

The Farmer's Advocate AND HOME MAGAZINE

THE LEADING AGRICULTURAL JOURNAL IN
THE DOMINION.

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JOHN WELD, MANAGER.

Agents for "The Farmer's Advocate and Home Journal,"
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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.
 2. TERMS OF SUBSCRIPTION.—In Canada, England, Ireland, Scotland, Newfoundland and New Zealand, \$1.50 per year, in advance; \$2.00 per year when not paid in advance. United States, \$2.50 per year; all other countries 12s. in advance.
 3. ADVERTISING RATES.—Single insertion, 25 cents per line, space. Contract rates furnished on application.
 4. THE FARMER'S ADVOCATE is sent to subscribers until an explicit order is received for its discontinuance. All payments of arrears must be made as required by law.
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 11. 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.
 12. ALL COMMUNICATIONS in reference to any matter connected with this paper should be addressed as below, and not to any individual connected with the paper.
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consumer's table and enthrone the apple in its place, economic and natural conditions are at work that will maintain an equilibrium between supply and demand, and altogether they put to rout the forces of fear hovering over the production of fruit in Canada.

Parcels Post Proved Practicable.

It should be reassuring news to our postal authorities, and in fact to Canada's entire population to know that after a year's thorough trial of Parcels Post, the United States Government has this year increased the scope of the work immensely. With the beginning of 1914 the United States commenced handling parcels of 50 pounds weight within the first two zones or a 150-mile radius, and parcels up to 20 pounds in weight over the entire system. An increase from the eleven-pound limit to twenty pounds in a twelve-month proves conclusively that Parcels Post is practicable. To those who claim that facilities for handling the increased amount of mail matter in Canada, which is sure to result when the Parcels Post law comes into effect, are inadequate what the United States has accomplished stands as a rebuke. There are those who claim that even a nine-pound limit demoralizes our postal system, and some who are not wholly convinced as to the value of Parcels Post maintain that covering only small parcels as it does, it will give the express companies an opportunity to place exorbitant rates on parcels too large or too heavy for postal transport. This latter cannot be. Our efficient and aggressive Railway Commission and the public standing behind them can and will attend to this, and the fact also remains that the bulk of the parcel traffic through the post offices is in parcels of from one to two pounds in weight. Nevertheless the fact that the United States postal system has so thoroughly assimilated the large amount of Parcels Post business, it has in one year and has almost doubled the size of parcels at the end of that time, and has also been able to show an immense profit on the undertaking,

is ample assurance of success in Canada, and many instead of bemoaning the lot of the mail carrier advocate an increase in his salary with the extra work involved, and also starting the system with the largest weight limit of parcels practicable.

The Beef Question.

Through low prices and high "The Farmer's Advocate" has stood behind the policy of finishing the beef cattle before allowing them to leave the farm, but finishing does not imply that steers should be fed until three or four years of age as was common practice in days gone by. Not at all. Baby beef under eighteen months of age may be highly finished, in fact often shows much better finish than an older animal, although the latter may be well covered with choice flesh and ready for export. Feeders through years of experience have found that as a general thing the younger they can turn their cattle into finished beef after they have passed the veal stage the greater their net returns. The young animal makes more rapid gains and usually in these days when finished commands the highest market price. Just recently we heard of two yearling steers being sold for 12c. per pound live weight and they brought their feeder as much as fairly good three-year-olds would have done. They were well finished and the man that sells such a finished product in abundance is no soil robber.

The draining our country has had of beef cattle of all kinds and descriptions since the removal of the United States tariff has caused a great deal of comment upon its probable effect on the farms of Canada. True it is that a great many stockers and feeders have journeyed south to the green hills of Pennsylvania and Vermont and to the full cribs of the corn-growing States. If the farms from which they come produce feed in sufficient quantity to finish the cattle raised such a policy will prove disastrous, but in advising feeders to thoroughly finish their cattle we could not go so far as to state, as a writer did recently, that all beef cattle should be retained in Canada until three years of age, a policy which it was claimed would mean additional untold millions in profits to our farmers. Feeders have been looking for the early-maturing animal and breeders have been breeding with that end in view. They know that a young animal makes the most economical use of food consumed and that a young calf will sometimes make gains in weight as rapidly as will a fattening steer ten or twelve times its weight. Of course, the calf consumes far more food in proportion to bodily weight than the steer, but as it grows the quantity of feed consumed per day increases and while the proportion in relation to bodily weight decreases the daily increase in live weight grows less. This is with the growing animal. Under average conditions it is not advisable to keep feeding cattle on a maintenance ration. The point at which feeders aim then is to get weight and finish together and get the animal off their hands at the earliest possible age. The steer is fed well from birth and many of the choicest beefs that leave the farms of to-day are on the block before they are thirty months of age, and many of them are around eighteen months to two years old. A steer or heifer at this age properly bred and properly fed and finished is what the butcher is looking for. The choice cuts out of these are bought at the top price on the market and the man who feeds them and sells them in prime finish is not robbing his soil, but can with a judicious use of a cropping rotation and the manure made build up his place. There are thousands of acres of rough land in Canada upon which cattle may be grazed and from which our own feeders should be able to purchase good feeding cattle, but the bulk of our farmers could probably raise more calves than they have been doing during recent years.

