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**EDITORIAL** 

#### ENGLISH - SPARROW NUISANCE.

The article on the English sparrow, published in the Farm Department of "The Farmer's Advocate" for November 19th, has elicited protest from a Bruce County subscriber, who seems to think the sparrow does more good than harm, or, at any rate, that it should be spared on sentimental and humanitarian grounds. We do not wish to be thought heartless. Our sympathy goes out freely to all creatures of the earth and air, except snakes, rodents and vermin. We can even feel interested in the dingy sparrow. Undoubtedly, it performs a valuable service as a scavenger of yards and streets, just as our friend, the pussy cat, helps to reduce the rat and mouse population. But there is such a thing as having too muchor too many-of a good thing. When cats multiply unduly they reduce the make of butter, and help themselves to some other things to which they have questionable title. So with sparrows. Their prolificacy is responsible for an undesirable excess of their kind, which, hovering about the farm buildings and crops, befouling roofs and sometimes fodder, and helping themselves to grain, prove a filthy and expensive nuisance. It has been calculated that the progeny of a single pair of sparrows might, if unmolested, in ten years amount to over 275 billion. Their commonly-credited penchant for molesting and driving away other birds, notably swallows, is another point against them, while the recently-voiced suspicion that they may be a means of spreading the contagion of foot-and-mouth disease, will also tend to increase their unpopularity.

It really seems necessary that something should be done to lessen their numbers, and the offering of prizes to school children for the collection of sparrows' eggs, while it seems cruel, is probably no more cruel, and might prove more effective, than some other plans that have been tried. Down in Nova Scotia, the East Pictou Council of Women has made some progress in exterminating the notorious plant, ragwort, which causes the Pictou Cattle Disease, by offering prizes to school children, and there is something to be said in favor of trying this method in combating the sparrow nuisance. True, there is considerable to be said against it; for instance, the danger of children securing a considerable proportion of other birds' eggs, and developing bird-nesting propensities in the juvenile mind. Let us hear the mind of our readers as to the prudence of the suggestion.

### TAFT DEFINES PROTECTION.

"It will take the difference between the cost of production here and the cost of production abroad in the making of any product, whether of the farm, the factory, or the mine, and it will impose a customs duty equal to that difference in the cost of production. That cost of production is made up at least of three elements-the cost of material, the cost of labor, and the manufacturer's profit, or interest on capital. Taking that difference, you have the measure by which the Republican party has pledged itself to revise the tariff. In other words, it has pledged itself to protect every industry, and to give every industry that needs protection the same measure of

protection upon foreign products coming into com- spreads as an epizootic, and may be carried and petition with those of the Republic. The beauty of this definition is the latitude it allows in figuring out the cost of production, according to the ideas of the manufacturer of the home article, and the amount of "water" or wind in the capital stock upon which interest is to be reckoned. ing of a tariff in this way will afford perennial occupation for the statistical experts. The organized mercantile and manufacturing interests will be effectually put before the tariff-makers, but how about the case of the American farmer? Sir John A. Macdonald is credited with having race said that "The farmer was the most regent and least troublesome of all classes. for anything, and he never got any ....g."

Moreover, in America, the farm is for the most part a producer of products of which some considerable part is exported, and the price of which is accordingly regulated to a considerable extent by that of the exported surplus. For this reason, taken in conjunction with lack of business organization to maintain prices, farmers can be to only a slight degree advantaged by protection on their lines of production, though compelled to pay artificially-enhanced prices on the "protected" goods that constitute their pur-

Is it, therefore, not reasonable to suppose that the farmer will fare better under a moderate tariff policy than under extreme protection? In this connection, it is pleasing to note that Andrew Carnegie is quoted as pronouncing in favor of low tariff or free trade now in practically all lines except luxuries. The steel industry, he concedes, no longer needs protection. This is very generous of Mr. Carnegie. The only criticism of his position that might be offered is that he deferred under protection a bigger fortune than he knew what to do with.

