

the head of sale of grain samples, markets are to come into force by proclamation in the Canadian Gazette.

A measure known as "The Highway Bill," involving an expenditure of one million dollars as subsidies to the different Provinces according to population for road construction passed the House of Commons, but the Senate failed to sanction all its provisions, necessitating that the bill be held over until next session.

LIGHTENING AN OVERLOADED DEPARTMENT

Quite in line with a suggestion previously advanced through "The Farmer's Advocate," is an announcement that the Census and Statistics Branch of the Department of Agriculture has been transferred to the administration of the Minister of Trade and Commerce. This is a change that has been in contemplation by the Government for some time, as it has been recognized that not only has the Department of Agriculture been overburdened with incongruous branches, such as patents, copyrights, archives, etc., but that the statistical work might with advantage be co-ordinated with the work performed by the Department of Trade and Commerce. The mines branch is to be turned over to the Department of Interior, where it belongs more properly than to the Department of Inland Revenue.

Nova Scotia Notes.

Eggs are plentiful, and have dropped from 28 cents to 20 cents. Dairy butter remains the same, namely, 25 cents; creamery butter is selling for 32 cents. Beef is creeping up; a certain merchant lately paid \$52.65 for a carcass (steer three years old) weighing 585 pounds, or 9 cents per pound, cash, and the hide was bought for \$7.00. The buyer claimed that it was the best beef he ever handled. Potatoes are retailing for 70 cents per bushel. The flow of milk is increasing, and output is easily sold. The local milk companies report good business. A few farms are for sale, and a number of farmers are moving to the Western Provinces. Draft horses 1,200 pounds and up are in demand just now for the construction of the Eastern Railway of Nova Scotia, at least that part of it between Dartmouth and Dean's Settlement—about seventy miles. It is said that the new railroad, when completed, will run through a fine farming country.

Farmers are taking keen interest in the standing field-crop competitions, and are giving more attention to the cultivation of grain. A good exhibit of seed was shown at the sixth annual Seed Fair. In wheat and oats (White Russian Wheat and Banner oats), the first honors went to Ronald Chisholm, of Briley Brook, Antigonish County, he also winning the Broadfoot Cup for the second time. Mr. Chisholm has already taken several first prizes with his grain, at the Amherst Fair in December, 1911, and at the January Provincial Seed Fair, at Truro, 1912. Potatoes were of excellent quality.

The price of seed being so high of late years, farmers are endeavoring to raise their own supply, and are making good. J.M.

Antigonish Co., N. S.

Is the Field Horsetail Poisonous?

The specimen of plant sent to this office by Mr. Mason is the common Field Horsetail, also called the Small Scouring Rush (*Equisetum arvense*). It is getting common throughout the country, and is particularly noticeable along the railways, its light spores doubtless being picked up and disseminated by passing trains. It flourishes in moist fields if its perennial roots or root-stocks are given a chance to get established. Its pale-yellowish, spore-bearing stems live but a brief time in early summer, and these are succeeded by the sterile, much-branched, green plants, which are more conspicuous, and may grow rank enough to become an impurity in hay.

Mr. Mason inquires whether it is more dangerous eaten green than dry. I have no knowledge of stock ever having been injured by eating it in the fresh state. An allied plant has the reputation in Europe of poisoning horses eating much of it in hay. The United States Department of Agriculture received statements from two of the New England States of supposed poisoning of sheep and horses from eating the American plant named above. About ten years ago, Messrs. Chestnut and Wilcox scolded the effects of Horsetail diet upon a rabbit. The conclusion they reached is that its deleterious action, which was very marked, was due solely to the mechanical effects of the harsh, scouring stems upon the alimentary tract. As far as they felt justified in going was to say that hay containing a considerable proportion of the weed should be fed sparingly or cautiously. Any experience that Mr. Mason or any other reader has had on this subject, if communicated, would be of general interest.

Automobile vs. Traction Engine.

Editor "The Farmer's Advocate":

It is not at all peculiar that in every case in which the right of the traction engine to the use of the highway is brought into question, the automobile should at once be cited as an instance of a machine, more destructive of highways than a traction engine could possibly be, driven with larger disregard of the right, not to say the lives, of others, and yet having practically undisputed use of our highways. True, here and there are instances of unwarranted arrest at the hands of petty officers having too huge a sense of their own importance, but, as compared with the number of such machines in everyday use, these are too few for serious notice. And, while no one will dispute the fact that the automobile is a very large factor in the destruction of our rural highways, no one seems to be willing to consider the elimination of the automobile because of it. The sentiment is rather in favor of making the road to withstand the demands of automobile traffic, and much time and money is being spent to achieve this result. And this is as it should be, for the automobile already far outnumbers the horse-drawn pleasure vehicle. While men of means who love the horse for his own sake will never give him up, they will still have an automobile, and people of moderate means who never would have considered horse ownership for pleasure are falling over themselves to buy automobiles. Also, the farmer is finding the automobile to be an actual necessity, and what is a good road for autos is equally good for the horse. No wonder, then, that the automobile is having its own way with the roads.

On the other hand, on the few occasions that the traction engine really does hurt the road, the damage is plainly noticeable. It shows at once. Unlike the insidious but constant and rapid wear occasioned by the automobile, the whole detriment is accomplished and is measurable at once, and the steady deterioration from the automobile does not measure up in the town official's mind with the occasional ravage of the heavier machine. It will take education to change the point of view of some of these legal suasion for others. The subject is a good one for the attention of Threshermen's Associations everywhere. The plain fact is that the threshing engines have equal rights on the highway with other users. It remains with the owners to secure universal recognition of these rights, never lying down, always ready to fight when they are questioned.

