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A Dairy Census

EVERY reader should be interested in our dairy census. Read over carefully the questions on the outside front cover of this issue and send in your reply as early as possible. The value of the returns to be compiled from a census of this kind depends largely upon the character and number of replies received. Whether your cows have given a good return or not, your answer will be just as valuable for our purpose and no names will be published. Our object in taking a census is to gather information from which to base a statement showing what the average Canadian cow in doing for the Canadian farmer. Let no dairyman, whether he lives in Ontario or in any of the other provinces, neglect this opportunity to advance the business in which he is particularly interested. Help to make the returns as complete as possible.

A Chance for Skilled Farmers

Mr. James Thompson, of Lanark County, Ont., has issued a most striking challenge to the Dominion and Provincial Departments of Agriculture, and through them to the director of the Experimental Farms and the president of the Ontario Agricultural College, which if taken up would prove of the greatest interest to farmers and agriculturists generally. He says:

"We have experimental farms, and their value can scarcely be over-estimated, but we would like to see the government buy a poor farm, which is run out for want of labor, and the buildings sadly in need of repair. Let them put a mortgage on it for half its value. Then let some expert, by good management, pay off the mortgage, principal and interest, pay for extra help, redeem the land, renew the buildings, and at the same time provide a fair income for himself. We doubt his ability to do so."

Mr. Thompson has outlined a pretty hard proposition for the teachers of higher agriculture and the promoters of the more advanced methods of farming in Canada. But, many will say, if a skilled expert trained at the Agricultural College and similar institutions cannot make a success of farming under these adverse conditions, how is the ordinary farmer to do so. And many farmers, though their number is not as large as it once was, are undertaking, and some of them successfully, just such a task as Mr. Thompson describes.

It is casting no reflection upon the excellent and valuable work that the Experimental Farms and the Agricultural College are now doing, when we express a wish to see this challenge accepted. While the ultimate success of the venture would depend largely upon the pluck and endurance of the

expert selected, we believe there are those on the staffs of these institutions, and among the graduates of the College, who, if placed on some poor back concession farm, with inadequate buildings and equipment, and with the interest on a \$3,000 mortgage to meet every year, would give a good account of their stewardship at the end of ten years. The experience, whether it turned out successfully or not, would be valuable, and bring the individual who undertook it into prominence. Perhaps, some skilled agriculturist trained at these institutions will volunteer. Or, it may be, that even now some College graduate is successfully working out his destiny under conditions equally as onerous as those outlined by the challenger.

In this connection it might be well to consider the advisability of extending the practical teachings of the College by having a farm in each county operated under the direction of the College staff. Such a farm should represent the average in the district, and on it should be put to a practical test the theory and practice taught at the central institution. This might be done by getting some graduate in the district to operate his farm in this way, if he is not already doing so. By being under the direction of the College a system of farming could be followed and worked out according to a definite plan, modelled after that taught at Guelph, and adapted to meet the conditions of soil, climate, etc., in the district. Such a plan would help to advance the interests of agriculture and bring the farmer into more direct touch with the practical teachings of the College.

Weed Collections Go to O.A.C.

The boys and girls who took part in THE FARMING WORLD Weed Contest last spring and summer will be glad to learn that the collections sent in by them have been presented to the Ontario Agricultural College, for use in the Biological Department and in the new MacDonald Institute. These collections from several of the provinces of the Dominion, and whose preparation involved so much trouble and care on the part of the competitors, will prove a valuable addition to the specimens already in use in the botanical departments of the College.

A brief history of the competition will not come amiss just here. Twenty-one different collections were received, containing from nineteen to one hundred and forty-six different specimens each, or a total of 1,165 specimens, forming the largest collection ever made in Canada. Each plant was mounted on a separate sheet of paper and labelled, both the scientific and common name being given. An essay, descriptive of a few of the most injurious weeds in the

locality in which the collection was made, and the methods employed to destroy them, accompanied each collection. The prizes were awarded by Dr. James Fletcher, Dominion Entomologist and Botanist, Ottawa. The prize winners were as follows: First prize, Miss Ada Gardhouse, Highfield, Ont.; second prize, Miss Lizzie Taylor, Kempsville, Ont.; third prize, Master Ernest Gordon, Stapledon, Ont.; fourth prize, Master Wm. Brittain, Woodstock, N. B.

The following letter from Wm. Lochhead, B.A., M.S., Professor of Biology, acknowledging the receipt of the collections, shows how they will be utilized at the College. One or two of the collections were mounted when wet, and having moulded badly were destroyed. All the other competitors are mentioned personally by Professor Lochhead:

I hasten to thank you for the collection of Weeds which you forwarded me as a donation to the Ontario Agricultural College. The collection is valuable as it represents common and persistent weeds from many different localities of the Dominion. I shall make good use of the plants presented, but I shall not retain them in their present form. Many of them will be remounted and placed in our reference collection; others will be used as part of a working collection to which the students may have access at any time. I note the names of the following collectors: Ada Gardhouse, Ernest Gordon, Wm. Brittain, Lizzie Taylor, H. B. Fraser, John Steckle, A. P. McVannell, Edna Gates, Precilla E. Buchner, Anne Lee, Jeannie W. Watson, Mattie Fairburn, J. H. Sloan, Miss Ineson, J. B. Hart, D. M. Bart, F. C. Latham, Greta J. Ferguson and L. S. Bayne.

If these young people should ever find their way to the College they must make themselves known to me, and I will be only too pleased to show them around.

It may be well here to call the attention of these young people to the MacDonald Institute, which is an institution erected for them. If they have any difficulties regarding plants, insects, minerals, or any other objects of natural history, they should without hesitation write to Dr. W. H. Muldrew of the MacDonald Institute, and tell him all their troubles, and I am sure they will get a sympathetic letter in return."

Reforesting the Farms

The Minister of Agriculture announced in the Legislature last week that a small area of the college farm at Guelph would be set apart as a forest tree nursery, where suitable trees or planting may be grown. The seed for these trees will be sown in the course of a couple of months, and it is expected that in from two to three years the first lot of trees will be ready for transplanting. An educational campaign will be conducted in order that the farmer may know how to proceed and what to do to replenish the denuded forests of the country.