

The Farmer's Advocate and Home Magazine

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EDITORIAL.

With March here spring cannot be far away.

No breeder ever built up a good herd of cattle by using poor sires.

Some shrubs and perennial flowers about the dwelling will make it more homelike and attractive.

Some oats and bran will condition the pregnant ewes and increase the strength and vitality of the lamb crop.

Those of long experience always look for a season of luxuriant growth after such a heavy carpet of snow as we have had this winter.

Food played a large part in the winning of the war, and a plenty of it will have no small influence in bringing a troubled, fevered world back to normal.

The British Internal Revenue Officer has testified that 340,000 persons in that country made fortunes out of the war. It would be interesting to know just how we fared in Canada, and how large a crop of war profiteers we actually produced.

The Labor Party of the Provincial Legislature have acted wisely in not pressing their claims for the eight-hour day. Farmers could not conscientiously subscribe to any such principle for when applied to agriculture it is ridiculous and altogether unworkable.

The clothiers are urging for higher profits, and claim they will have to go out of business if a greater margin is not allowed. To the buyer of clothes the results will be practically the same, whatever happens. We shall have to resurrect the loom and the spinning wheel.

If considering whether it will pay to buy clover seed at current prices, give some thought to the requirements of the soil and to the nature of the rations you will want to feed the live stock during the winter of 1921-'22. One has to look ahead in farming; no clover sown this spring will mean no clover in the hay crop in 1921 and necessitate the purchase of protein-rich concentrates during the following winter if a suitable ration is to be fed.

At the annual meeting of the Eastern Canada Live-Stock Union, held at Toronto during the first week in February, almost an hour was devoted to a discussion of the proper time to begin the meeting, and then the meeting was adjourned before the business was concluded. To our knowledge no other meeting has been held to conclude the business. The Eastern Canada Live-Stock Union has never been a healthy child, but its chances of growing up seem to be getting slimmer.

There is no question but what artificial fertilizers will play an increasingly important part in the agriculture of this country, yet farmers as a rule do not understand their properties or peculiarities to the extent they should in order to get the most value for money expended on them. In this issue appears the first of a series of articles written by B. Leslie Emslie, who was formerly supervisor of the investigational work in fertilizers conducted by the Dominion Department of Agriculture; from this series farmers will be able to glean a great deal of information that can be put to practical use in the selection and application of fertilizers.

Size up Your Seed Requirements!

Those who have not already done so ought soon to take stock of their seed supply and plan the cropping system for 1920. Where a satisfactory rotation of crops has characterized the farm operations in years past, the different fields will present certain claims that cannot be overlooked, and where no well-laid plan has been followed it is time that a rotation was adopted and followed. Good farming now means more than plowing, harrowing and sowing the seed. On a well-managed farm, corn or hoe crops, grain and grass all follow one another in natural order, provided the elements do not combine to frustrate the plans of the husbandman. This requires planning not days or weeks, but years in advance.

When one takes a paper and pencil nowadays to figure up his requirements in the way of seeds, the total cost may be somewhat staggering; nevertheless, there is only one way to make a success of mixed farming, and that is to grow an abundance of grain and roughage, or, in other words, to produce good crops. It would be penny wise and pound foolish to skimp in the quantity or quality of seed used; the best is none too good at any time. Clover is scarce and dear, but one cannot afford to do without it. Clover is an important factor in the crop rotation, and anyone who contemplates omitting it this spring should first sit down and count the cost by estimating how much the returns of future years will be reduced by the absence of clover from the rotation when it should be there. Farming requires foresight to a marked degree, and in no regard is a lack of it more manifest than in the habit of sowing seed of poor quality or in insufficient quantities. Size up your seed requirements now and place your order; seeding will soon be here.

The Coming Session.

