

How Slate Pencils are Made.

In making slate pencils broken slate is put into a mortar run by steam and pounded into small particles. Then it goes into a mill and runs into a "bolting" machine, such as is used in flouring mills, where it is "bolted," the fine, almost impalpable flour that results being taken to a mixing tub, where a small quantity of stearite flour similarly manufactured, is added together with other materials, the whole being made into a stiff dough. This dough is thoroughly kneaded by passing it several times between iron rollers. Thence it is conveyed to a table where it is made into "charges," or short cylinders, four or five inches thick and containing eight to twelve pounds each. Four of these are placed in a strong iron chamber or "retort," with a changeable nozzle so as to regulate the size of the pencil, and subjected to the tremendous hydraulic pressure under which the composition is pushed through the nozzle in the shape of a long cord, and pass over a sloping table slit at right angles with the cords to give passage to a knife which cuts them into lengths. They are then laid on boards to dry, and after a few hours are removed to sheets of corrugated zinc, the corrugation serving to prevent the pencils from warping during the process of baking, to which they are next subjected, in a kiln, into which superheated steam is introduced in pipes, the temperature being regulated according to the requirements of the article exposed to its influence. From the kiln, the articles go to the finishing and packing room, where the ends are thrust for a second under rapidly revolving emery wheels, and withdrawn neatly and smoothly pointed. They are packed in pasteboard boxes, each containing one hundred pencils and these boxes are in turn packed for shipment in wooden boxes, containing one hundred each, or ten thousand pencils in a shipping box. Nearly all the work is done by boys, and cost therefore is light.

Russian Winters.

The Russians have a great knack of making their winters pleasant. You feel nothing of the cold in those tightly-built houses, where all the doors and windows are double and where the rooms are kept warm by big stoves hidden in the walls. There is no damp in a Russian house, and the inmates may dress indoors in the lightest of garbs, which contrast oddly with the mass of furs and robes which they don when going out. A Russian can afford to run no risk of exposure when he leaves his house for a walk or drive. He covers his head and ears with a fur bonnet, his feet and legs with felt boots lined with wool or fur, which are drawn on over the ordinary boots and trousers, and reach up to the knees. He next cloaks himself in an ample top coat with fur collar, lining and cuffs; and he buries his hands in a pair of fingerless gloves of seal or bear skin. Thus equipped, and with the collar of his coat raised all round so that it muffles him up to the eyes, the Russian exposes only his nose to the cold air; and he takes care frequently to give that organ a little rub to keep the circulation going. A stranger, who is apt to forget that precaution, would often get his nose frozen if it were not for the courtesy of the Russians, who will always warn him if they see his nose "whitening," and will unbidden help him to chafe it vigorously with snow.

In Russian cities walking is just possible for men during winter, but hardly so for ladies. The women of the lower order wear knee boots; those of the shopkeeping classes seldom venture out at all; these of the aristocracy go out in sleighs. Those sleighs are by no means pleasant vehicles for nervous people, for the Kalmuck coachmen drive them at such a terrific pace that they frequently capsize; but persons not destitute of pluck find their motion most enjoyable. It must be added that to spilled out of a Russian sleigh is tantamount only to getting a rough tumble on a soft mattress, for the very thick furs in which the victim is sure to be wrapped will be enough to break the fall.

The houses and hovels of the Russian working classes are as well warmed as those of the aristocracy. A stove is always the principal item of furniture in them, and these contrivances are used to sleep on as well as to cook in. The mujick, having no bed, curls himself upon his stove at the time for going to rest; sometimes he might be found creeping right into the stove and enjoying the delights of a good vapor bath. The amount of heat which a Russian will stand is amazing, and his carelessness in facing the cold afterward not less so.—[Pall Mall Gazette]

ADDITIONAL CORRESPONDENCE.

Canada as a Stock-Feeding Country.

SIR,—Could you make place in your very useful journal for the following extract from the Monetary Times. The value of our country for stock-feeding should be more widely known than it is, and the very great circulation of your paper is doing much in that way.

CANUCK, Yorkville, Ont.

The Monetary Times says:—The natural advantages which Canada has over her competitors are great. The climate is, without exception, the healthiest, the best calculated to produce cattle, not only free from the diseases which plague the Americans, but of purer blood and heartier physique than any in the world. Add to this the comparatively short railway journey to the port of shipment and the three days sail in river and gulf to the ocean, and the summary is still incomplete. The Canadian beefs are the only ones which are absolutely free from taint of any kind, and therefore well able to compete in British markets against all imported cattle.

Farm Engines.

In reply to J. S., Windsor, Nova Scotia:—There are a great many manufacturers of farm engines in Ontario. They are exceedingly useful, and can be procured for much less than the sum you mention. Consult our advertising columns and you will find the names of manufacturers whom we cordially recommend. Send for circulars.

SIR,—Will you be good enough to answer a very short question? Is there a variety of Arbor vitae, known as Siberian, and imported from that country. A tree dealer has offered such for sale in this locality at a high price.

A. A., Exeter.

[There is a tree known as Siberian Arbor vitae. It is a seedling of the common Arbor vitae, possessing increased vigor and a more active habit, but it is not a native of Siberia. Sometimes a foreign name is given to make an article seem more valuable. The Siberian Arbor vitae, however, possesses increased vigor and a more upright habit than the tree from which it originated, and is therefore of greater value. It is also higher priced, as it is not so easy to propagate, nor is it so easily obtained.]

