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Select Good Seed

THE farmer cannot be too careful in the selection of the seed he wishes to put into the soil. The success of the future crop depends in no small degree upon the kind of seed sown. A fertile soil and good seed go hand in hand. The one will not produce a good crop without the other.

The best way to secure good seed is by selection. If from the ripened grain the best and most thrifty plants are selected and the seed from these saved for sowing improved results will follow. But better still if this selection has been carried on for a period of years. If the selection process has been thorough the seed at the end of a few years will be strong and with its powers to reproduce itself greatly increased.

But comparatively few farmers have followed the selection process as introduced by the Macdonald seed grain competition, and will have to adopt other methods for securing good seed. Unless there may be a good reason for changing, seed grown on one's own farm or in the neighborhood is preferable to that at a distance, as it is acclimatized. However, a change of seed, even from a distant point, is often wise, especially where the home grown seed has lost its vitality, and no effort has been made to improve it by selection. But in getting new seed, care should be exercised in the choosing. The grain should be plump, bright in color and the more known as to its ancestry the better. Rather than sow poor, shrunken, inferior seed, it will pay to go to considerable expense to secure good, strong seed. Poor seed means a poor crop.

Keep Fence Wire on the Free List

The increasing cost of timber and the scarcity of help have made the farmer more and more dependent upon the manufacturer of wire fences for his fencing material. The old time rail and board fence is gradually being replaced by the wire kind, the demand for which has increased enormously in recent years. And the end is not yet. As the old timber fences, now doing duty, become no longer serviceable, this demand for fence material is bound to grow to larger proportions.

The wire fence is, therefore, no longer a luxury, but a necessity in this country, and is supplying a need that would mean a hardship to many if it could not be filled. Because of this fact it is little wonder that the recent movement to have fence wire, which has for a number of years been admitted into this country free, placed on the dutiable list, has aroused strong opposition from the farming community. A tax on fence wire at this juncture

would work injury to many farmers, who are dependent upon this material to replace the old rail fence now no longer of service. In fact the whole farming community, already sufficiently taxed to maintain home industries, would feel it and be the poorer by the extra price it would have to pay for wire fence material. The government will be badly advised if at the present time it is induced to return to the old order of things and place a duty upon wire for fence making.

The wires used for farm fencing are Nos. 9, 12 and 13 galvanized smooth wire. Practically none of these grades are made in Canada and the enormous quantities used in fence making have to be imported. A tariff of 25 per cent. would enhance the cost of wire fencing fully ten to fifteen cents per rod, no small item if a farmer has several hundred rods of fence to build. At present there is a duty of 20 per cent. on wires

made. A little protection here would help the industries concerned, while the admission of the finished wire would help to keep the price of fence material down to its present level in case Canadian wire manufacturers endeavored to put up the price.

Grants to Fairs on a Better Basis

The decision of the Ontario Fairs' Association at its annual meeting a week ago to recommend that in future government grants be apportioned upon the basis of the work done for agriculture marks a step in advance in the conduct of the fall fair. An apportionment upon this basis means that no local fair can receive public money unless its operations are conducive to the up-building of the agriculture of the district. Those who do not conform to this regulation will have to go out of business or conduct their fairs without any government assistance.

This is as it should be. The \$80,000 given annually to agricultural societies in Ontario was never intended to be frittered away on mere entertainment and pastime, but to be used, by prizes and otherwise, in promoting the agriculture of the district. We can hardly say that we congratulate the fair representatives upon the stand they have taken, as it should have been taken long ago. In fact, the societies are, perhaps, deserving of censure for having drifted away so far from the spirit of the act by which they are entitled to government aid as to make their present action necessary. But better late than never, and now that a decision has been reached we trust that every promoter of the fall fair will put his shoulder to the wheel and endeavor to make it as it was originally intended to be, a potent factor in the development of the agriculture of Ontario.

The reduction of the number of societies is a more difficult problem to deal with, and we do not wonder that the delegates approached it rather charily. Vested rights cannot be set aside with impunity. The local fair or society that has been running for a number of years cannot be put out of business with the stroke of the pen. The process must be a gradual one and must be carefully and cautiously worked out. Perhaps, the new basis upon which the grants will be distributed in future will help in this other direction also by weeding out some of the useless societies and bringing to the front those that are doing good, useful work. Some say that the township society should drop out, and that the local societies should centralize in a couple of good fairs in each county. This is all right in theory, but the experience of the past shows that there are numbers of township so-

Live Close to the Land

Only when a considerable percentage of a nation is living close to the land can the highest type of independence and prosperity be enjoyed. The farmer who produces all the necessities and many of the luxuries, and whose products are in constant demand and never out of vogue, should be independent in mode of life and prosperous in his fortunes. If this is not the condition of the average farmer (and I am sorry to say it is not), the fault is to be found, not in the land, but in the man who tills it.—From "Fat of the Land," given free to FARMING WORLD subscribers. (See page 194.)

Nos. 7 and 11. Instead of placing a duty on the brands already on the free list, the government would be doing the farmers a good turn by putting the other two on the free list also. They are not extensively imported at the present time, but if they were on the free list a stronger and better fence could be supplied at little, if any, increase in cost.

While we are in favor of encouraging home industries within reason, it should not be done at the expense of any one class, and especially such an important class as the farmers of this country are. Until such time as it can be shown that Canadian made wire can be supplied in sufficient quantities to meet the demand things should remain as they are. If the government desires to aid Canadian steel industries, without unduly taxing any large section in the community, it might be done by putting a duty on wire rods. These comprise the rough material from which the finished wire is