

factories, and the skimmings from the sugar-boilers, the last, doubtless, containing a fair proportion of spent-bone-ash.

*Dakota crops.*—It is really marvellous that men should patiently go on farming lands that at their best cannot yield much profit; but when we read, as we do in the Rural New Yorker, of a man cultivating 300 acres of land in the Great West, the yield of wheat on which is only 6 bushels to the acre, we begin to think that the American is not so shrewd as we have always thought him to be.

The farmer in question uses the most modern implements, and returns his cost of cultivation as extremely low. Labour, from first to last, he gives as 75 cents; a bushel of seed, 50 cents; interest on purchase of land, etc., 75 cents; in all, about \$3.09 an acre, nothing being allowed for taxes and general expenses. Now, 6 bushels of wheat brought him in, this past season, \$3 12: where are the profits? And yet he says that, as he does a good deal of the work himself, he gets good wages! Is it worth any man's while to cultivate 300 acres of wheat for the sake of earning the wages of a day-labourer? The English farmer often grows on 45 acres of land as many bushels of wheat as this Dakota farmer grew on his 300. The latter had far better learn how to farm, when he might grow his 1,800 bushels on 100 acres, and let the rest of his land run down to pasture.

*Christmas-beef.*—A nice little supply of meat was sent to the London markets for the Christmas trade. The total quantity was 11,018 gross tons (12,340 of our tons) against 9,668 in 1897, and 11,810 tons in 1896. The Christmas trade lasts for five days, from Monday, December 19th, to Saturday, December 24th.

*Yield of poor land.*—Prof. Wrightson, the well known head of the Agricultural College of Down-ton, near Salisbury, Eng., whose large farm is situated on the downs, i. e., on chalk land, holds the same opinion as that we have often put forward in lectures, and on paper; viz., that crops, in general, are more a question of cultivation and manure than of the quality of the soil.

Mr. Wrightson says: "If ever good crops are to be taken as proof of good land, all I can say is that great injustice will be done to hundreds of enterprising tenants, and this Mr. C. S. Read

knows perfectly well. I have plenty of land, which can under management produce 19 or 20 sacks (78 to 80 bushels) of oats to the acre, not worth more than 5s. an acre rent. It is, as Mr. Read surmises, on the chalk, and is not soon affected by dry weather. It is poor, but it is kind and grateful and easy to till. It is safe-cropping land, capable of growing any kind of crop when under fair management, but soon runs out, and is readily reduced to absolute incapacity to grow corn. It is done almost entirely by cake feeding. If the matter is gone into, it will be seen that the extra expense attending the management is quite equivalent to a rent of £2 per acre. For instance, it is close-folded with sheep, which, for the sake of argument, receive 1 lb. of cake and corn per day. Further, and also for the sake of argument, we shall assume 250 sheep to pass over one acre in one week. That is, there is consumed on every acre  $250 \times 7 = 1,750$  lb. of cotton or linseed cake. That is, 15 cwt. of cake fed on the acre. Am I wrong? Let us try it again; 1 lb. is not a great deal too much. Two hundred and fifty sheep is not a very heavy stock for 1 acre of turnips for one week, but if it is, try it your own way. Now, if we say half-a-ton of cake instead of three-quarters, and if we assume £6 as the price per ton of mixed linseed and cotton cake, there is £3 per acre spent in cake which, on good land, would not have been necessary. Hence the cake is a sort of equivalent for rent. You pay rent, I spend cake, and I am no better off than you."

You see by this, that "there is nothing like sheep"; and if at some future time, when the market for dairy-goods begins to fail us, our people could be induced to grow rape and vetches, feeding them off with sheep eating cake, or grain, or pulse, they would soon find out the benefit of the change.

*Artificial manures.*—Nitrate of soda and sulphate of ammonia have in England, at last changed places; the latter, owing to its supply and demand being now about balanced, has maintained a level of price about 20 to 25 per cent over that of nitrate, whereas, two years ago, it was worth 10 per cent less than nitrate, which, as the sulphate contained at least 4 per cent more nitrogen than the nitrate was an abnormal state of things. The truth is, that nitrogen in every form, except in nitrate of soda, has become enhanced in price.

Very little Peruvian guano is shipped nowadays.