SIR,—What is the best meal to feed milking cows, when no roots are fed, weather and butter yield considered? P. D. S., Bartonville, Ont.

[The best grain feed for milch cows consists of the following mixture: Ground peas one part; ground corn one part; ground oats two parts; bran two parts, and two ounces of oil-cake meal with each feed. Five pounds of the above given twice each day to a common-sized cow will be sufficient, but if the cow is large or not seeming to do well, a little more may be given.]

W. M., of Pembroke, Ont., writes that the fall wheat and rye are complete failures in the County of Renfrew, but the spring crop promises to be the best raised for many years.

N. W. P., of Ohio, in a communication to the Cincinnati Bulletin, writes as follows:

The wool crop is the one that some farmers are particularly anxious about just now. Prices in the east have not declined very much; but there seems to be a determination upon the part of dealers to put the price down. Now, I think there is no doubt but that wool would bring fifty cents per pound if farmers would hold it until the 1st of August, and no one sell until that time. The manufacturers will have to pay that price and more. There is no doubt but there are wool houses in the east that are empty; and there is a great amount of money ready, lying idle, to purchase wool with. Speculators are holding back for a purpose. They are telling manufacturers to wait, and they can lay in their stock of wool at a much less price after awhile, that wool is plenty and will be cheaper than it is now. But let these wool gamblers once get the wool into their possession, and they will tell a different story, like this: Why, there is a short crop of wool, and the price we have had to pay was so high that we shall have to hold our wools at from 50 to 60 cents. The factory men will then be in their power, and will be compelled to pay the prices asked.

Stock Notes.

The exportation of cattle from the Dominion during May was 300 per cent. in excess of any previous month.

A steer three years old, belonging to Abner Bath, of Granville, N. S., weighs 1,620 pounds. He is a handsome beast, being perfectly white, not a dark colored hair visible.

F. W. Stone, of Guelph, Canada, has sold to Lee & Reynolds, Camp Station, Idaho, five Hereford bulls, viz., Paragon, Picture 2d, Grandee, Dominus and a bull calf.

Two fat cattle fed by Mr. J. Russell, of Pickering, Ont., were sold for the English market, and weighed the enormous weight of 5,000 lbs., being 2,600 and 2,400 lbs. respectively. It took two days for them to walk to the shipping station, a distance of about seven miles. The buyer found there was only one beast in Canada heavier, and in order to beat it, he agreed with Mr. Russell to take the beefs back and breed them for another year, at \$9 per month.

A consignment of pedigree stock was shipped from Liverpool for Quebec, June 6th, by Mr. Simon Beattie, of Annan, Scotland, consisting of 8 entire horses and 3 fillies, all Clydesdales of various ages. Some of these animals are to remain in Ontario, while others are to go to the U. S. Also a number of sheep made up as follows: 62 Cotswolds one and two years old, there being 45 ewes and 17 rams; in Oxford-Downs, 2 two-shear rams, 1 one-shear ram, 13 ewes; in Shropshire-Downs, 19 rams and 26 ewes.

The entries for the Metropolitan (English) Short-horn and Jersey show and sale, held at the Agricultural Hall, London, on the 16th and 17th, closed on the 8th inst. Two hundred entries were received, including representatives of celebrated Short-horn and Jersey herds; also several lots of Kerry and Ayrshire cattle. The Duke of Devonshire and Viscount Combermere offer cups in the Short-horn classes, and two cups will also be given for Jerseys.

An International Exhibition of sheep and wool is to be held at Philadelphia, next September. Pennsylvania is centrally and conveniently situated for such an exhibition. Her farmers are awakening to the importance of sheep husbandry. One of her counties, Washington, has "over 400,000 sheep, producing as good Merino wool as there is in the world." The main Centennial building, the grandest and most appropriate structure for the holding of the proposed exhibition, has been engaged for the purpose, and sufficient funds for the payment of all expenses, including a liberal and attractive list of premiums, have been secured.

HORSES FOR MANITOBA.—The Montreal Journal of Commerce says: The business of shipping horses to Manitoba is attracting a good deal of interest in the vicinity of Dundas, Ont. The horses are bought up at \$80 to \$100, according to report, and sell readily, on reaching their destination, at \$140 to \$150. What margin of profit this leaves cannot be definitely stated, the dealers themselves naturally claiming that it is very small, but the eagerness with which the business is pursued plainly indicates that the results are as a rule highly satisfactory. One firm extensively engaged in this business enjoys the advantage of having a special agent at Winnipeg who keeps them informed of the state of the market, so that shipments may be made when the time seems propitious. The business extends to cattle and poultry, and is latterly, it is thought, in some danger of being overdone through too rapid expansion.

The Royal Agricultural Show of England is to take place this month at Carlisle, where about \$27,500 will be offered in premiums.

Jas. Coutts, sr., and his son, of the township of Sutton, died recently through having come into contact with glanders from which a horse belonging to the former was suffering. Animals affected with farcy or glanders are very dangerous to operate on, the diseases being infectious, and a cure is seldom effected.