#### FOOT - AND - MOUTH DISEASE.

After a period of comparative freedom from epidemics of serious bovine diseases, the livestock-breeding fraternity have been startled to outbreaks of foot-and-mouth disease, first in Scotland, last February, and then in Pennsylvania and conveyance of the disease are difficult to deter- capital, prefer to locate in a district that has mine, but, with the trained staffs of expert veteri- ear-marks of progressiveness. narians which Departments of Agriculture in the out with promptness and efficiency. One thing not lulled by chronic familiarity, co-operation with the authorities is liable to be more hearty than in the case of less virulent and more common maladies.

greatly in different years, and under different climatic conditions. While it is virulently contagious, the vitality of the contagium varies very dition, which accounts for the mild form in which it has appeared on a few occasions in Canada, very heavy. The disease occurs chiefly in cattle, making this a feature of the weekly programme, This sounds very well. The difference in the sheep and pigs. Horses, dogs, cats and birds are or even to advising ratepayers throughout the

cost of production, plus the cost of transporta- less frequently attacked, and in some instances tion, will then be the measure of the American human beings have been infected. The disease distributed by birds, or on the boots of men, on the feet of dogs, or in hay or straw on which infected animals have slavered or stood. The symptoms of the disease in its mild or ordinary form are manifested in cattle by the appearance of vesicles and ulcers on the mucous membranes of the mouth, and on the skin of the coronet of the feet. Sheep, goats and pigs are usually affected only on the feet. In cattle, after a period of incubation of from three to five days, there is a moderate rise of temperature (up to 40 degrees C.), which becomes normal as soon as the eruption appears. Appetite and secretion of milk become diminished, rumination is suppressed, the mouth is generally kept closed, and slight salivation takes place. After two or three days, yellowish-white vesicles, the size of hemp seed, appear on the lips, gums and mouth. These vesicles become enlarged and very sore, and at this stage there is a considerable amount of slavering. The course of the disease almost always ends in two to three weeks, and the mortality is from 0 to 1 per cent.

## BEAUTIFY HOMES THROUGH PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Ontario's civic-improvement movement is most worthy of support. Ease of organization makes it possible to obtain most noticeable returns for energy expended in towns and cities. From these the good work, no doubt, would spread gradually to the surrounding rural districts. But this means of beautifying country homes is slow. Everything possible should be done, at reasonable cost, to interest the rural population in the beautification of home surroundings. Throughout Canada much remains to be done in this re-

Visitors and prospective purchasers of land advocating such a policy until he had built up are influenced by the attractiveness or nonattractiveness of the homes in a locality. Those influences which affect a community have a similar effect on the country at large. In other words, if the homes of Canada's farmers were kept in a high state of repair, and brightened by the planting of trees and flowers, and the erection of neat fences where fences are necessary, much would be accomplished by way of learn, within the present calendar year, of two increasing the rural population by the acquisition of desirable citizens from other countries, and also by the retention of our own upon the farms. New York States, in November. The source and The better class of newcomers, and those with

At best, civic improvement in rural Canada is leading countries now command, a disease which destined to be tardy. Steps should be taken to would formerly have run a devastating course, make it thorough. In no way can this be done may be and commonly is corralled and stamped more successfully than by interesting the boys then, must be a campaign through the public tion called for by the platform of the Republican about that desirable condition.

Naturally, the most encouraging results would be secured where teachers were adepts in the art The symptoms of foot-and-mouth disease vary of home adornment. The summer courses for teachers, including nature study and kindred subjects, and the gradually-increasing attention paid to this work in Normal training, are doing much much, according as it is in a dry or moist con- to augment the usefulness of teachers of rural teacher in a hundred who cannot follow directions concerning this laudable work, if such are prefew cases proving fatal here, while in Great Brit- pared along moderate and practical lines. Furtherain losses from this disease have frequently been more, not one in one hundred would object to