

More about Contagious Diseases in Our Stock.

Duty again calls us to touch on this, to us, one of the most humiliating subjects. At the quarantine at Point Levis, Quebec, a large number of imported animals have, during the past month, been slaughtered and cremated, having contracted pleuro-pneumonia. The Government has now taken prompt measures to prevent its spreading in Canada. The cost of this will probably amount to a very large sum, but that is nothing in comparison with the millions of loss that Canada must sustain if the disease is allowed to spread. Our motto has always been and still is: "Prevention is better than cure."

We have on previous occasions shown the inefficiency of our quarantines, and we have previously suggested that the importation of cattle and swine should be prohibited; and the sequel has proved our opinions to be correct. We would ask any one to estimate the loss that our farmers and Canada have already sustained by allowing diseased cattle and swine to be imported, and to consider what great danger we are incurring by continuing in this course. Temporary prohibition would give us a chance to redeem our former reputation, and enable us to proclaim again that Canada is free from all contagious stock diseases. Now we will further state that despite this slaughter and cremation, we have no confidence in our quarantines, as we saw them conducted, being able to prevent the introduction and spread of disease in our country, but look on them rather as hotbeds for the propagation of disease. The loss to the farmers and to the Dominion is too often of little consequence when individuals or combined organizations are to be served, whose sole aim is the accumulation of money at all hazards. We do not make these observations in disparagement of genuine importers or breeders who have the improvement of our stock at heart.

Question—Have cattle—from which this disease has sprung, and for which the country has to pay, not only for slaughtering and cremating, but the owners must also be remunerated out of the public funds—been imported for the benefit of Canadian farmers, or for the benefit of manipulators, to enable them to make money by shipping these very cattle to the States? It is now fairly admitted by real practical farmers that we already have in Canada just as good stock as we can import, and that the best of ours is taken to other places, where they bring just as good prices as any other stock. We know a few influential stock manipulators have immense influence with our legislators, and we know the practical farmers are not properly represented because they are not organized, and therefore cannot lobby their interests through legislative bodies in the manner that monopolists can. Such a strict quarantine system should at once be adopted as would make further importations of diseased animals practically impossible; as by importing these contagious diseases we are liable to have our whole country infected, and the loss of our reputation for having healthy stock would lower the prices of our stock, cheese and butter to an alarming extent, most probably for all time to come. A good reputation once lost can hardly be regained. We say, spare nothing to stay the progress and prevent further danger both in regard to the disease in cattle and swine.

The Farm.

PRIZE ESSAY.

On what Basis can the Middlesex Agricultural Council and Our Farmers most Harmoniously Co-operate for the Best Interests of Agriculture?

BY W. E. MARSHALL, ST. MARY'S, ONT.

In no calling do liberal study and varied experience give better results than in agriculture, and probably in none is there more carelessness and lack of system.

We have made rapid advances in these respects during the past few years, but there still exists a necessity for more insight and keener interest in our work. These facts have been recognized by the founders of the Ontario Agricultural College and Experimental Farm, and the promoters of the system of experimental stations which the Dominion Government purposes establishing.

Undoubtedly our Agricultural College has done much good in training young farmers and giving them an insight into the science of agriculture, which they could obtain in no other way. It has also by its experimental system realized, in some measure at least, its object, by disseminating a great deal of useful information; but it is a question whether the good being done by the institution is proportioned to the outlay in connection with it.

The proposed system of experimental stations will be a still more expensive, and, I think, a less profitable undertaking. It will also be open to the objection of liability to political influence.

Comparatively few farmers know anything of the work done at the Model Farm, for few read and profit by its reports, and possibly a less degree of success awaits the new system.

Now let us see if the Middlesex Agricultural Council could be put on such a basis that it would do the work intended to be done by these institutions, or that part of it which is most practical and useful. I think it could accomplish as much or more real good with a vast deal less expense.

We learn more from our own experience, and that of those with whom we often come into contact, than in any other way. Let the Middlesex Agricultural Council be constituted a sort of central agency for the collection and dissemination of experimental knowledge among the farmers, and let it co-operate with them through branch organizations established, say, one in each township. Each of these organizations should hold meetings monthly, at which topics of general interest could be discussed, each member taking part in the discussion, and giving all the rest the benefit of his experience. Reports could be sent to the Council for publication of all matter of general interest. Twice or oftener each year a series of experiments could be arranged by the Council or by a committee appointed for the purpose, and a report sent to each branch; the members would then decide among themselves who should perform the different experiments and report as accurately as possible all details and the results.

This method would do much to get us out of

the hap-hazard way so many have of blundering along, regardless of system, and in total ignorance as to the profit or loss in any manner of cropping or feeding.

The experiments should consist of tests of various cereals under different circumstances, of various kinds of feeds and systems of feeding, of methods of management of milk, butter, etc., and of any matters of general interest. Reports from the different organizations would be collected, arranged and published.

Other central organizations might be formed for different districts or Provinces, and by working through branch societies reach almost the whole farming community.

By these means we should become more interested in our work, form systematic habits of doing it, and learn to compute the profit or loss in every scheme.

Value and Uses of Rye.

There is no crop on the farm that can be turned into a greater variety of uses than rye, and it fills some positions not easily attained by any other crop. Although best adapted to light soils, it will flourish almost anywhere, and will often grow where other crops fail. It is excellent for soiling, for early and late pasturage, for green manuring, and for sowing with grass seeds as a protection. It cannot be excelled in sheep husbandry, where the flock may be inclosed by means of hurdles on poor patches of soil sown to rye. Here they can graze in late fall and early spring, or, indeed, in any season of the year, at the same time being fed with rich, concentrated foods; there is no better means of improving a poor soil. Another plan is to soil the sheep with rye, instead of pasturing as just mentioned. Sheep are preferable to cattle for such a purpose, for their rich droppings, which is the great source of fertility, are more evenly distributed over the land than those of cattle.

The soiling system cannot be complete without the use of rye. It may be sown early or late in the fall; when sown early, it affords excellent pasturage or soiling before the freezing season sets in, and it will grow again early in the spring, making a luxuriant pasture before the grass is fit to be grazed, but it should not be grazed or mown too close late in the fall. It is also a good plan to run over the field in the fall with the mower, leaving the mowings evenly distributed over the surface. The tramping of the stock does not seem to injure rye as much as it does other crops. As a soiler it comes in early in spring before any other soiling crop, and it can be so utilized late in the fall. But it is not so nutritious as some other soiling crops, notably peas and clover, and should not be fed alone for any appreciable length of time, especially in early spring and late fall. For green manuring, its usefulness is unrivalled on soils which are not adapted to clover. It may be pastured until the middle of June, after which it may be allowed to grow for a month or two, and then plowed under.

For early fall sowing, three to four pecks per acre will be sufficient, but, when sown late, another peck should be added.

Rye may thus be made to pay without the use of the grain, although flour made therefrom makes excellent bread, and should not be wanting on any farmer's table.