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WHEN WRITING TO OUR ADVERTISERS PLEASE
 MENTION THE FARMER'S ADVOCATE

of wealth when he came in, and he was still a man of wealth when he went out, and not only will his name never be connected with anything crooked done in this parliament but he will leave a revered name both in this House and in this country.

What I have said may look a little harsh. It has become my rather ungrateful task in the last few years to give names to situations which my fellow members, with probably a better sense of charity but a less keen sense of justice, did not like to call by their proper names; but I think the people of this country like things to be called by their proper names and like things to be investigated from top to bottom. Now, this Bill of indemnity and of pensions to ex-ministers is not a question of constitutional principle; it is a question of paying men who work for the people of Canada. Therefore I think it should be considered on the ground of whether the amount of money paid is proportionate to the services rendered, and whether the measures cannot be amended. For my part, in summing up what I have said, I think the Indemnity Bill should be called purely and simply the salary to members' Bill, or something to that effect, and not only should the salary be curtailed by the days of absence, but members who are most of the time absent from this House should receive a very small indemnity. The Pension Bill should be amended in such a way, first that the term of years of service should be eight or ten years; second, that the ex-member of the government draw his pension while occupying a public function entitling him to money coming from the treasury of Canada, whether a member of the House of Commons, a member of the Senate, a judge, or an official in the civil service of the country; third, that he should be in such a state of fortune that he cannot live comfortably without the pension; and fourth, that no malversation of office or delinquency of duty shall have been proved against him by any committee of this parliament."

SOFT BACON.

Economy of gain is not the only matter to be considered in outlining a system of feeding and management. The quality of the product is of equal importance.

In August, 1905, the best Danish and Irish bacon was quoted 13s. per cwt. higher on the English market than the best Canadian. This difference in price, if it could be obtained, would net the Canadian farmer about \$1.50 per cwt. live weight more for his hogs than he has been receiving heretofore, which, it is needless to say, would very considerably enhance his profit.

The defect in our bacon of which the English dealers complain the most, and which is chiefly responsible for the difference in the prices above quoted, is the large percentage of soft sides that are continually going forward among Canadian shipments. It is true that the quality of our product has been very much improved during the past two or three years; but there is still much to be done in this regard before we can hope to top the English market, and before our bacon industry can be said to have reached the limit of its possibilities as a source of profit to Canadian farmers.

Soft bacon does not necessarily imply fat bacon. A pig may be thick fat and yet kill out a firm carcass; on the other hand, a thin, underfed pig, like that shown in Fig. 11 is almost sure to be soft. The terms "soft" and "firm" refer to the condition of the fat in a side of bacon when it is taken out of the salt. Sometimes it may be noticed before the bacon goes into the salt; but frequently sides that were apparently firm when put into the salt will come out decidedly soft. Softness reduces the value of a side in proportion to its degree: a very soft side is comparatively worthless; and between this condition and firmness there are many degrees of tenderness. This is a condition entirely beyond the control of the curer. Of many thousands and hogs, killed on the same day and put through the same process of curing, some will come out of the salt firm, almost hard; others so soft as to be almost worthless; and others of every conceivable shade of difference between these two extremes. It is clear, therefore, that the remedy must lie with the producer of the hog.

Many theories have been advanced in attempting to account for this softness in our bacon. It has been said to be due to overfeeding and forcing hogs to heavy weights at an early age; but the packers report that they find more softness among thin and unfinished hogs than among the thick fats. It has been said to be due to lack of exercise; and yet, perfectly firm bacon has been produced from hogs that have had very little exercise. The feeding of corn has been said to be responsible; but many soft sides come from pigs that have never tasted corn; and hogs fed on a ration containing a considerable percentage of corn, especially when supplemented with dairy by-products, have produced bacon of the finest quality. Feeding succulent foods, such as rape, clover, or roots, was for a time thought to be the cause; but experiments have shown that these foods, when fed in conjunction with a fairly liberal grain ration, have a decidedly beneficial effect on the quality of the bacon produced. Hogs enclosed in the same pen and fed at the same trough have been found to differ in the firmness of the bacon.

