

# Farmer's Advocate

## and Home Journal

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### EDITORIAL

#### Facts for all Electors

The executive of the Dominion Grange, in its discreet but forceful appeal to the members of subordinate Granges, with reference to the policy of that organization in the forthcoming Federal elections, has taken grounds which will, for the most part, be quite generally endorsed by the more independent element of the Canadian electorate, even though they may not all agree on every particular point. In presenting its case, the Grange Executive has wisely refrained from throwing the onus of responsibility on either political party, but has urged the members of its organization to use their influence within the existing parties to advance the objects with which the Grange has identified itself.

On the subject of militarism, the voter is reminded that eighteen years ago our expenditure on militia and mounted police was a little over \$2,000,000; in 1906 it was \$6,600,000. In the expenditure on armories, which is carried out under the Public Works Department, the increase is proportionate.

The taxpayer is reminded that, in the thirteen years from 1895 to 1907, inclusive, over nine and a half million dollars have been paid out of the Federal treasury to iron and steel manufacturers, as a free gift to this favored interest; while, from 1882 to 1907 over four million dollars were paid in bounties to the fishermen of Quebec and the Maritime Provinces. Lead and petroleum producers are among the other classes heavily subsidized at the general expense. On agriculture, the one great unsubsidized industry, the net burden of all these favors eventually falls, with only partial and indirect return to the form of improved home demand and prices for farm products.

From 1884 to 1907, a period subsequent to the \$25,000,000 donation to the Canadian Pacific, almost \$35,500,000 has been paid out of the Federal treasury in railway subsidies, besides which millions of acres of land have been granted by the Dominion and Provinces. Some of the subsidies were for lines in parts of Ontario settled for 100 years. Moreover, these railways pay little more than a nominal taxation, whereas, in adjoining States, railways built without subsidies pay \$400 per mile.

The enormously growing expenditure is viewed with alarm. Eighteen years ago, the total disbursements of the Dominion Government, under all heads, were less than \$42,000,000. In 1906 the total was over eighty-three and a quarter millions, while for the current year the appropriations, aside from the railway subsidy voted, amount to over \$130,000,000. At this rate, the Grange considers that expenditure is far outrunning the development of the country.

A trenchant plea is made on the subject of tariff reform. In 1906, the last year for which official figures are obtainable, \$173,000,000 worth of dutiable goods were imported into Canada, and the amount paid in duties was \$46,671,000 which was at the rate of nearly 27 per cent. Moreover, by reason of the protection afforded home manufacturers, the latter were put in a position to add a proportionate amount to the selling price of the goods manufactured in this country, of which the valuation was \$18,000,000. Yet, in the face of all this, the manufacturers are seeking, through both political parties, to obtain an increase in the protection enjoyed. It remains for the great agricultural class to ring these facts throughout the country, to bring them home to every candidate, to create an irresistible public sentiment against tariff increase, and for tariff reduction, and to send to Parliament a party of men who may be trusted to give that opinion effect.

#### Brandon Farm Report

A condensed report, giving the results of experiments carried on at Brandon Experimental Farm in 1908, in grains, grasses, clovers and roots, appears in another column of this issue. The superintendent of this station, since he assumed charge of the work two years ago, has shown commendable enterprise in preparing each year a press report, giving results of the experiments carried on. This is as it should be. Experiment station reports are valuable. They should be given the widest possible publicity, and in no way can they be brought more prominently before the farming community than by printing them in condensed, readable form in the agricultural papers.

The work this year at the Brandon farm has been very similar to that carried on in previous years. Plot experiments were undertaken with all the ordinary field grains, including peas and corn, variety tests conducted in roots and potatoes, and some work done in clovers and grasses. During the approaching winter season some important work will be undertaken in steer feeding. Last year's report of results in cattle feeding at this station, published several months ago in this journal, threw considerable light on the cattle feeding system developing in certain districts of the West, the work of last season being the first official comparison that we know of in this country of the indoor and open air systems of winter feeding. Similar tests will be made this season.

