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### RURAL NOTES.

DRYNESS, with a free circulation of air and a full exposure to the sun, are the material things to be attended to in choosing a residence. One of the primal causes of consumption is a residence on or near a damp soil.

MANURE does most good when thoroughly mixed with the soil, for then it acts as an absorbent of moisture and its richness is more generally distributed. The usual way of ploughing it under causes half of it to be lost, and the top-dressing method is not much better.

THE way to get a gloss on shirt bosoms and collars is to mix a little spermaceti with the starch, use a flat-iron slightly rounded at the edges, and press on the linen with great force. The chief secret is what is vulgarly known as "elbow grease," and that means hard work to the laundress.

THE so-called American exhibition of 1886 in London appears to be a money-making scheme of one or two speculating characters who understand the art of advertising and who have succeeded in beguiling a number of respectable men into lending the use of their names. The chances are that it will do the United States far more harm than good in the opinion of Europeans.

IN England the farmers pay annual rentals per acre larger than the price of some farms in this country. They live only by keeping the land in the highest state of cultivation. If English farmers can afford such a system, there is no reason why our farmers, who own their lands, should not make their farms pay a handsome profit every year.

NO one appreciates the many points required in a good farm horse until he tries to buy one to use. He will find scarcely one that is not defective in some respect, and before he finds the right one will be obliged to pay dearly for him. A farmer who has a horse that is reasonably satisfactory should hesitate long before selling. The horse will be more difficult to replace than he now supposes.

AMERICAN farmers are decreasing their flocks of sheep in consequence of the low price of wool. We do not think that Canadian farmers should in this matter follow their example. The fact is that for a number of years sheep farming for the wool product has not been a very profitable business in our country, but sheep farming for mutton is another industry altogether, and it will pay to keep at it.

A LARGE area of peas is likely to be planted in the Province this year. The bug did very little harm to last year's crop, and farmers are hopeful that it has disappeared for good. It will be a piece of rare good fortune to our farmers, should this prove to be the case, for there are few crops grown that pay better than peas when the bug lets them alone. We would not be too sanguine of the bug's departure, however, last year may only have been a bad season for him, and he may come up smiling again this season.

THIS is an opportune time for giving a reminder to farmers who would this year grow a crop of clover for seed. The general prevalence of the midge renders it almost impossible to get a seed crop if a hay crop be first taken off the ground. The only safe way is to pasture the clover fields until about the middle of this month; then turn the cattle off and let the seed crop grow. It will be far enough advanced for safety before the second brood of the midge is ready to attack it.

A FARMER who kept some hogs in a close, damp, dark pen, and others in a pen open to fresh air and sunlight, noticed that he lost one or more of the former yearly, but none of the latter. A *post mortem* examination showed that death was caused by consumption. The conditions were changed and no more hogs died, thus showing that even a hog cannot live in health if forced to breathe damp, impure, and stagnant air in a dark pen. How much greater the risk with cattle and horses. Fresh air and light are essentials to animal life.

DR. TAYLOR, of the Washington Department of Agriculture, has been making some interesting discoveries in the structure of butter globules. From their form and motion he can determine if the butter be fresh or stale, genuine or bogus. This is interesting from the scientist's point of view; but the ordinary consumer of butter can't have a microscope or a polarizer always at hand when making a purchase of a few pounds of butter, and we are not sure that these fine instruments would be of much value to more than one housekeeper out of a hundred thousand any way. The old test of the tongue is the one that must of use can apply most efficiently, and it answers the purpose very well.

THE past winter has been hard on bee-life, and a great many colonies are said to have been lost. It is a difficult matter to know just what to do with bees in our winters. It does not answer to keep them too warm, and there is a risk of losing them by exposure in one cold night. Last winter there were many nights and days in which the mercury fell below zero, and it would seem to have been one of the seasons when prudence would have dictated the giving of extra care to the bees. But then it is so easy to be wise after the event. The bee farmer is growing in importance with us, and it may be hoped that the Beekeepers' Association will undertake to study the best mode of treating bees in relation to our own climate. It is obvious that a good deal remains to be known on the subject.

THE butter factory at the Model Farm has this year been placed in charge of Professor Barré, late of Montreal. Professor Barré has given a good deal of study to the subject of butter making, and he has the reputation of being well up in the theory and practice of it. He spent a considerable time in Germany and Denmark, studying the systems practised in those countries, and doubtless, also, he has a good knowledge of the creamery system, with which he has to do in the position which he has been called upon to fill. If in addition to his duties at the Model Farm Creamery he will attend the meetings of Farmers'

Institutes in different parts of the country, he may render our farmers very valuable service in communicating to them information of a scientific and practical character on a subject of large importance to them.

THE Commissioner of Agriculture has justly a good opinion of the utility of Farmers Institutes, and he is taking steps to procure the establishment of one for every electoral district of the Province. At the last session of the Legislature he obtained a vote authorizing him to make a grant of \$25 to every Institute that may be organized, on condition of an equal grant being made by the council of the county in which the electoral district is situate, and subject to certain regulations approved by him. These regulations require: 1. That an Institute shall be composed of not less than 50 members, each paying an annual fee of 25 cents; 2. That a majority of the board of management shall be practical farmers; and 3. That at least two meetings of each Institute shall be held annually in different parts of the district. County councils are invited to take steps for making the Government grant at their June sessions.

THE loss of many cattle by starvation in some of the northern counties of the Province during the past winter, and notably in the County of Bruce, will be a matter of surprise to many. And what is hardly less surprising is the fact that while hay was finding eager buyers in the northern townships of Huron and in Bruce, Grey and Simcoe at \$18 to \$20 per ton, farmers in Kent, Elgin and Norfolk could not dispose of their surplus at \$5 to \$8 per ton. In the one district there was a state of famine caused by a local drought last summer, and in the other there was over-abundance as the result of two very heavy crops in successive years. But another of the curious things about the matter seems to be that the abundance of the south was unknown to the farmers of the north, and the scarcity in the north was unknown to the farmers of the south. Some valuable service in such a matter as this might have been rendered by a mid-winter bulletin of the Bureau of Industries.

NEVER such a late season as this one! Never for thirty years! Never for forty years! Never in the memory of the oldest inhabitant! And of course every farmer who is behind hand with his work, or whose seed is ungerminated in the ground, is in a state of semi-despair. We are getting used to that story now, more or less. Last spring was cold and late, so was the spring of 1883, so also was the spring of 1882. Yet the spring crops in all three years were remarkably good, and in two of them the fall wheat harvests were among the best on record. In 1883 the fall wheat was a failure, but that was not due to a late spring, and if an early autumn frost nipped some of the late fields of spring grain it was a fatality of which the proverbial oldest inhabitant could not readily recall a parallel. The fact is—and it is almost a proverbial fact too—that low temperature and copious rainfall in April and the first ten or twelve days of May is one of the conditions of an abundant harvest. We shall be surprised indeed if the coming harvest in Ontario is not an abundant one.