

A Few Suggestions on Farm Improvement

A Symposium of Ideas, the Product of the Experiences of Some of Our Folks

Legumes for Soil Improvement

J. B. Baving, Oxford Co., Ont.

An eleventh commandment that would cover the greatest number of farming sins would read something like this: "Thou shalt grow sufficient legumes to maintain the supply of nitrogen and organic matter in the soil."

Clovers have been advocated by lecturers and farm papers ever since I started to till the soil, over a score of years ago. And still there are farmers right in my own neighborhood who allow their soil to become hard packed, lifeless, badly deficient in organic matter, and almost devoid of nitrogen, when all of these conditions might be avoided by following a proper crop rotation in which the clovers play an important part.

Clover seed, I know, is rather scarce and high in price. I don't believe, however, in buying clover seed. I grow my clover seed, three to four acres of it each year. I cut the first crop a little early to give the second or seeding crop a better chance. From that three or four acres I always harvest enough seed to supply all my wants and a nice balance for sale.

I sow clover everywhere. Never does a crop of grain go into the soil without clover seeded along, even though the land is to be plowed the following spring. I have even sowed clover at the last cultivation of the corn, and believed the results to be satisfactory. This clover, even though it lasts only for a few months, adds nitrogen and humus to the soil. With humus I get better moisture conditions and a soil that works nicer and both looks and is richer. The decaying clover roots add to the porosity of the soil, and that means better aeration. Legumes make for soil improvement and are well worth growing did they not have the additional advantage of being the very best forage that can be produced for cattle.

Protection for Farm Improvements

R. H. Harding, Middlesex Co., Ont.

There are many men who spend a good deal of their time to-day discussing protection, both pro and con, from a Government standpoint. At the same time, altogether too many fail to provide the protection that their homes require, protection that, to my mind, is of infinitely greater value to us individually than any measure of protection that any Government could pass. I wish to refer to just two such measures of protection at this time—the protection against wind and against lightning.

If we are to take the past year as a guide, we may expect more havoc from winds from year to year as this country gets further stripped of its timber. To prevent this damage I feel it is the duty of every farm holder to plant a substantial shelter belt of trees, which will not only prove a great protection from year to year, but will very materially increase the value of the farm as time rolls on. It is true that this shelter cannot be supplied in a day or two, but it takes

only a few years, and even if you are too old to expect much benefit from such protection in your lifetime, you couldn't possibly leave a greater legacy behind you (cost considered) than an artistic windbreak around your buildings, besides its being a source of security for both man and beast.

The other form of protection which I refer to—against lightning—is, to my mind, just as much neglected as the former. The losses through lightning amount to hundreds of thousands of dollars annually for buildings and live stock, without including the most terrible of all losses, human life. It is estimated that there is considerably over \$317,000,000 worth of buildings in Ontario. We would be quite within the mark in saying that not more than one in every three buildings has any protection against lightning. Is this as it should be? It is true that most of the losses of farm buildings and of live stock are caused by lightning. Our insurance com-

A Cost System for the Farm

S. C. Potter, New Westminster Dist., B.C.

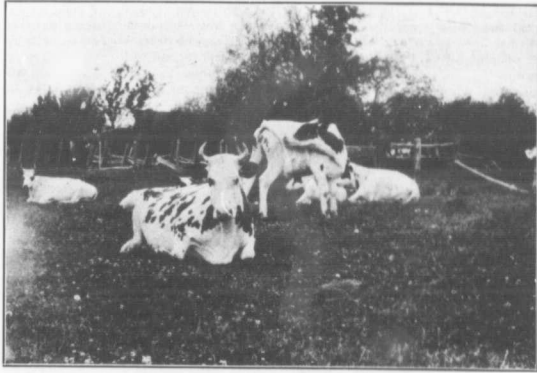
A few days ago, when arranging to get some letter heads printed I got into conversation with the superintendent of the job department of the printing plant. Incidentally I learned something of the care and accuracy with which printers keep track of their costs. No matter how small the job, they know just how many minutes of work have been put on it, the value of the press for that time, and so on and so forth down to the finest details. The superintendent informed me that they had two objects in following up their cost system so accurately. In the first place it was necessary to know the cost of a job in order to quote a fair price on the work to their customers. The second object was to find leaks.

