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EDITORIAL.

After sixteen years' official observation from his position as U. S. Secretary of Agriculture, Hon. James Wilson concludes that farmers on an average are getting only half crops.

The winter fairs continue to grow in favor and popularity with the farming community, as they come at a season when home work is not pressing, and they furnish a display of the best of commercial farm stock, including milking cows and poultry, while in addresses by practical men much useful and helpful information is received.

The numerous labor-saving devices upon our modern farms reduce work but not responsibility. Gasoline engines, mechanical milkers, acetylene lighting plants, and even water systems do not run themselves. Brains, observation and trained capacity of a high order are demanded in the operation of a modern farm.

It looks, says Peter McArthur, as though conscience had a cash value in the apple business. This is unquestionably a fact, though one that many people have been slow to discover. The grower who will make it a point always to give a little better value than the customer expects, can soon pretty nearly name his own price.

Co-operative organizations of producers to sell and of consumers to buy supplies should be able to whittle down to a fine point the wedge of middlemen's charges that now keeps them apart. But so few co-operative purchasing companies are truly co-operative or really well managed. They seem to run more to oyster suppers, and the like, than to solid persevering effort and business gumption.

A somewhat extensive importation of pure-bred Dairy Shorthorns and other dairy stock collected in Ontario by W. A. Dryden has been, or is being, distributed in Alberta by the Annual Husbandry Branch of the C.P.R. Co.'s Department of Natural Resources. At the head of this branch, it may be remembered, is Dr. J. G. Rutherford. The shipment included some 42 head of pure-bred dairy Shorthorn females and 16 bulls, while, in addition to some grade Holsteins and Ayrshires, wrote Dr. Rutherford, were about 150 head of the best dairy Shorthorn grade females he has ever seen together in Canada. He wishes there were more in the East.

The cow and the hen are two of the greatest producers of farm wealth. In the United States, for example, the value of the products of the farmer in 1912 is estimated at about \$830,000,000, an amount which exceeds the value of the cotton lint, and is nearly equal to the combined value of lint and seed. The wheat crop is worth only three-fourths as much as dairy products. An egg may be worth sometimes only a cent and three-quarters, and yet 1,700,000,000 dozen eggs are worth \$350,000,000, and these are the American estimates for 1912. If to the value mentioned is added the value of the fowls raised, the products of the poultry industry on American farms amounts to about \$570,000,000. This is nearly equal to the value of the wheat crop and is more than three-fourths of the value of the cotton lint produced during the year.

Secretary Wilson's Farewell.

It is the unique distinction of Hon. James Wilson to have served through sixteen years and three administrations as the efficient head of what has grown to be the greatest national department in the furtherance of agriculture the world has ever seen, measured by the outlay of public money involved, and the magnitude and range of operations in fields of investigation, demonstration and instruction. From his office at Washington has been issued his valedictory report as secretary in contemplation of retirement in March next, when the new President of the United States, Woodrow Wilson, will take the reins of office in hand, and naturally will surround himself with new administrators. A native of Ayrshire, Scotland, Mr. Wilson in early years, by heredity and education, seems to have been thoroughly imbued with those characteristics that appeal most strongly to the spirit of the Republic, and ultimately he served as Congressman for several terms, and then became Regent of Iowa State University. To administer the Department of Agriculture at Washington he was called in 1897. Judged by the present and former reports, the fixed determination of this organization, from alpha to omega, might be expressed in two words—Going Ahead—with the object of producing greater crops in order now, if possible, to a reduction in the cost of living. Production on American farms is increasing. It began with \$4,000,000,000 annually, 16 years ago, and it has swelled to \$9,532,000,000, and the crop produced in 1912 has been the greatest in the history of the country. A few years ago the farmer was the joke of the caricaturist; now, like material once rejected of builders, he has become the head stone of the corner. But there are elements at work in the situation that tend to frustrate the well-intended efforts of all government agricultural agencies to lower the cost of living. People want to live "higher"—or better—and they want to live in town. Secretary Wilson observes that the town does not need the "retired farmer" who represents capital going to waste, while the farm needs both his experience and his capital. The relation of distribution and transportation to food cost does not appear to lie within the purview of this report, but the time is probably not distant when these matters will be subjected to an increasingly rigid oversight and control. For the fourth time the value of agricultural export has passed the million-dollar mark, but beef and its products have gone into a sorry decline. The beet-sugar crop increased from 600,000 tons to 700,000 tons in 1912, and is encouraged because of its direct returns and because it takes no valuable plant food from the soil to preserve, which is one of the country's first considerations. For a similar reason the kelp plant is gathered from the sea, the great reservoir of potash, and then extracted. Secretary Wilson, as might be expected, takes a kindly interest in the sheep, regretting that dogs outnumber sheep in many States, and, with severe irony, he adds: "We have not learned to eat dogs as they do in some European countries." Kansas is cited as having had in one year 175,000 sheep and 192,000 dogs. "The dogs" is the reason given by many farmers why they do not keep sheep, and yet a couple of feet of woven wire and a few strands of barbed wire alone will keep them out of a pasture, comments the secretary, by way of suggestion. That

the banking question in relation to the farmer is becoming alive in the United States, appears clear from the fact that the Department initiated an enquiry on the subject of agricultural credit. It appears that local banks supply more than one-half such credit—general stores, one-quarter; neighbors, one-seventh, and the balance is from outside sources; but these conclusions do not apply to all communities. It is evident from the returns, however, that the American farmer is seriously lacking in credit facilities, fully one-third both of tenants and owners being unable to secure temporary loans on general security or crop liens. In some districts it is impossible to obtain loan on mortgage or other securities. To learn that liens are placed on so many crops is disquieting, and also that in certain cases loans on farm property are higher than in case of city realty. Some support was discovered for the suggestion that local associations might be formed to receive their own deposits for loaning to themselves, and also to borrow from outside on the combined security of the property of all the members to loan to themselves. In conclusion, the Secretary pays an unstinted tribute of praise to the distinguished corps of experts directing various lines of endeavor for the national good and in many cases sacrificing greater remuneration in private employment for love of the great results of their public service. With this report, the public labors of Secretary Wilson may cease, but his work will live.

Who's Who at Ottawa.

One might not suppose from the preponderance of attention given to other issues, more or less of purely political party concern in the deliberations of the House of Commons and Senate of Canada, that agriculture could, after all, be the country's Rock-of-Gibraltar industry upon which the security of all else depends. But this, in reality, is no matter of marvel, for the spokesmen of other interests, often described as "Big," are chiefly in evidence at our national head offices in Ottawa. Judging by its personnel, lawyers are most in favor for "The Commons." They reach this place of eminence in public service, at any rate, in decidedly substantial numbers; but their concern for the well-being of farming is, in the nature of things, academic and passing, rather than practical and abiding. Men can hardly be supremely occupied in the existence and progress of pursuits with which they are chiefly concerned only through the price of supplies at the corner grocery, or on their local market square. There are some eighty-seven lawyers, good, bad and indifferent, in relation to their profession, of course, but all hail-fellows-well-met, or they would not be there. Of merchants and manufacturers there are sixty in all, with a keen eye to business—their own, by the self-preserving law of nature. Twelve there are who describe themselves as journalists—may we hope, the salt of our very earthly capital. In proportion to their numbers and the opportunities for useful public service, Parliament seems to have little attraction for farmers and physicians. Of the former, according to the recording angel of the House, there are eighteen and 14 of the latter. The share that they are able to contribute to the proper business of this great food-producing Dominion is by no means in quality below that of the other professions, but the opportunities to help themselves are not to be compared with the advantages enjoyed by gentle-