmer's Advocate and Home Magazine

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EDITORIAL.

Once a week is not too often to cultivate the corn.

A summer-fallow is a mistake and a source of loss if it is not looked after properly.

The monthly milk check is a good thing from which to estimate a dairyman's farming ability.

Any live stock intended for the show-ring this fall should be handled and trained. Start now.

How about the weeds growing around the fences—will they be allowed to stand and reproduce themselves?

Are the canvas and working parts of the binder in trim for the harvest? "Preparedness" is better than "watchful waiting."

Pullets intended for winter layers should receive extra attention from this on. Fresh eggs next winter will command a good price.

It is customary in editorial comment to say something about the Kaiser and his ilk, but language, suitable to the occasion, would no longer appear well in print.

Calves are better kept indoors during the heat of the day and allowed to run out at night. Protection against flies in the real young stuff is both practicable and profitable.

Canadian wool is at last meeting with the recognition it deserves, but producers had to be impressed first. When they became interested and got together, then something happened.

Pure-bred cattle on pasture away from home should be watched closely. Open heifers and un-bred cows often get in calf under such circumstances, and the sire is frequently a scrub or a poor grade. This means loss.

The Patents and Copyrights Branches have, at last, been removed from the Department of Agriculture at Ottawa. This opens the way for a Deputy Minister who understands agriculture and will mix with the fraternity.

The Saskatchewan farmers did their part in increasing production but climatic conditions have been rather unfavorable. The element of luck seems to enter into farming operations, at times, in spite of the saying that there is no such thing.

It has been stated in meteorological circles that the mean or average temperature for one year corresponds very closely with that for any other year. We must have some warm weather soon and a lot of it to balance the cold from January to July.

Potato diseases are becoming common, and unfortunately they are not easily recognized by those who have not paid particular attention to this kind of crop. However, the blight is still the common and deadly enemy of the potato, and this can be held in check with Bordeaux mixture.

Weedy fields should be plowed soon after the hay is off, and either prepared for fall wheat or summer-fallowed for the remainder of the season. Of course, a very dirty field is not suitable for wheat, but if handled properly many of the weeds can be germinated and destroyed before seeding time.

Conservation of Banking Credits.

The President of the Canadian Bankers' Association, Edson L. Pease, has requested the General Managers of all banking institutions to consider the reduction of existing credits and to apply a rigid check upon the further expansion of credit. This is the test he would have applied to all applications for a new loan: "Is it necessary for the prosecution of the war or the health and safety of our civilian population?" This appears like sound and reasonable finance, for any moneys tied up in non-essential and unproductive industries only retard the work which is of importance in connection with the prosecution of the war. The three main groups of borrowers in essential lines are mentioned as, farmers, manufacturers and merchants, and in regard to the former he says: "The farmers are being asked to produce more than ever before, and loans for productive purposes must have the right of way." We are pleased indeed to see that the President of the Canadian Bankers' Association holds such a reasonable and sane view in regard to agriculture, and it is to be hoped that the General Managers will become converted to this doctrine and impart the same spirit to the local branches where the farmer applicant will, no doubt, apply the test. There are, however, three classes of loans which the President says should be discouraged, the first of which is:

"Loans for carrying over grain, cattle or other marketable products in the hope of obtaining higher prices, and loans for the acquisition of additional property, unless the area under production is to be increased thereby and immediate results may be expected."

In regard to cattle a construction might be put on this section which would be very injurious to the cattle industry and to production in general. Cattle are marketable in almost any condition so long as they are healthy, and they are held, in the majority of cases, for the increase in price which is expected on account of the gains made. A farmer who puts in feeder cattle in the autumn hopes for a spread of at least two cents per pound by spring, for the gains in weight will not pay him for the feed consumed and the labor expended. Therefore, any restriction of credits in this connection would be doing serious harm to a very worthy industry.

Britain's Agricultural Policy.