I imagine that a cost system not half so accurate as that followed by the job printer would open the eyes of most farmers to many mistakes in management that they have been making. One of the first things to which, they have had their eyes opened would be the foolishness of dividing the farm into numerous small fields. While not as accurate as a printer, I have been following a cost system myself and here is one of my experiences. I had two fields of 10 acres each, practically square. A year ago this spring I cleaned out the fence and brush between the two fields and plowed straight through. I found that I could do the plowing in 50 per cent. less time than it had been done the previous year; the same horses in the same condition, and the same man managed the plow. The difference came in the turning which was doubled by the cross fence. I found that every other operation was performed to better advantage in the larger field.

Had this system of figuring costs been applied to my farm when I first started in, that fence would have been removed years ago. When we take into consideration the expense of erecting the fence and keeping it in repair, as well as the strip of ground adjoining it that is wasted, we would have a pretty big bill to meet as a result of our carelessness in not keeping track of costs.

This is just one instance from my own experience to show the importance of keeping track of the costs of various operations on the farm. Individual records of dairy cows are a necessary part of a good cost system. The price of producing every crop on the farm should be kept track of, at least approximately.

We buy our seed corn on the ear. I wouldn't take shelled seed corn as a gift. I have been in the corn growing counties and know that the best of the corn is selected to be sold on the cob. The nubbins and inferior ears are put through the sheller. It looks as good as the best, but nubbins can only grow nubbins, for like legels like.—Henry Glendinning, Ontario Co., Ont.



Pure Bred Cattle are Assets in the Right Hands

Chateaugay Co., Que., owner of the pure bred Ayrshire heifers here seen, has made a financial pure bred business. So have many others. Rightly handled, will lift mortgages, build homes and make all other improvements possible. get one's experience with grades then gradually work into the field where greater skill is necessary and greater profits are possible.

—Photo by an editor of Farm and Dairy.

panies admit that they scarcely ever pay for a burned building that was roddeed.

Prof. W. H. Day has certainly gathered enough statistics to satisfy the most sceptical that lightning rods properly installed are almost absolute protection against fire by lightning. The value of a ground rod as a protection against lightning has also been proved by the telephone companies, the telegraph companies, the electric power companies, and others. Then why should the farmer doubt their value? Because some fake lightning rod vendors may have operated in your community in years gone by does not prove they are valueless. If there is no agent in your district at the present time who is willing to give you a square deal, and give you value for your money, just buy the wire and make your own rods by twisting a sufficient number of stands together. Any handy man can make and erect his own just as well as an agent can do it. Let me say (lest some might say I am seeking for business) that I am in no way interested in the sale of wire or lightning rods; just interested in the protection of life and property, that's all.



Cow
Geo. B. Ryan, New Westminister Dist., B.C.

The Ne...

Prof. J. B. It is obvious situation that h... mer may be, h... tive unit, in de... with which he... labor, of securi... capital cheaply... above all the so... their solution up... It is a deplora... it is so feeble i... Each farmer do... manages the wo... receiving much a... of the rural de... the centralizing... away from coun... social life in th... been impoverish... try village near... er was born, be... ago, a carpenter... two shoemakers... chant and a num... ers. At the p... none of the occu... presented in that... change has resul... the lessening of... mers, but also... of variety in soci...

It is useless to turn to former... respect. The ind... their artisans hav... ished from our vi... social and econo... in part be made... operative spirit.—

The Val...

Mrs. R. C.

Several times du... neighbors call me... about at the wind t... through the house... wind was blowing... foresight we exco... mended to our fa... planters and our f... the wind breaking... in way of noths of... buildings, which... serious as the fore... Our windbreak is... been really effectiv...