

Farmers' Clubs.

Dominion Farmers' Council.

[This Council meets on the third Saturday of every month at 2 o'clock p.m. All communications should be addressed to the Secretary, W. A. Macdonald, London, Ont. The Council has now on hand pamphlets containing its Constitution and By-laws, with an account of its origin, also pamphlets containing a form of Constitution and By-laws suitable for Farmers' Clubs, which will, on application to the Secretary, be distributed free to all parties having in contemplation the organization of clubs.]

The regular monthly meeting of this Council was held on the 18th ult., President Leitch in the chair.

Amongst the communications read was one from Mr. James Fletcher, Government Entomologist, Ottawa, enquiring if any members of the Council had any knowledge or experience of the use of gas-lime as an insecticide and a fertilizer.

None of the members had any experience in the use of gas-lime for the purposes mentioned.

REPORT OF COMMITTEE ON DAIRY TESTS.

The Committee, consisting of the President, the Secretary and Mr. Jas. K. Little, appointed to report on the scheme for the establishment of a register for dairy stock based on individual merit, presented its report, which reads as follows: "Your Committee recommends that the contemplated register be established, and that it contain pedigreed as well as unpedigreed stock. Your Committee find it difficult to establish satisfactory standards, but from all the evidence it can collect it recommends (subject to future modifications, if necessary) that the quantity of milk per season be equal to five and a half times the approximate weight of the cow tested for registration, and the standard of quality be four percent of butter fat; that the registered stock be divided into three classes, viz., small, medium, and large, and that the Secretary be instructed to write to Mr. Jas. W. Robertson, Professor of Dairying at the Model Farm, asking him to make such experiments as will enable you to form a correct judgment as to the division of cows into said three classes; namely, to make such weights and measurements as will facilitate the approximating of the weight by the measurements.

"JAS. K. LITTLE, Chairman."

PRESIDENT LEITCH—I believe the principles embodied in the report are sound. Few farmers have scales for weighing their stock, and if they can approximate the weights by the measurements, an important step will be gained. There are rules for ascertaining the weights of animals by the measurements, but we do not know how accurate these rules are. If the weight cannot be approximated in this way, the next question to be decided will be, Shall we be guided by the measurements alone? In this case we must depend largely upon the advice of Prof. Robertson.

HENRY ANDERSON—There is another principle upon which the report may be regarded as sound, namely, that the experiments conducted at the Model Farm should originate in farmers' organizations after deliberate consideration, as they would then be practical and have more weight. But, I confess, I can hardly see the drift of this register. Must every cow be tested before she can be registered, or will the offspring of registered cows be eligible for registration?

JAS. K. LITTLE—This question was discussed in committee, and the answers are implied in the report. Every cow must be tested before she can be registered, but whether or not her male offspring will be eligible for registration the Com-

mittee has not decided. It would probably be advisable to register bulls from registered stock when they proved themselves to be good getters. It has been the object of the Council not to admit stock that is registered in any of the herd books, as this might clash with the objects of our breeders, but none of the breeders who are members of this Council looked upon the matter in this light, and the Committee has therefore recommended the registration of all classes which come up to the standard. The Committee also discussed the question as to whether a deficiency in quality below the standard could be made good by an extra quantity above the standard, and *vice versa*; but no conclusion was arrived at. The object of the register is not to establish a new breed, although the tendency may be in this direction. One important object to be gained will be a knowledge of how true good stock of the various classes will breed their kind, which will be ascertained by testing all the cows before registration.

PRESIDENT LEITCH—I see nothing to hinder the progress of the work, except, perhaps, the dividing of the stock into three classes, which should present no serious difficulty. The test instruments are so simple and expeditious that it requires no expert to handle them; and although their cheapness brings them within the reach of every farmer, farmers' clubs get them free, and the evidence of a committee of this Council, or of clubs established under the auspices of the Council, should be placed beyond suspicion as to the accuracy of the tests. The dividing of the cows into three classes is equivalent to a test of the cost of production of the milk, for my experience is that the quantity of food consumed bears a very close relation to the size or weight of the cows under normal conditions. These tests will put an effectual check to the disgraceful practice of breeding cows which produce watery milk, calling them milk and cheese breeds. The cows to be entered in the proposed register will receive no credit for any of the water in their milk.