The Overseas Dominions of the Empire will find many significant points in Britain's proposed agricultural policy handed down by the Committee appointed in 1916 under the chairmanship of the Earl of Selborne. Already the British Isles have reversed their position from that of producing twelve weeks' food supply and importing enough for forty weeks, since, if the harvest prospects are realized this year they will reap a crop sufficient for forty weeks, and leave a balance of only twelve weeks' requirements to be imported. In March of 1917 this Committee submitted a report recommending the adoption of three principles, namely: a minimum wage for agricultural workers, a minimum guaranteed price for wheat and oats and the assumption by the Board of Agriculture of powers to enforce cultivation. These and other proposals were given effect by the Corn Productions Act. While the Committee look upon these as the permanent basis of agricultural reconstruction they deem other measures necessary to produce the results aimed at, namely, to render the United Kingdom practically self-supporting as regards corn potatoes and dairy products; corn meaning in this case practically all kinds of grain, which significance is given the word in that country. With this object in view they recommend in a second report sweeping changes which include the following points: 1, establishment of national agricultural councils for England, Scotland, Ireland, Wales, and statutory county agricultural committees; 2, improved agricultural instruction in schools; 3, increased

state aid for agriculture through existing societies and otherwise; 4, small holders to be given facilities for purchase; 5, village reconstruction, and development of rural industries; 6, establishment of reclamation and drainage authorities for each of the three kingdoms; 7, systematic efforts to deal with weeds and animal pests; 8, adoption of a uniform standard of agricultural weights and measures; 9, reorganization of rural transport.

Commenting on these proposals the Committee assert that the three fundamental principles enunciated in 1917 and the recommendations made in the recent report are inseparable and that the policy advocated must stand or fall as a whole. If the minimum wage, the minimum price, and the power to enforce cultivation are not embodied in permanent legislation "there can be no hope for the people of the United Kingdom becoming emancipated from dependence on supplies of food brought from overseas, or of the increase of our rural population."

In reply to the question how great an increase is necessary in the interests of national security, and how great an increase is possible the Committee say: "Our reply is that in any future crisis like the present war this country must be wholly independent of overseas supplies of corn, potatoes, or dairy products, and that it must be less dependent on overseas supplies of meat than it is now; and that if the measures we recommend are continuously carried out the dependence of this country on overseas supplies of food will become continuously less during the years of peace, with the result that on the outbreak of war and by carrying out the plans of the Board of Agriculture, carefully matured in times of peace, specifying the crops to be grown, the country would become self-sufficient in the foodstuffs named after the first subsequent harvest in respect of the cultivation for which these plans have been carried out."

From the foregoing one can glean sufficient information to excite an interest in the policy and to see that it is of vast importance even to the agricultural interests of this country. We, as a producing commonwealth, have long considered the United Kingdom as an outlet for our surplus product, and the market which we found there was extremely useful to Canadian farmers and beneficial to Canada, especially in adjusting financial balances arising out of the considerable investments of English capital in this Dominion. If this proposal meets with any degree of success it will call for a corresponding reconstruction and a readjustment of affairs in this and others of the Overseas Dominions. Mr. Prothero, President of the British Board of Agriculture, has said "From the struggle we have necessarily taken many severe lessons, not the least of these has been that we must make ourselves at least capable of self-feeding; not to be self-feeding but to be capable of self-feeding." Again he says, "It is idle to pretend that we shall return to anything even approaching pre-war agricultural conditions. A new order has been set up in England, a new doctrine already invested with the authority of the law printed upon it." Mr. Prothero further contends that in order to be capable of self-feeding, between 13,000,000 and 14,000,000 acres of land must always be under cultivation, and the Government must see to it that at least half of the farm land in the Kingdom is annually plowed.

Some are inclined to argue that after the war Britain will revert to a strictly manufacturing and shipping nation, and that the country is pre-eminently fitted for an industrial system and climatically unfitted for an agricultural system; that agriculture can only be developed at the expense of British manufactures and the British mercantile marine. The Committee replied to this argument in a very forceful manner and stated that if carried to its logical conclusion "it would degrade the use of English land to the perpetual sport of the manufacturing rich and to the occasional play-

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