Peel Co., Ont. ERNEST L. DAVIDSON.

Cultivate Cheerfulness.

Editor "The Farmer's Advocate":

In an editorial in "The Farmer's Advocate" of March 14th we are told that "the milk of human kindness tendeth to abundance of the milk that bringeth in the cheques."

I am of the opinion that "the milk of human kindness" can be used to advantage not only in the treatment of our dairy cows but in dealing with every living thing about the place, from pussy lying under the stove to wifey working over the stove.

In dealing with animals, this does not necessarily mean abundance of feed alone. Did you ever notice that when you go into the barn on a morning when things do not seem to be going just right, and you order the horses to "get around there!" as if they had done something for which they should be punished, they will begin to step over with their heads high in the air, and they will give a sniff which if it could be translated would say, "What have we done now?" Then if you go on down into the stables and shout at the cows in the same rough voice, have you noticed how they put up their noses and show the whites of their eyes, as if wondering what awful thing were coming to them.

Such men are common all over the country, unfortunately, but not for a moment can we believe that they are the ones that get the most out of life. Their stock never seems to do quite so well as that of the man who always speaks quietly. It needs no argument to prove that cows which are yelled at and pushed and scolded will show their resentment in a way most potent to the farmer by holding up part of their milk, and it will be the very best part too. The scales and the testing machines have proved this. Both quantity and quality suffer when the cows are roughly treated.

The horse that is misused never gives his master the confidence and good service that a properly-treated animal does. He always stands looking out of the corner of his eye to see what move his driver is going to make next.

Then, again, the man who is habitually cross with his cows and horses is very apt to treat the members of his household the same way, and if there is anything that will make home-life miserable it is this habit of speaking sharply to everybody one meets.

Look at this from any standpoint you like, it is the cheerful man or woman who wins out in

the end. Even hens know when they are kindly spoken to, and cats and dogs. There is something in the heart of every living thing that responds to cheerful words and kindly ways; and they cost far less than the harsh words and manners so many of us have, either consciously or unconsciously acquired. C. C. S.

Carleton Co., Ont.

P. E. Island Letter.

Up to almost the middle of March we had close winter weather, with a very heavy covering of snow on the fields. About the middle of the month soft weather set in, and for a week there were great freshets, making travelling very difficult, and leaving the fields quite bare. It looks bad for the clover on the new meadows just now, as the frost is out three to four inches. Succeeding frost will be sure to break the root, unless we should have a fall of snow to cover it up.

Butchers are scouring the country for fat cattle just now, and it looks as if beef would be at a premium this spring. Seed oats are also in strong demand, and sell from 60 to 75 cents per bushel. Much of the Islands export of oats this spring will be for seed in Nova Scotia and New Brunswick.

From February 28th to March 14th there were four seed shows held here—two in King's County (one at Souris and the other in Georgetown). These were the smaller shows, but brought out strong competition. The samples shown were excellent, and the large attendance, notwithstanding unfavorable weather and bad roads, showed that farmers have awakened to the necessity of using only the best seed if they are to have paying crops. The Provincial Seed Fair was held in Summerside, and happened on good weather, which resulted in a big attendance. This show is always improving, and exhibitors are ever on the increase. The samples of all seeds are so well cleaned and most of them so true to type in the different varieties that the judges have some difficulty in placing the awards. Better oats, wheat, potatoes, peas cannot be got together anywhere in Canada. The domestic science exhibit in connection with this show occupies a building all by itself, and has grown to great proportions under the management of the ladies. It was a magnificent display in the art of bread-making. Hundreds of homemade loaves, all of which appeared to us to be about perfect, together with a vast array of fancy cake, pies, biscuits, and the hundreds of tempting samples of fruits and vegetables preserved in glass, gave ample proof that the P. E. Island ladies were experts in the culinary art.

The Central Seed Fair, held in Charlottetown, was a grand closing to the circuit, and was in some particulars the best show of all. The management secured the market building, and had ample room to display their splendid exhibits to advantage. This show, as well as the Provincial, was open to the whole Island, and competitors in all the other shows were here. Competition was very close and the samples the very choicest. The expert judges had little criticism to make of any of the exhibits.

The domestic science department was also a very strong feature of this show, and in connection there was also a large exhibit of poultry of all the standard varieties.

The great feature of both of the larger shows were the educational meetings held through the day.

These seed shows with their educational meetings seem to come nearer the people, and attract their attention to better farm practices than the big fall shows where there is so much of the amusement element, such as horse-racing and fake shows in evidence to take their attention from anything useful or instructive. W. S.

A Supervisor of Government Farms.

An appointment which has been on the tapis for some time became a reality last week, when the Ontario Legislature announced that S. E. Todd, B. S. A., a graduate of the Ontario Agricultural College, and for the past two years District Representative of the Ontario Department of Agriculture in Lambton County, where he made an unqualified success of the varied work connected with his office, has been made Supervisor of all the farms connected with Government Institutions throughout the Province, comprising some 1,000 or 5,000 acres, his new duties to commence at once. Mr. Todd's new work will be largely of an advisory character. As an agricultural expert, he is looked upon as one of the best in the country. He revolutionized Lambton County agriculture, and we look for great things in his management of the Government farms.