

lowest cost per pound to be given the prize. If desirable, prizes might also be given to the cow producing milk or solids not fat the cheapest; but we think all interests would be served by confining them to butter-fat only, as the other products of the milk are based upon it.

A test conducted somewhat after this plan would be simple, easily understood by every person who keeps cows and quite within the possibility at a two weeks' exhibition. Of course there are other details to be considered, such as allowances for period of lactation, age of cows, etc. Then it would be necessary to have one building devoted exclusively to the test, and to have some competent persons to take charge of it. We would suggest that the test be under the supervision of Prof. Dean or Mr. Day, of the Ontario Agricultural College, and that at least two second or third-year students of the college who have given some special attention to the feeding and caring for milch cows be engaged to take charge of the details such as weighing the feed, milk, etc. If it were possible to conduct a test upon the same basis as at Omaha all well and good. But as the analysis of the feed would involve an extra amount of work it would be better to conduct it in as simple a manner as possible, for the first year at least, and the simplest way is to confine the test to cost of production only. It is something practical we want, and what could be more practical than to find out which cow or breed of cows will produce the cheapest?

Farmers' Institutes for 1898-99

The annual bulletin issued by Mr. F. W. Hodson, Superintendent of Farmers' Institutes, containing the list of meetings and speakers at the local institutes for the season of 1898-99, is now ready for distribution. The meetings arranged for number 516. The demand for meetings is greater than ever, and it has been found impossible to grant all the meetings asked for. This indicates the growing enthusiasm and interest in this work from year to year.

In the Superintendent's announcement it is pointed out that, owing to the political campaign last spring, a number of the meetings advertised for the latter part of February had to be cancelled. This caused a loss of membership and a reduction in the number of meetings held. Notwithstanding all this, however, the year ending June 30th, 1898, was the most successful in the history of the Farmers' Institutes of this province. The total membership on the 31st of December, 1897, was 15,707, while on the 31st of July, 1898, it was 16,351. According to this rate of progress it is safe to predict a membership of upwards of 20,000 before the end of 1899.

During 1897, 658 meetings were held, 3,270 addresses delivered, and 126,094 persons attended the meetings, which is nearly 1000 more than in 1896. Through excursions arranged for by local institutes 30,000 persons visited the farm at the Ontario Agricultural College during the summer. It is the intention to have this branch of the work more systematized another year. During the series of meetings announced in the bulletin, the staff of the college will not be employed as speakers. Owing to changes in the college year these gentlemen will not hereafter be available for Farmers' Institutes during December, January and February, but will be during the month of June. Nevertheless a good staff of speakers have been secured, who will cover every branch of farm practice pretty thoroughly. Among the speakers this year will be J. S. Woodward, formerly Superintendent of Institutes for New York State.

With this programme of meetings and speakers there is no reason why every Institute meeting should not be well-attended and of great practical benefit to the locality in which it is held. A great many people, however, associated with local Institute work seem to lose sight of the fact that a successful meeting can only be secured by every local officer doing his duty. It makes no difference how good the staff of speakers is, if the meeting is not properly

advertised, and, if every effort is not put forth to get the people out, the best results cannot be obtained. The Superintendent recognizes this and stipulates that where the local officers employ "slipshod methods" no speakers will be sent. This is nothing but fair to all concerned. Where the local officers will not help themselves they do not deserve to be helped by others. Besides, it is unfair to a delegation of speakers and to the Farmers Institute system of the province, which supplies the delegation free of cost, for the local officers not to do all in their power to make the meeting a success. It is gratifying to know, however, that the local arrangements for meetings are being improved upon every year and it is to be hoped that when the present series is concluded no delinquent local officers will need to be reported to the Superintendent.

Plank-Frame Barns

Plank-frame barns are coming into use in some sections of the Eastern States. Some do not believe that these barns will be found permanently strong and secure. However, none of them have stood long enough yet to determine how they compare in strength with the timber frames. It would seem, however, that if the plank frame is securely made it ought to be as durable as the timber frame.

Mr. J. A. Woodward, of Penn., in the *Rural New Yorker*, in describing the building of this kind of barn, says: "There are no steps in the work of erection; it is rather a weaving together continuously one plank at a time. There



Devonshire cow, the property of W. J. Rudd, Eden Mills, Ont. First prize-winner at the Toronto Industrial Fair, 1898.

is no such thing as putting a bent together and then raising it as under the old square-timber system. The outside plank of the corner may be set up in place, toe-nailed at the bottom to the sill, and stay-lathed. Then a single plank of each of the other parts in that end of the building may be set up in the same way, and one or two of the nail girts (horizontal pieces) may be nailed on. The several planks of the post, the brace, and both the upper and lower ties are all interspaced, and these are nailed at each and every joint or crossing, and thus all the numbers are woven together, and the frame grows increasingly rigid. With each added plank the nails should correspondingly increase in length."

Mr. S. G. Gilcrest, of Ohio, in describing a barn of this kind he built recently, says: "This frame is made entirely of planks—2x4, 2x6, 2x10, and 2x12 inches, but very few of the latter size, only the collar beams. The posts are 2x8, the joist beams 2x10, and the braces are of the lighter timbers. This barn is 40 x 80 feet, with 24-foot posts. There is a basement eight feet high throughout the entire building, with a 12-foot driveway through the centre the short way. This basement is used exclusively for live stock, all the space above is for hay, and there is no timber, from the floor to the cows, in the way of handling it.