

## Communications.

### A Gopher Remedy.

A correspondent sends the following: "As the gopher plague seems to be spreading to all parts of the country it is about time to call a halt, and to take active measures against this small pest. Here is a remedy which I have never known to fail—it is 'the dead medicine.'

Take a small tin can—an empty condensed milk can is about the right thing—and fill it about half full of warm grease, then add two tablespoonfuls of white sugar and stir until it is dissolved, then add, while the grease is still warm, one half bottle (50 grains by weight) of pure strychnine and keep stirring until the grease is cold and has congealed. The cooling process may be hastened by placing the can on ice or partly immersed in cold water.

The grease should be about one-third tallow and two-thirds lard—this is about the right proportion.

Now take the can of prepared grease and place it on the prairie where gophers are plentiful and it won't be long till the gophers, who are very fond of grease and sugar, come around and help themselves. As soon as they begin to feel sick they will crowd to the nearest hole and die. The destruction is simply terrible.

The cans should be occasionally moved around on to new ground. Ten cans should be enough for a quarter section of land.

Many people will object to using strychnine in this wholesale manner thinking that it would be dangerous to stock, etc. Well, stock can easily be kept away from wheat fields, but there is no danger, however, to stock. Cats and dogs should be locked up during the poisoning season.

The best time to poison gophers is when they first come out in the spring; they can then literally be exterminated.

In mixing the medicine one-half the quantity of strychnine given above may be used, but it is not so deadly."

### Freight Service on Deloraine Branch.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE COMMERCIAL:

SIR:—The present freight train service on the Deloraine branch is certainly not calculated to be in the interest of the merchants, settlers and public generally or if so intended falls very far short of the mark.

There are no regular freight trains. Sometimes we get one train per week, sometimes not as often. But the worst phase of the matter is we can never tell when we will get a freight. Hence merchants and others desiring to have goods come over the road or to ship goods cannot tell when they can count on a freight. If they order goods expecting to receive the same in reasonable time, their order may be a day later in reaching the shipper than it should to catch the first freight which will cause a delay of from ten days to two weeks in getting goods a fraction over one hundred miles.

Surely this is a most unjust state of affairs. If the traffic will not admit of more than one freight train per week why not let us have a scheduled train once a week. Shippers can then govern themselves accordingly, and as traffic is so very light there cannot be any urgent demand for running the only freight we do get on Sundays as has lately been done.

Trusting those interested and particularly the Winnipeg board of trade will take the matter up with the railway authorities.

MERCHANT.

An Eastern exchange says: "Winnipeg has sent a carload of butter to England as an experiment. If it is Mennonite butter it will create a sensation in England."

## For The Grocery and Produce Trade.

The "boom" in eggs in the United States has flattened out, and prices in Eastern Canada markets, which were very high in consequence of the demand from the States, are now lower. Prices dropped 6 to 8c per dozen in one day at New York, Buffalo and other points, owing to large receipts from the south-west.

Canadian refined petroleum has made another advance of 4c. a gallon in the east. This is the second marked increase in price within a few weeks. Crude oil is scarce in the United States and Canada and refined oils are being forced up.

The past few days has witnessed quite an advance in the price of hogs, says the Toronto Canadian Grocer. This bullish tendency is due to the fact that earlier in the season the hog crop of Canada was a great deal over-estimated. Besides this the export trade to Great Britain this winter has been extraordinarily large, stocks having been pretty well cleared up to supply the demand. Now the run of hogs is over and packers find that there are practically no hogs in the country, which is an unusual state of affairs at this time of the year. No wonder then that prices have gone up rapidly, and that the prospects are that they will continue to climb the pole.

Holders of dairy butter are threatened with heavy losses, says the Montreal Trade Bulletin. A lot of 600 packages of Manitoba butter has just been received at Montreal which is offered at 7c per lb. In the Perth and Ronfrow districts, where it was said no dairy butter was held of any consequence, holders are offering it by the car load. The same thing has occurred in the dairy sections west of Toronto, car lots being offered on this market by different western shippers for sale, while others have written to parties here to know if they will handle it. Good, well kept western dairy is selling here in jobbing lots at 10c, while poorer grades have sold at 7c to 8c. These prices mean severe losses to owners. A lot of Manitoba roll butter has also been received at Montreal in big dry goods boxes, weighing 250 to 300 pounds each.

The English correspondent of the Montreal Trade Bulletin says: "A patent is said to have been taken out for a method of preserving butter, which enables it to be shipped from the Antipodes without refrigerator accommodation, and one ton shipped from Victoria has been already consigned to a firm in London who report in excellent condition. This shows a saving of \$9 a ton in freight and freezing charges,—truly a big thing for Australians, if it be true. But if it is good for them it is good for Canadians. A preservative was first used in this trade, but it was so much objected to by the trade and such an outcry raised, that it had to be abandoned. If this is the same sort of thing, it is no good."

Money has been lost this season by holders of cheese as well as butter. Last fall buyers were paying 9 1/2 to 10c in Ontario for cheese, at the factories. Now they cannot sell for more than they paid last fall, which means a loss of the carrying charges and expenses of handling, equal to at least 1c per pound.

The Pillow and Hersey Manufacturing Co. of Montreal, held their annual meeting recently, the president occupying the chair. The report of the past year's operations was submitted to the meeting, and, being found satisfactory, was unanimously adopted. The new board of directors is composed of the following gentlemen: J. A. Pillow, President; John R. Hersey, vice-president; John McDonald, C. R. Hosmer and A. H. Hersey.

## Irrigation in Dakota.

A bill has been introduced into the South Dakota legislature granting to counties the right to issue bonds for the purpose of constructing irrigation canals. It is proposed to empower counties to issue bonds for this purpose in amounts not exceeding 15 per cent of their assessed valuation. This is a most practical solution of this perplexing problem. The expense of constructing such works is too heavy to be borne by individuals, the consequence being that the control of the irrigation works, which are now regarded as essential to the prosperity of the state, must fall to some division of the local government or pass into the hands of a corporation organized for that purpose. The latter alternative is to be avoided if possible, for the good of the country. Such irrigation companies as are now in operation have been almost uniformly profitable to those operating them, and the extra expense connected with the maintenance of such companies would be saved to the consumers by county ownership. The example of south Dakota could be followed by Nebraska and Kansas, with advantage to those states. —Minneapolis Farm Implements

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