

Notes for Farmers.

The American secretary of agriculture, Mr. Wilson, recently delivered an address on the subject of "Irrigation," from which we take the following extracts: Mr. Wilson said:—"The husbanding of our waters that go to waste where the snow melts in the mountains, through government agency, is a new departure for which we may thank President Roosevelt. All other influences combined would have failed to secure the legislation. It was a wise movement. It will result in making homes for millions more people. It will make markets for manufacturers and business for commerce. It will help to balance off the growth of our cities. It will result in producing the hundred million dollars' worth of sugar we now buy abroad. It will do all this and much more, and still leave large areas that cannot be irrigated. "After we get what we can from the man who studies the weather and the man who studies the plant, we must turn to the scientist who studies the soil. This is a new line of research that has utterly been neglected by educators and scientists, as far as a practical application of facts to everyday life is concerned. Our soils are mixtures of original rocks that have been disintegrated by the action of agencies that have operated through long periods of time and are still at work. Water has been the carrying system and is still at work above ground and beneath the surface. One of your beautiful valleys seems to have similar soils all over it, but it is certain to have as wide a variety as the mountains from which the material came. The schoolmen have neglected inquiry into soil variation, soil moisture and soil composition, from which plants get nutriment. The whole field lies fallow and awaits the coming of the student of soils and soil moisture.

"We are studying methods of applying water to crops to determine which are the most economical of labor and water, which produce the best results in crops and in the condition of the soil. Our experiments to determine what quantities of water produce the largest returns have already been mentioned. "Experiments in this country and elsewhere have shown that the stage of the growth of the plant at which water is applied has a great deal to do with the crop produced. The experiments show that water applied to grain crops at certain stages tend to make them produce a larger relative quantity of straw than they otherwise would; water applied at other stages tends, to increase the production of seed. Water applied to root crops at certain stages makes them run to tops, and at other stages it goes to enlarge the roots. The time of applying water to beets affects their sugar contents, and water applied to potatoes at the wrong time may ruin the crop. All these things are well known in a general way, but they are merely suggestive of the possibilities of a careful, scientific study of the methods and times of applying water to crops. "It may be possible that regulating the time of applying water to crops and the amounts applied will be found to be one of the greatest agents in eliminating undesirable qualities and perpetuating valuable ones in all our crops raised under irrigation. The possibilities along this line are unlimited, as they are along all lines of agricultural practice. "Farmers cannot, as a rule, make these experiments for the improvements of the crops themselves. They are dependent upon the returns from their fields for their living, and must therefore stick to methods and to crops which have proven to be successful. Progress in agriculture, both in the arid region and elsewhere, must depend very largely upon the work of the government in testing new ideas and introducing those which prove beneficial.

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ALCOHOL DRINKS

PHYSICAL EFFECTS.—Very interesting are some of the conclusions arrived at in the recently-published "Fourth Report of the Committee of Fifty on various aspects of the Liquor Question, covering the 'Physiological Aspects of the Liquor Problem.'" Edited by John S. Billings, Houghton, Mifflin & Co., Boston. The investigations of this committee, which was organized ten years ago, are scientific and thorough and therefore reliable. The experiments of Dr. Abel lead him to the following conclusions, with which the committee agree, viz.: Alcohol in moderate quantities does not appreciably affect the action of the heart itself, either in the way of stimulation or depression. (In very large quantities, such as result in helpless intoxication, alcohol is a direct and powerful depressant of the heart.) Nor does it affect the walls of the arteries and veins, nor the arterial blood-pressure. In large quantities the action is depression upon the nerve centers which control the arteries and the action of the heart. Alcohol stimulates the respiratory functions, highly flavored wines, etc., producing more pronounced action than plain alcohol. The action of alcohol on the nervous system is one of its most important and most unfortunate characteristics. It is this action which leads to the "craving" for drink.

Alcohol stimulates muscular work, but a paralyzing action always succeeds the stimulation, and further doses do not renew the stimulation equally; but some depressing effect also follows the stimulating use of tea, coffee, or kola. The action of alcohol on the brain is the prime cause of alcoholic consumption. "Elderly people and invalids may receive benefit from moderate drinking, and there are many, in whom the exacting duties and friction of life cause mental tension and overwrought nerves, who find a good restorative in a glass of wine taken with dinner at close of day; but the use of alcohol is not a necessity of social life, and there is no reason why alcohol should not be abolished from the world, and the craving which it satisfies turned into some other channel."

