

Home and Farm Magazine Section Editorial Page

Timely, Pertinent Comment Upon Men and Affairs, Following the Trend of World News; Suggestions of Interest to Readers; Hints Along Lines of Progressive Farm Thought.

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TO READERS.

Readers are requested to send letters and articles for publication to The Editor, Oregon-Washington-Idaho Farmer, 411 Panama Building, Portland, Oregon.

Discussions on questions and problems that bear directly on the agricultural, live stock and poultry interests of the Northwest, and on the uplift and comfort of the farm home always are welcomed. No letters treating of religion, politics or the European war are solicited, for the Farm Magazine proclaims neutrality on these three matters.

Comparatively brief contributions are preferred to long ones. Send us also photographs of your live stock and farm scenes that you think would be of general interest. We wish to make this magazine of value to you. Help us to do it.

WISDOM AND ABILITY.

AN ERROR that is very common today is the confusion of wisdom with ability. A man has gained great knowledge of agriculture and stock breeding through study; this, per se, argues that he should be a most successful farmer. He may become such, but it does not follow. A person may have learned much—but this only points out what he has to work with, not what he will do. Learning may prove a burden until a man understands the uses of it.

The story is often told of two men, who, with the same opportunities and the same aptitude for study, took up farming as a vocation, one making a notable success of it, the other a failure. One has been cited to show the value of a thorough technical training; the other has been used to illustrate the failure of an agricultural college to turn out a farmer. Either conclusion is entirely wrong. It was not learning that made one man a success and that made one a failure; it was the knowledge of how to use that education that made the distinction. This but illustrates the inaccuracy of basing conclusions on results rather than individuals. But for the personal equation there was every reason for the two men to meet with the same degree of success, for they were equally well-equipped. The difference was that one made the right use of his equipment, the other let it prove a burden instead of an aid.

Wisdom merely as wisdom is valueless, both to oneself and one's neighbor. It is when that which is learned is put into practice for the benefit of oneself or one's neighbor that the true reason for study is found. Too many people can tell others just how things should be done but lack the actual ability to do any of the things themselves. It is this which has given "book-learning" ill repute in some sections. The lack of practicality in graduates has been the principal criticism the schools and universities of our nation have had to face. Sometimes it is the fault of the institution, but too often it is the person who is crammed with knowledge he has not fully digested and does not know what to do with, that is to blame.

HEALTH PAYS.

WHETHER you raise chickens, horses, apples or potatoes, you are vitally interested in methods of prevention and of fighting the diseases to which they are susceptible. It is an economic saving to prevent disease from destroying a portion of your income, and looking at it in that light you take what precautions you think are necessary.

Do you give as much attention to your own health as you do to that of a favorite steer?

Irregular meals, long hours and hard work tend to undermine the health, if precautions are not taken. And, considered from the viewpoint of dollars and cents, it is far more valuable to you that you retain

your own health than to ruin the delicate machine of the body. If guarding oneself against ill-health means a certain amount of neglect of stock or produce, just consider the neglect which would ensue were you confined to bed. Aside from monetary considerations, which are, or should be, secondary, what profit it though you gain a fortune and lose your well-being?

Health is the most valuable thing on earth to the human animal. With it he may enjoy life in its simplest aspect; without it he cannot enjoy the most pretentious of pleasures. And in the long run, health pays.

THE HORSE AGAIN.

VETERAN HORSE TRADERS are almost unanimous in declaring that the past summer was one of the worst they had ever known for their business. Prices were low and there were few buyers even at sales replete with good bargains. From one of the greatest slumps it has known since the inroad of the automobile, the horse market suddenly revived on the declaration of war in Europe, with the result that it is in a better condition today than it has been in a long while.

The horse is yet far from being a thing of the past. In spite of the marvelous heavily armored land cruisers the automobile manufacturers have given to the military man, the cavalry is an essential part of an army in the field. This is probably as much so today as it ever was, though before the present conflict had begun many had predicted that the cavalry would prove of little value in modern fighting with high power, long-range guns, and aeroplanes to do the scout duty hitherto assigned to the cavalry. Yet as it has turned out thus far, the German cavalry is one of the most effective forces the Kaiser is using against the allied armies. The gallant Uhlans have shared much of the laurels of victory with the mighty siege guns and marvelously trained infantry. And the cavalry corps in the British and French military machines have rendered excellent account of themselves.

