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The Farmer's Advocate and Home Magazine

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LONDON, ONTARIO, SEPTEMBER 21, 1916.

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EDITORIAL.

Keep the plow going. Be prepared for next year.

Use "Farmer's Advocate" fair reports if anxious to purchase a few winners.

Put plenty of men in the silo to tramp. Save the silage by the exclusion of air.

The man with a woodlot on his farm does not shiver at the prospects of a coal famine.

Germany still maintains that she is fighting a defensive war. She is at least on the defence.

The success of a fair does not always depend upon the number of entries. Quality counts.

Making a first exhibit at a county fair paves the way to the championship at the big fair later on.

It is not hard to find someone who thinks he can do the other fellow's job better than it is being done.

It might pay to buy a little cottonseed meal for the dairy cattle this year and save some of the coarse grain for the pigs.

"The man worth while is the man with a smile, when everything goes dead wrong." A good loser gets there in the end.

No better indication of the way the war is going could be had than the entrance of Roumania on the side of the Entente and the change of front in Greece.

It is fortunate that the big railway strike in the United States was averted. No matter who is the cause of strikes the people always suffer by them.

When politicians show extreme friendliness, carry a broader smile than usual, and put a great deal of warmth in their universal handshake, look out; an election looms up on the horizon.

Unnatural conditions are making some rich at the present time, but those who stand behind production in the period after the war will be safest. Canada has a new crop of rich men since the war began, but the best crop for the country is the multitude of steady individuals who produce over a period of years.

The School Fair may be a good place to kindle the boys' and girls' interest in exhibiting, and they may go on to greater things at the larger fairs in later life, but judges must be careful in their placings that they do not discourage by making unjustifiable awards. The only way to make sure placings are right is to have a good reason for them and make it known to exhibitors. This is the educational part of the school fair.

"Because of the war" everything bought for the household or the farm has gone away up in price, but when the same explanation, coupled with that of adverse weather conditions, is made by the farmer to account for a necessary rise in the price of dairy products and other things from the farm the public asks for an investigation. Such would be a good thing, and should be applied to all things which have "jumped" since the war began. It would show the farmer making the smallest profit of any and entitled to all he gets, and more. It might not be so re-assuring for some others.

Farm Management.

Sometimes officials connected with agricultural departments and agricultural colleges are criticized for their tendency to get too far away from the farm. They may get scientific at the expense of practical knowledge, which can only be gained through rubbing shoulders with the farmer, his son and the hired man. To know conditions it is necessary to get on as many farms as possible and find out what is going on. Just in this connection there is an opening right now for considerable investigation work which would later be of inestimable value as a basis for teaching farm management in our agricultural colleges, schools, and to short course classes. Farm management in Ontario, or in Canada for that matter, is little understood. That much of it is bad management is well known. That there is much good management is also a fact, but so little is known of the subject in a general way, as applied to Canadian agriculture, that no one seems sure where the leaks occur, and no one, consequently, has a cork to stop them. To get at the matter thoroughly an investigation taking in a large number of farms in each of several districts is necessary. Actual farm conditions must form the basis of the work. Get right down to the problems of the 50-acre, the 100-acre and the 200-acre farmer. Study his methods; tabulate the results; find out what is wrong and what is right. Then evolve something definite as to system. There is work here for the District Representative, or for someone who is in touch with conditions, has had practical farm experience, and can insert the probe and pull out the pellet. Farm management, the biggest consideration on the farm for it covers in all its many ramifications, has been the most neglected of all subjects by agricultural teachers. Farmers are plentiful but good managers are few. Colleges and schools should train more to manage better.

A Dangerous Season.