AS A FOOD.—Professor Atwater calls attention to the great dangers of excess, moderate drinking leading thereto, but seems to prove that while "not food in the sense that bread and meat are food," alcohol is, nevertheless, a food in the sense that starch is, being of the substances "which, when taken into the body, either build up tissue or yield energy." Alcohol undoubtedly yields energy by furnishing a fuel to the human engine, and to a certain extent preventing the breaking down and wasting of the proteid bodies, which are the true nutrients of the human system, but "the preponderance of evil resulting from the excessive use of alcohol had led many to feel that any statement regarding the moderate use of alcohol is reprehensible." He adds: "If I may be permitted the expression of a personal opinion, it is that people in health, and especially young people, act wisely in abstaining from alcoholic beverages; but I cannot believe the cause of temperance in general, or the welfare of the individual, is promoted by basing arguments against the use of alcohol on anything less than attested facts."

TEMPERANCE DRINKS.—The paper on "temperance drinks" is interesting, if not as important as some. The statistics show an enormous consumption of these beverages; for instance, in Massachusetts at least 300,000 bottles of Ayer's Sarsaparilla are sold annually, "and as this contains over 26 per cent. of alcohol, it is clear that many are partaking pretty freely of an alcoholic drink without perhaps being aware of it." A very large variety of drinks containing a greater percentage of alcohol than ordinary wines and beers are consumed in rigorous total abstinence circles, one of its foremost advocates permitting her picture to be used as an advertisement of one of the most alcoholic of these drinks. Tables give a list of forty-two such preparations containing from 6 per cent. as a minimum to 42 per cent. as a maximum of alcohol. Mentioning a few at random, we find "Paine's Celery Compound," 21 per cent.; "Hoodland's German Bitters," "entirely free from alcoholic stimulants," 25 per cent. alcohol; "Hostetter's Stomach Bitters," 24 per cent.; "Warner's Sarsaparilla," 26 per cent.; "Ayer's Sarsaparilla," 26 per cent.; "Fiebig Company's Beef Tonic," 23 per cent.

ALCOHOL AND DISEASE.—Dr. Welch's report on the pathological effects of alcohol concludes the second volume. It demonstrates that "alcohol in sufficient quantities is a poison to all living organisms, both animal and vegetable." The use of concentrated alcohol, or of excessive amounts of alcoholic beverages, produces injurious effects upon the stomach, but in many instances, "even after the prolonged use of diluted alcohol the stomach appears nearly normal, both to the naked eye and under the microscope." "Long continued excessive use of alcoholic drinks is by far the most common and important (though indirect) cause of cirrhosis of the liver in human beings." Many diseases of the nervous system are the direct result of excessive alcoholic stimulation. A fatal termination of Bright's disease, apoplexy, paralysis, insanity, pneumonia and tuberculosis is predisposed by excessive alcoholic stimulation. Many persons drink beer, wine, and spirits in moderation throughout a long life without apparent impairment of health. Others are extremely susceptible. There is no question as to the injurious effects of a continued use of even small quantities of alcoholic liquors. One of the most important effects of alcoholic indulgence is a lowered ability to resist disease. "Physicians recognize the graver prognosis of pneumonia, cholera, erysipelas, etc., in persons who habitually drink to excess. The belief that those who indulge freely in alcoholic liquors thereby acquire a certain degree of protection from tuberculosis is completely discredited."

GENERAL CONCLUSIONS.—Effects of moderate or occasional use of alcoholic drinks differ with individuals, age, occupation, climate, etc. With the majority of occasional drinkers and moderate drinkers no especial effect upon health seems to be observed by themselves or their physicians, but in some such cases drinking is harmful; in a few it is thought to be beneficial. Eighty per cent. of the leading brain workers of the United States are alcoholic drinkers occasionally or regularly, in moderation. The use of such drinks to stimulate mental effort gives, on the whole, bad results. Even occasional or moderate use is likely to be harmful to young persons, mainly because of the danger of leading to excess. Among diseased or infirm persons over fifty years of age, while sometimes useful, alcoholic beverages should be taken, if at all, with the least meal of the day. The special effects are due to the alcohol contained, and other ingredients are of comparatively small importance. "Fine old whiskies and brandies" are nearly as alike to produce injurious effects as are the cheaper grades, if taken in the same quantities. In moderate quantities, beer, wine and diluted whiskey are in a certain sense foods, but they are seldom used for food purposes; mainly for their peculiar effects on the brain. In large quantities, and for some persons even in moderate quantities, they are poison. Alcoholic drinks in moderate quantities may be useful as restoratives in fatigue after work is done, but often produce depression and a harmful effect when used just before or during labor, physical or mental. They are useless as preventives of infectious or contagious diseases; on the contrary, they appear to lessen the power of the organism to resist the cause of such disease. They are useless to prevent fatigue and effects of cold, and are almost always a useless expense. Their use in excess is the cause of much disease, suffering and poverty and crime.

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Society Directory.