Upon motion of Henry Anderson, seconded by John Kennedy, the report was adopted.

When programme of the day was called, the Secretary stated that he had received a letter from Mr. J. B. Freeman, M. P. P., stating that he could not prepare his paper on "Renting Farms on Shares" in time for the December meeting of the Council, but would have it ready for the January meeting.

The Secretary filled the vacancy by delivering a lecture on "Testing Milk and Cream."

[A part of the lecture appears in the Dairy columns of the ADVOCATE.]

One of the most successful farmers in the U.S., when he commenced farming, didn't know enough to get a new plow point when the old one was worn out. He farms on scientific principles.

Mr. A. S. Fuller states that a tap-root is not essential to the life, growth, or productiveness of nut-producing trees. He is inclined to the opinion that the removal or shortening of the tap-root of nut-producing trees is beneficial, as it causes the growth of laterals. He affirms that the tap-root of trees is generally very short-lived. If the tree grows on very dry and rocky soil, the tap-root may live for many years and be of great value to the tree by obtaining moisture at a depth not reached by ordinary roots. On most soils, however, he declares that the tap-root dies after the tree becomes well-established and attains a considerable size.

The Farm.

How the Farmers are Trampled in the Dust.

We make the following extracts from the annual address of the Dominion Grange, recently delivered in Toronto by Worthy Master Wilkie, and we make comments thereon in another column:—

There has been far too much boasting about the condition of the farmers in this country, and the result is that a false impression has gone abroad of the amount of wealth which exists amongst them. It is said that in addition to their valuable farms, large amounts lie to their credit in the banks. But the money thus deposited is very often intended to meet mortgages which are coming due and other liabilities of a like nature which are maturing against their property, and which they are struggling to wipe out. Doubtless a very large amount of capital is invested in farming, but much of it belongs to capitalists and is only loaned on the land—a very large proportion of which is under mortgage, much greater than most of the people suppose. And much of it is hopelessly sunk. The only hope that still remains in many cases is that the land may be sold for something more than the amount of encumbrance. If any one doubts this let him turn to the number of advertisements of farms for sale. The newspapers are full of them, and hundreds of land agents throughout the country are furnishing long lists free to any expectant purchaser. The owners of these lands are not men who are retiring on their fortunes, nor are they men who desire to engage in other pursuits. A large proportion of them are men who are selling to save the little which still remains, there being no longer any hope of saving the farm. A great deal of the money loaned on Canadian farms belongs to men in other countries, and is loaned by agents and monetary institutions. In such cases the capital invested does not all belong to the farmer; in some cases his interest in the land is very small, the balance belonging to the money lender, the farmer having the right to re-purchase, or call it redemption, if you like. But who pays the taxes?

The farmer pays it all—pays taxes on the full cash valuation, whilst the money-lender, if he pays anything, pays only on the interest he collects. But there is a great amount of capital invested in land, stock and implements, which belongs to the tillers of the soil of this Dominion. The actual return from this investment, after counting out the value of labor expended and contingent expenses of farm operations, is perhaps less from the same amount invested in any other industry. There is nothing more uncertain than the returns of the farm. It may be tilled in the very best manner, the crops may be sown with the greatest judgment and care; but the misfortune of a wet season or a protracted drought, or the ravages of insects, may render the whole unprofitable. But the work has to be done. The crop must be harvested. What there is must be taken care of, for "half a loaf is better than no bread," and if there is but little there is more need for it. The price of produce has much to do with the profit of the farm, and the farmer has the option of taking the dealer's prices or keeping his produce. For what he buys he pays the price fixed by others, and for what he sells it is the same. In both cases it is often fixed by rings and combinations, and all he can do as an individual is to submit.

It is not easy to find a remedy for these difficulties; if any can be brought about it must be by organization; singly and alone, the farmer can never cope with the overwhelming odds against him. The world of to-day seems to be run by rings and monster combinations. Every class is organized. The laborers are organized. The mechanics, the dealers, the doctors, the lawyers, all trades, occupations and professions have their active organizations of some kind, and are keenly alive to their advantages. The farmer alone seems to be the only man who looks on with indifference; and with amazing innocence he argues that there is no necessity for these organizations, that the world is none the better for them; that there was