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TOPICS FOR THE WEEK

Agricultural News and Comments.

According to the annual report of the dairy expert for the colony of Victoria, Australia, the exports of perishable food products from that colony have largely decreased during recent years. For the year ending April 30th, 1898, the total exports of perishable food products amounted to £779,339, as compared with £1,069,000 for the year previous. But the decrease is more noticeable in the butter exports. In the year ending April 30th, 1895, the total exports amounted to £1,081,243, as compared with £670,000 for the year ending April 30th, 1898. This great decrease is ascribed to the drought of the past few years.

A British farmer advocates bran-water as a milk stimulant for dairy cows. Here is his recipe. If you desire to get a large yield of rich milk, give your cows every day water slightly warmed and slightly salted, in which bran has been stirred at the rate of one quart to two gallons of water. You will find, if you have not tried this daily practice, that your cow will give twenty-five per cent. more milk immediately under the effects of it, and that she will become so attached to the diet that she will refuse to drink clear water unless very thirsty. But this mess she will drink at any time, and ask for more. The amount of this drink necessary is an ordinary water-pail at a time—morning, noon, and night.

There is a difference of about four cents per pound between the price of the finest English cheese and the Canadian summer cheese. This difference is claimed by Professor Robertson to be mostly due to the English cheese being cured at a uniformly low temperature. If the low prices obtained for Canadian cheese, as compared with the English cheese, are due to the lack of proper curing facilities in the Canadian factories, the remedy is quite easy. Every factory should have in connection with its curing-room a sub-earth duct, as described in FARMING a few weeks ago.

There has been considerable controversy in England as to the best breed of cattle for the farmer to keep. As one would expect, the controversy has not succeeded in settling the ques-

tion, and the breeder and farmer still thinks his own particular kind the best, and so it will always be. The best cattle for the farmer are the kind which he has a fancy for, and which will best meet his own conditions. Some authorities think that for raising the animals for stores, for milking and for fattening, the Shorthorns hold sway over one-half of England.

According to a bulletin issued by the Illinois Experimental Station, and based upon the figures furnished by 316 corn-growers, it cost 19.5 cents per bushel and \$10.59 per acre to produce corn in Illinois in 1896. These figures do not represent the cost of growing merely, but are based upon the average sum of the expenditures on all the processes involved in production, from the preparation of the soil to the delivery of the corn at the elevator.

A German authority states that the roots and stubble of a good crop of red clover weigh over three tons per acre, and contain 180 pounds of nitrogen, seven pounds of phosphoric acid, and seventy-seven pounds of potash, all of which is placed, when turned under, in the most available form for growing crops. Clover makes a large demand upon the soil for potash and phosphoric acid. If the resulting crops are removed from the soil it will be easily seen how clover may rob the soil, as well as restoring fertility if the substances taken out are not restored.

Harness horses are reported to be scarce in Scotland, and that that country must come to America to have its needs supplied. The French are buying their light cab horses in America, which they formerly purchased in Germany. They claim to be able to buy their cheap horses cheaper than they can raise them. However, why should the Scotchman and the Frenchman make all their purchases in the United States? Cannot Canada supply a large share of this trade?

An American dairyman says: "I have never been able to discover any difference between well-fed cows that never go dry and those that go dry from one to two months, so far as health and vigor go, or lasting qualities. I think it is largely a matter of habit. If a heifer is allowed to go dry with her first calf, she is more apt to go dry a little longer with her next. In fact, the whole character of the cow, so far as man can shape it, is made in the heifer. If the child is father of the man, the heifer is mother of the cow."

Many creamery men think 16 cents a low price for a fine quality of butter. But it is fully two cents higher than was paid last year for export at this time. At Elgin, Illinois, the largest local butter market in the United States, the quotation last week for fine creamery butter was 15½ cents. The Canadian butter-maker is, therefore, not so badly off, comparatively speaking.

In the winter wheat belt of the United States the increased acreage sown is estimated to be 7.2 per cent. larger than last year, making the total winter wheat acreage now growing for harvest 25,651,000 acres. The spring wheat acreage shows a more decided increase, which is estimated to be 17.3 per cent. greater than last year's acreage, and making the total spring wheat acreage 17,868,000 acres. This makes a total wheat acreage for the United States of 43,519,000 acres. And, if the crop is up to the average, an enormous yield may be looked for.

The Over-Crowded Professions and Agriculture.

One may well ask the reason why so many of our brightest young men, year after year, continue to enter the so-called professions and make them their life-work when there are decidedly better opportunities for advancement in other lines of life. The professions, such as law, medicine and teaching, are all overcrowded, and where openings can be found for recent additions is somewhat of a mystery. A few days ago, at Osgoode Hall, eighty-four gentlemen were given the right to sign the roll as barristers, and at Toronto University fifty-one were given the degree of bachelor of medicine. There are other colleges yet to be heard from, and it is probable that upwards of two hundred young men will enter the professions of law and medicine this spring from the various colleges of Toronto alone. A large number of those already in these professions can barely make a living, and many of them do not do even that, but depend upon special lines entirely separate from their vocations to afford them a livelihood. Now where in a province the size of Ontario a couple of hundred more lawyers and doctors are going to locate and make a competency is, as we have already stated, a mystery. Many of them, no doubt, have connections that will enable them to find openings, but in doing so others may be driven out. A large majority, however, may struggle on for a few years, and drift to other countries. These are among our brightest gems, and this young country can little afford to lose them. If these had entered some of the lines of life that would have enabled them to engage in developing our agricultural and mineral resources this country would be able to retain them as citizens, and to provide them with greater opportunities for obtaining a competency.

No other calling affords greater opportunities at the present time for advancement, and also for making a competency, than agriculture, and yet we find that only eleven young men received their degrees from Toronto University in the science of agriculture this spring. Two hundred in law and medicine, eleven in agriculture, is the proportion, and yet who will say that our great West alone does not furnish infinitely greater opportunities for advancement in agriculture than the whole Dominion could possibly afford through law or medicine. This, in a way, is a sad condition of affairs, and is well worth considering by everyone having the welfare of this country and its people at heart. How is this tendency on the part of young men to enter the professions to be counteracted, and what means shall be adopted to induce our young men to enter upon such a calling as agriculture, which in this country affords ample room for every steady and intelligent worker, are among the important problems which those in authority will have to decide and that very soon, if this country is to retain within her borders its best young blood.

One reason why there is a tendency to crowd the professions and to overlook the opportunities which agriculture affords is, we believe, because the children both in the city and country have acquired false ideas regarding these different pursuits. No definite effort has been made to instill in the young mind at the public school a love for the farm and for the line of life with which agriculture is so intimately associated. If the child, whether in the city or country, has been led to look upon farming as a kind of drudgery in which there is nothing but work and no play, then it is little wonder that young men to-day are rushing