#### Forest Devastation

It is difficult to conceive of the immense amount of damage done by forest fires during the past two months in this country and the United States. All through September a smoke cloud hung like a pall over Lake Superior. It drifted over the entire St. Lawrence system, tying up navigation completely in some cases. Up through the Michigan peninsula, in Wisconsin and Minnesota on the American side; along the North shore from the Soo to Fort William and around the Western end of Lake Superior on the Canadian side, millions of dollars' worth of valuable timber in our already circumscribed forested areas were destroyed by the fire fiend. The fires burnt themselves out finally, or were checked by rain. They licked up towns and threatened cities, and very likely if these outbreaks could be traced back to their start a fair proportion of them would be found to have been started by man. Sometimes hare-brained campers start the blaze agoing. Sometimes settlers set the timber alight to rid the land of its forest encumbrance, to prepare it the more speedily for the production of agricultural crops.

Scientists aver that most forest fires are started by lightning, but experience has shown that most of the destructive bush fires of recent years have been set out by man, either started intentionally, for the express purpose of clearing the land, or started by man's carelessness in leaving fire where it can reach standing timber. The man who deliberately sets the forest alight to serve his own selfish ends, commits a crime fraught with more serious results upon his fellows than he could commit by the violation of almost any other human law. The man whose carelessness is responsible for the result is no less a malefactor. Both types of delinquents are menaces to society. Sufficient punishment for such crimes would be difficult to mete out. The trouble is in most cases that no punishment can be inflicted on the guilty at all. The man who sets a city ablaze can generally be apprehended, but the criminal who starts a fire that may burn up millions of dollars' worth of standing timber, snuff out human lives and sweep away the property of his fellows, seldom receives the punishment for his heinous act.

#### The Expert Judge System

Take it all through, the expert judge system as developed in this country has worked out satisfactorily. Here and there one finds a society to which an inefficient man has been sent, that is contemplating returning to the old system under which each fair board engaged its own staff; there are some societies that never co-operated with the various departments of agriculture at all in the employment of their judges, and there are societies that have had such experience with government expert judges as will not tempt them to risk engaging government experts again. But comparing show with shown, and government judges with other judges; the sum total of satisfaction in results overbalances the isolated cases of dissatisfaction, and we have had rather less "grousing" on the part of exhibitors and spectators than formerly.

In practice it is highly desirable that judging, live-stock judging especially, should be done by expert men. This is axiomatic. When an exhibitor brings his stock into the show ring, if he is going to get turned down, he wants to be turned down by a judge who knows what he is doing, not by somebody who knows no more about live-stock than will enable him to distinguish the sex of the animals brought before him. It is because government judges, take the average of them, have been men capable of rendering fair, just, and if not always absolutely consistent decisions, decisions anyway that were devoid of prejudice, that has popularized the expert judge system now very much in vogue.

For the smaller societies the system has been something of a boon. It has enabled them to avail themselves of the services of first-class men at the minimum cost, so far as the salary and expenses of the judge were concerned. The stronger societies have benefitted, too, from the system, but not to the same extent as the smaller fairs. The government expert judge system, however, is only a phase in the evolution of our agricultural fairs. There are indications already that the era that produced that system is passing. Exactly what the next step will be is a little difficult to forecast. A good many societies are either getting a little tired of the present system, or else desire to have the selection of their judges absolutely in their own hands, and we would not be surprised if quite a number of fairs next year reverted back to the old system that formerly prevailed. It will not be the old system either, to be exact, for a good deal has been learned in the last few years about judges and judging, and there is little danger of falling back into the old rough and ready way method of having anybody at all to do the judging.

#### A Cash Argument

The Brewers, Maltsters, Distillers and Allied Trades of Canada consume in their products every year:

Corn, wheat, rye and assorted grains, hops and sugar products etc.	\$4,500,000.00
Labor producers only.	6,000,000.00
Coal and other fuel.	1,200,000.00
Bottles.	1,000,000.00
Lumber, rubber goods, steam engines, machinery, tools, steam fittings, plumbers supplies, wagons, harness, builders' supplies, filtering material, chemical supplies, paint and varnish, furniture, brushes, packing house products, advertising signs, printing.	20,000,000.00
Fire Insurance premiums.	1,000,000.00
Railroad Freight and Express.	1,500,000.00

Making a total paid in to the producing sources of Canada of. . . \$35,200,000.00