This year will be remembered by every farmer, whether he lives on clay land, loam, or on the sand, for it "got" them all. Jupiter Pluvius poured and poured in the spring to the delight of the sand farmer, to the disadvantage of the loam farmer, and to the exasperation of the clay farmer. And then he stopped suddenly and drought burned up the crops on sand, scorched them on loam, and baked them on clay. The result is a shortage of coarse grain and coarse feed. To further add to the troubles, the crop out West was hit by rust, hail, and locally by frost, until feed from that quarter will be scarce. This means high prices for all feed this winter. Feed is scarce on Ontario farms. Many silos will not be filled this year. Roots in many fields are practically a failure. Straw is short and oats and barley a poor crop. The one redeeming feature is that hay is plentiful. What will happen? We do not know, but it is all too likely that many farmers will sell themselves "shy" of live stock rather than buy sufficient high-priced feed to run them over until spring. Selling too much is dangerous. Prospects for live-stock prices were never better. If the country is sold short of good breeding stock, it will take years to get it back and it is not long till next July and August when a bumper crop may be harvested, which, without stock to turn it to valuable meat or milk, might not be worth any more in dollars and cents than this year's light crop yield. A big crop of grain with no stock to feed it to always brings a small price per bushel. It would pay to save the breeding stock.

Already signs of the "clean out" are in evidence. We were talking to a packer a few days ago who said that at the present time good brood sows were coming into the packing house for slaughter so far advanced in

pregnancy that foetuses had hair on them. What will happen the hog industry if this goes on? The fall litters are lost, and, worst of all, the tried breeding stock is gone and it takes time to get breeding stock back. Pigs, being grain eaters, the hog industry is likely to suffer most. Sheep and cattle can be run through with hay the basis of their ration, but there is a danger that a number of good, useful, breeding cows will go to the butcher when they are really needed in the herds.

To make it worse, stock are not going to go into the stable in the best condition this fall. Pastures have been bad. A summer silo would have been a big lift on many farms. More corn must be grown in Ontario. The best feeders of the future will plan to feed summer and winter, and corn is the crop for bulk and aggregate feeding value. This has been a dangerous season. Avoid the greatest danger by keeping all the breeding stock possible to run over winter.

Encourage the Young Breeder.

The remark is often heard at a big exhibition like the National, held annually at Toronto, that the small breeder has very little chance of winning much of the prize money. A close observation of the show for many years back seems to substantiate the belief. Faces do not change much. The same breeders are there year after year and the same men are "in the money year after year." True, they have choice stock and deserve to win, but it seems, sometimes, that the show is above and beyond the man with two or three pure-bred animals, or even a small herd or flock. He looks at the line-ups and says to himself "what chance would my heifer or my filly have in that class?" and goes away decided not to attempt it. Big showmen should be made of men who start on a smaller scale. How can they be started? Controller Foster, of Toronto, hit upon a good idea when he suggested offering \$500 in prizes for competition between young breeders in the ring and in judging. Get the young men started. Encourage competition among them. At some of the state fairs, across the border, a live-stock judging competition is a feature of the entire live-stock department. It is the right time right now to start here in Canada.

County Seed Exhibits.

The grain and seed exhibits at our fall fairs, with the exception of those exhibits put on under the Field Crop Competition, are a disgrace to this grand old province. We quite agree with Dr. Zavitz who stated in an article in our Annual Exhibition Number this year that they should be improved or dropped. The bag or bushel of wheat, stuck back under a table of vegetables and upon which there is no name and no particulars as to method of seeding and growth is not, as a rule, a very educative feature of a fair. And, too, it is more than likely a perennial visitor, making the rounds of six or eight fall fairs each year for money and for money alone. We have often wondered if it would not be much better to have county grain and seed fairs separate and held in the winter when everyone could attend and find time to listen to lectures on grains and seeds and have the desirable qualities of both thoroughly explained. The District Representative could help greatly with such work and the grain and seed would get the prominence to which it is entitled. Farm crops depend largely on good seed.

The old man who defined executive ability as the art of getting the credit for all the hard work that somebody else does was about right. Some politicians have executive ability of this kind.