We would not advise, as has been done, the raising of every calf of the dairy breeds for beef purposes. Many such calves would not grow into steers, worth anything for feeding purposes in three years, which is one year longer than the span of life conceded by many to the beef animal.

Conditions cannot be remedied by wholesale foolhardiness. Many dairymen use a scrub bull for no other purpose than simply to begin new lactation periods for the cows in their herds. Of what use would such calves be to a man in the business of producing beef? True it is that many a good calf has been "knocked in the head" or has been sold for veal, and present prices of beef should soon put a stop to this.

Neither is there any remedy in breeding all kinds of cull and scrub females. Every calf from such is raised and fed at a loss. What should be stopped, however, is the depletion of the good females caused by the high prices now offered. The man who keeps the poor individuals and sells the choicer heifers is on the broad road to failure, while he who sells his culls and retains the best stock is on the surest way to success.

We are promised on all sides that beef is to be high in price for years to come, but it is not going to be so high that any old scrub of a cow mated with the poorest class of mongrel bull will produce a calf which, fed on high-priced grain and roughage and by high-priced labor, will yield a profit for the producer. The aim of the breeder and feeder of beef cattle must now and ever be to produce the very best quality of animal possible and to finish that animal at the earliest possible age at which good beef may be finished and the only sure path to this success in high prices as well as in periods of market depression is to cull the herd, retain the biggest, smoothest and best females, use on them a bull of good beef type and quality and thus produce early-maturing, comparatively easy-feeding steers and heifers to be marketed at the earliest possible age, not as scrub stockers or feeders, but as finished beef fit to go on the tables of the laboring man or the millionaire, and for which the demand is sure.

All this talk about prohibiting the slaughter of females, about keeping all cattle to a certain age and retaining all dairy calves for feeding purposes is twaddle to the ear of the practical feeder, who knows by experience that scrub cattle and long-drawn-out feeding periods do not increase his bank account. The farm must have good cattle and it must finish them or both cattle and farm will soon be rated in the poor class. Breed right, feed right and finish early.

Yields and Profits.

Not infrequently someone is heard to remark that there is no money in growing oats. From the results of an acre-plot competition, some details of which were published in last week's "Farmer's Advocate", we would not hesitate in saying that the average crop of oats yields a small return. According to statistics the average yield per acre of oats for the past ten years in Ontario has been 36.6 bushels. One of the competitors who, by the way, was the winner in his county (Glengarry) grew 57 bushels of oats on an acre at a cost, including rent of land, of \$17.10. These oats were valued at 34 cents per bushel (a fair market price), and his profit was only \$2.28 per acre. But had he only grown an average crop of a little over 36 bushels per acre he would have been a loss, as the crop would only have been worth \$12.44, a loss of \$4.66. But you say his cost of production was high. True, he put on seven loads of manure per acre, but had he not done so what would have been his yield? Without extra effort it might have run even below average, and, at the average cost of production, would likely still have been grown at a loss. The average cost of producing an acre of oats, taking into consideration the winners in the six counties in the competition, was \$12.40, which just about balances what an average crop of oats, according to figures covering the past ten years, would be worth at 34 cents per bushel, which is slightly more than the grower in some years gets for the crop if sold off in the raw state. If the man who grows the average crop only breaks even, where does the man who gets the smaller than average crop land? Who would rise up and say that the oat grower gets too much for his product?

There are other points to be gleaned from the report of the competition in question however. Again is it emphasized that the good farmer gets highest returns. Fifty-seven bushels of oats per acre was the smallest yield amongst the winners, and 89 the highest. These yields are much higher than the average of 36.6. The same thing held true in other crops in the competition. Potatoes average in Ontario 113 bushels per acre, yet 427½ bushels were produced