The long suspense is ended and the people of Ontario may join with the present Ontario Government in a deep, soul-satisfying sigh of relief that the members are all duly elected and commissioned to lead the U. F. O. and Labor battalions into the fray of the coming session. The Premier would have escaped considerable worry, perhaps, had seats been provided for himself and colleagues at an earlier date, but the very fact that no one representing any element of public opinion decided to oppose the two Ministers or the Premier after three months in office is a good indication that Ontario is pretty well satisfied with the sample of Government provided by the Coalition, and willing that the present administration should be allowed to carry on. True, Honorable Mr. Drury was opposed in Halton, but what issues were at stake or what element of thought or opinion Mr. Stephenson represented we have yet failed to comprehend.

The same spirit of open-mindedness which has characterized the electorate will, no doubt, prevail while the Legislature is in session, and the people of Ontario will expect honest, business-like and unbiased legislation to receive the support of every element and party represented in the House. Politics, as we used to understand them, have been subordinated to the wholesome desire for clean, upright administration, and the fact that this Government happens to be largely U. F. O. will not shield them from the storm of public indignation if, through any fault of their own, they fail to provide it. Farmers withdrew their allegiance to their favorite parties for no other reason than to get fair representation and better government, and they will not be backward in manifesting their disappointment should they have any occasion to entertain serious differences of opinion with the Coalition.

We understand from the public utterances of elected U. F. O. members of the Legislature that any action on the part of the Ministers that savors of favoritism toward their own or other ridings will not meet with

approval, and we presume their opinions on any questions that affect the public generally will be based on the same worthy principle.

The announcements already made indicate a comprehensive program of progressive legislation for the coming session which convenes on March 9, and it has been evidenced by the results of the recent by-elections that the Province of Ontario has confidence in the present Government to guide the ship of state through the troubled waters and bring her safely into harbor.

Wide Sleighs and Wider Roads.

The perennial agitation for wider sleighs has broken out again this winter with renewed vigor owing to the exceptional depth of snow, and the consequent inconvenience to those using teams on country roads. There have been desultory attempts made in the past to excite interest in this matter but at no time, in our remembrance, has a concerted effort, on the part of those chiefly concerned, been made to have the matter given the consideration it deserves. A team of mules or ponies may get along fairly well on the narrow-gauge roads such as we have this winter, but it is exasperating to drive a good team of draft horses over these narrow paths where they are obliged to balance themselves, or else flounder off into four or five feet of snow. Often it is a struggle between the two horses to see which will tread the path and which will plow along beside it. Even a lively span of drivers cannot move away with any degree of confidence for a mis-step may throw them off the track.

The obstacles in the way of wider sleighs and a more sensible width of roads in winter are not insurmountable. Farmers could, with little expense, adapt their sleighs to any width, and by setting a date in advance when wider sleighs would come into vogue the manufacturers would be subjected to the minimum of loss. The committee appointed last spring by the Agricultural Committee of the House of Commons to consider the standardization of implement parts might well devote some attention to this matter, and we believe they would do so if the people of country districts exhibited some degree of unity in urging this much-needed transformation.

The Quality of Ontario Butter.

If the dairy officials of the Ontario Department of Agriculture needed any further evidence of Ontario's position with regard to butter manufacture, they certainly found it in the recent show of dairy products in Manitoba. According to reports, Ontario enjoyed the notable distinction of failing to get within fifty places of the top in a list of two hundred and twenty-five entries. We are reminded by this occurrence of the difference between the words "reputation" and "notoriety." In this instance Ontario may fairly claim the notoriety, while if some system of developing a graded product is not soon evolved she will be forced to leave the reputation for good butter to the other provinces. In the solution of this problem the party fundamentally concerned is the producer, but the parties immediately concerned are the creamerymen and the produce merchants. They take the raw material of the dairy off the hands of the farmer, and in the manufacture and distribution of it either encourage or retard the development of the great dairy industry. In the matter of butter grading, a distinctly progressive step, these two factors in dairying are now standing off and looking at each other, like the two boys, one of whom was afraid and the other daren't. The butter trade during the war was characterized mainly by a heavy demand, so heavy in fact that creameries would take any kind of cream because they could sell any kind of butter.