In 1898, Prof. Day commenced a series of experiments to determine if possible some of the causes that may produce soft pork. These experiments have been continued each year since that date, and hogs have been fed on nearly every kind of ration that was likely to be used by the farmer, and kept under all and various conditions practicable. These hogs when finished were shipped to the Wm. Davies Co., of Toronto, who killed and cured them and reported on the quality of the product after coming out of the salt. In this way much valuable information has been obtained, from which the following deductions may fairly be drawn:

1. An exclusive corn ration, continued for any length of time, will give unsatisfactory gains, and produce soft bacon.

2. Corn as a considerable portion of the ration may safely be used to finish thrifty shoats that have had plenty of exercise and a ration of mixed grains until they have reached a live weight of 100 lbs.

3. Pigs that have been raised to 100 lbs. live weight on a ration of mixed grain and skim milk may be finished on a ration largely composed of corn without any bad effect on the quality of the bacon.

4. An exclusive ration of peas will give unsatisfactory gains which are always associated with inferior bacon, but when fed in mixture with other grains, peas will produce bacon of excellent quality.

5. Barley, either alone or in a mixture with oats or middlings, will produce bacon of the very best quality.

6. Exercise contributes to firmness but will not overcome the bad effect of a faulty ration.

7. Skim milk and whey are exceedingly valuable in their effect on the quality of the bacon.

8. Succulent food, such as roots, rape, clover, etc., when fed to the extent of about half the ration by weight are conducive to the production of firm bacon.

9. Unthrifty, unfinished hogs, or those that have been held for a time on a short allowance to prevent them from becoming too heavy, while holding for improved prices or any other reason, have a marked tendency to softness.

Similar experiments were conducted in 1901 by Prof. Grisdale and Prof. Shutt at Ottawa, and these corroborate the conclusions of Prof. Day.

When all the experimental evidence is reduced to its last analysis, it seems to indicate that the firmness of the bacon depends largely if not altogether on the health of the animal slaughtered, and that any ration or system of management, that will maintain the hogs in a normal condition of health and thrift will produce firm bacon.

THE DANGERS OF IRONY.

Irony has its well known perils for the writer, and Mr. (Minister) Birrell has just discovered that it adds a new terror to politics. In the debate on his education bill the other day, no less a brother literary man than Mr. Wyndham flourished a note on religious education which Mr. Birrell had inserted in his edition of Boswell. It ran as follows:

"Happily we have it now settled under the hands of the prelates, both of the Roman and Anglican churches, that it is the natural and inalienable right of every parent to teach his child his own religious opinions, and that it is the duty of the state to allow all children attending elementary schools to be instructed on the school premises in their father's religion, irrespective of the question whether such religion is generally believed to be true or false."

This was triumphantly adduced by Mr. Wyndham as a direct contradiction of the position now taken by the minister for education. But Mr. Birrell rejoined:

"I was, I admit, covered with humiliation and shame when my right honorable friend, the member for Dover, whose acquaintance with the by-paths of literature even in its humblest manifestations is so extensive, read out to the House a note of mine which I was foolish enough to inscribe on a page of Boswell. He read it out to the joy and triumph of my opponents, and the mute confusion of my friends. But me it covered with shame, for that note was meant to be a piece of withering sarcasm. I fear at the expense of the prelates of the Church of Rome and the Church of England. I thought when I composed it that I had really done rather well, until it was my fate to hear it read out solemnly to the House of Commons with all the magnificent eloquence of the right honorable gentleman as being the sober, solemn expression of my own deliberate opinion. Henceforth I must leave it my alone."

COMPARISON OF HOG PRICES.

Average price of hogs in 1905, May 31st—11.10. One year ago—10.10. Two years ago—9.10.

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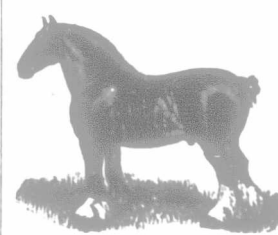
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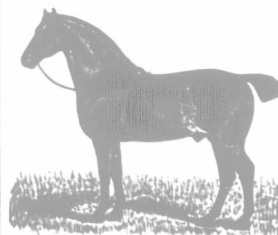
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