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ST. PATRICK'S T. A. & D. SOCIETY.—Meets on the second Sunday of every month in St. Patrick's Hall, 92 St. Alexander St. immediately after Vespers. Committee of Management meets in same hall the first Tuesday of every month at 8 p.m. Rev. M. J. McKenna, Rev. President; W. P. Doyle, 1st Vice-President; Jno. P. Gunning, Secretary, 716 St. Antoine street, St. Henri.

ST. ANN'S T. A. & B. SOCIETY, established 1863.—Rev. Director, Rev. Father McPhail; President, D. Aallery, M.P.; Sec., J. F. Quinn, 625 St. Dominique street; M. J. Ryan, treasurer, 18 St. Augustin street. Meets on the second Sunday of every month, in St. Ann's Hall, corner Young and Ottawa streets, at 8.30 p.m.

ST. ANN'S YOUNG MEN'S SOCIETY organized 1885.—Meets in its hall, 157 Ottawa street, on the first Sunday of each month, at 2.30 p.m. Spiritual Adviser, Rev. Father Flynn, C.S.S.R.; President, R. J. Byrne; Treasurer, Thomas O'Connell; Rec.-Sec., Robt. J. Hart.

A.O.H. LADIES' AUXILIARY, Division No. 5. Organized Oct. 10th, 1901. Meetings are held in St. Patrick's Hall, 92 St. Alexander, on the first Sunday of each month at 2.30 p.m., on the third Thursday at 8 p.m. President, Miss Annie Donovan; vice-president, Mrs. Sarah Allen; recording secretary, Miss Rose Ward, 61 Young street; financial secretary, Miss Emma Doyle, 776 Palace street; treasurer, Mrs. Charlotte Berrington; chaplain, Rev. Father McPhail.

A.O.H. DIVISION NO. 6 meets on the second and fourth Thursdays of each month, at 816 St. Lawrence Main street. Officers: W. H. Turner, President; P. McCarl, Vice-President; J. Emmet Quinn, Recording Secretary, 931 St. Denis street; James Scullion, Treasurer; Joseph Turner, Financial Secretary, 1000 St. Denis street.

C.M.B.A. OF CANADA, BRANCH 26.—(Organized, 13th November, 1873.—Branch 26 meets at St. Patrick's Hall, 92 St. Alexander St., on every Monday of each month. The regular meetings for the transaction of business are held on the 2nd and 4th Mondays of each month, at 8 p.m. Spiritual Adviser, Rev. M. Callaghan; Chancellor, F.J. Sears; President, P.J. Darcey; Rec.-Sec., P. J. McDonagh; Fin.-Secretary, Jas. J. Costigan; Treasurer, J. H. Feeley, Jr.; Medical Advisers, Drs. H. J. Harrison, E. J. O'Connell and G. H. Merrill.

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NOTES

BROWNSON CENTRAL. Bishop Farley, of New York, at a meeting of the in that city, held on 5th October instant, arrangements were completed for the celebration of the centenary of the birth of the late A. Brownson. A monument to Brownson, erected in Sherman and Amsterdam Avenues has been completed, an exhibition in the main Catholic Club. The monument is six inches high, and a monument fifteen feet high will be placed shortly. It is intended that the day shall be important to all circles, and the Club the leading clerical authorities of New York to Certainly if ever a monument to Brownson. But to have a memorial bronze erected his work as an imperishable monument rarest character. Truly great; he was great dark days when he was about, like a giant lost in the night, for the light that he needed—the light and the foothold of truth he succeeded in securing towered high above all the temporaries in the domain of controversy. Brownson's "An encyclopaedia of Catholicism. When the celebratory place we will be happy to event and to thus revive Brownson's wonderful life more wonderful works.

THE CHURCH IN AMERICA. Urban Gohier, a French Jesuit, has just issued a volume in which he discusses the important of the Catholic Church in America. He gives some very strong facts by strong statistics to the strength of the Church in the World. Mr. Gohier must have a very careful and exhaustive of his subject. From his will extract a few passages: "The Catholic Church in the States numbered 44,500,000 in 1790, to-day numbers 100,000, or more. To this now add 6,500,000 of Catholics in the Philippines and 1,000,000 in Porto Rico. The territory of the United States alone supports seventeen Archbishops, 17 Bishops, almost 11,000 more than 5,000 chapels, 500 officiating priests, 13 Catholic seminaries, 163 boys, 629 colleges for girls (included), 8,400 parochial schools, 250 orphanages, and nearly other various institutions. The United States alone supports Peter's Pence to Rome than Catholic countries together. This would be still stronger Mr. Gohier taken in Canada added thereto not only our population, but above all the number of our churches, colleges, universities, and various institutions of charity and of But, as it is, it suffices to great growth of the Church on the continent.

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