A horse is a splendid mark for a bullet, however, and it is not to be wondered at that the supply is rapidly decreasing in Europe. For many weeks the fighting has been principally between the foot soldiers and artillery, with only occasional sorties by the cavalry. But each mounted raid costs dearly in the lives of horses and men.

Already dealers in the United States have been commissioned by European powers to purchase horse flesh for use on continental battlefields. This means an increase in value that is certain to be taken advantage of by breeders. There is money in raising good horses now, more money than there has been in years, and Northwestern breeders will be among those who profit by the increased demand.

THE FARMER'S OPPORTUNITY.

THE FARMER'S HOUR has come. The products of his skill, energy, capital and labor will be wanted as never before in the history of modern times. In the Irish Homestead appears the following comment, which is surely applicable to American farmers:

"Lord Kitchener, whose views as a soldier one must respect, seems to be of opinion the struggle will be a long one, and if that is true, the exhaustion of the agricultural harvest of Europe, only half gathered in, and the certainty that until the war is ended there will be very little further agricultural production, should ensure a rich reward for the farmers in these countries who are fortunate enough to be able to work uninterrupted on their land. When the present European harvest is consumed, what harvests will there be to be gathered except those of the farmers in countries like our own. We believe the utmost agricultural production possible to us will pay farmers and prove profitable even if they find production more expensive than hitherto. They must not think that the prices prevailing when the present harvest has just been gathered will be the prices of next year. If the war continues for such a time as Lord Kitchener anticipates, we will really have famine prices all over Europe."

DEPRESSION TEMPORARY.

THE LAMENTABLE war waging in Europe, the most widespread, costly and probably to be the most destructive of human life ever waged on the surface of the earth, is felt all over the world in some degree. The navies of the belligerents are so numerous in their units, so swift and so powerful as a whole, that the high seas in every quarter of the globe are rendered unsafe for merchant ships. Never before has a war prevailed which was felt so widely over the earth as that now raging in Western Europe.

It is impossible to see how this should continue long. The crops of the United States are the largest ever harvested in cereals, and the cotton crop is immense. The belligerent nations will need these commodities, not only as much as usual, but far more. The exportable wheat crop of America is exceedingly large. So is the corn crop, and also the cotton crop. If these staples should be permanently tied up it would be in a way as disastrous to our people as to those engaged in the combat. If the embargo on commerce should last many months the effects would be felt in almost every household in America.

It is a matter of astonishment that the great English fleet, aided by that of France, has not already driven all the ships of war of the Teuton nations from the waters of the Seven Seas. From London have come assurances that the sea between our country and Great Britain was open and safe to ships of commerce, but there is some doubt in the minds of the shippers, and more in those of the insurance people as to the accuracy of this statement.

There is, to be sure, another reason for the temporary stay in the export business of foodstuffs and cotton, so greatly needed in Great Britain and other European countries, namely, the lack of money to pay for the cargoes. To be sure, there is no very great scarceness of provisions yet in most parts of Europe. It is harvest time all through these countries, and in spite of the absence of the able-bodied men in the war most of the crops will be gathered. When the home supplies of food are exhausted, as will be the case in a couple of months at the most, and when the spot stock of cotton is all used up, we may be assured that ways and means will be devised to get new supplies into the country.

The prices of these commodities are sure to be good, and it is difficult to reason out any wherefore that would indicate any long-continued depression in business in America.

Did you ever notice what a splendid thing a club is in a social or intellectual way until politics enters it?

Even the oldest inhabitants can't remember when last Delavan's comet—that celestial visitor visible in the northern sky this month—paid its respects to Mother Earth. It was something like ten thousand years ago, say the men who claim to know.

Funny how close together Christmas seasons are in stringent years.

Eat, drink and be merry, but don't forget tomorrow's bill.

The Russian Jews may profit by the war. They are well treated in the Czar's army and receive prompt promotion. And this treatment may survive the war.

Some say the aftermath of war novels and dramas will rival the horrors of war.

Even the most optimistic have about lost hope that it will be a brief, decisive war.

Funny how non-committal some candidates are on the prohibition question. They are equally prepared to support either a wet or a dry state, according to the election returns.

Isn't it easy to tell a person what you think of him over the telephone? And isn't it fun to hang up before he can answer back?