

# FARMER'S ADVOCATE

AND HOME MAGAZINE

\* AGRICULTURE, STOCK, DAIRY, POULTRY, HORTICULTURE, VETERINARY, HOME CIRCLE.\*

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VOL. XXXIV.

LONDON, ONT., AND WINNIPEG, MAN., FEBRUARY 1, 1899.

No. 471

## EDITORIAL.

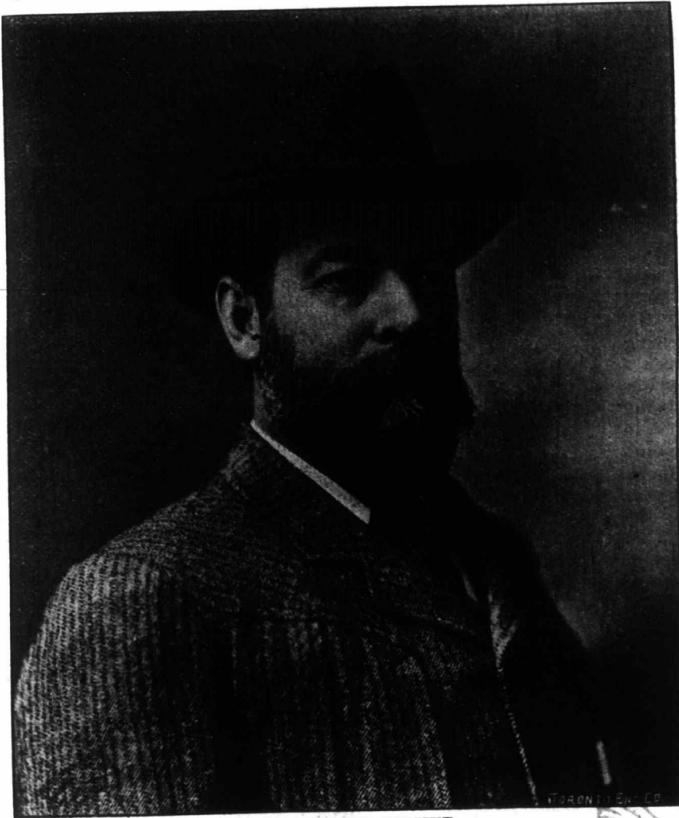
### The Tuberculin Test in Great Britain.

"We are having," writes our regular staff correspondent in Scotland, "a big preliminary skirmish on the question of tuberculosis. Foreign and colonial authorities attach far greater importance to the tuberculin test than do breeders and cattle owners in this country. Everything possible is made of the cases in which the test has been proved a failure, and, unfortunately, we have no adequate records of the cases in which it has been applied. Our Government is greatly to blame for the condition in which matters at present stand. They will do nothing to check irresponsible testing of cattle, and no one really knows in a public market whether he may not be buying stock which is actually being sold because they have reacted. The first thing which the Government ought to do is to institute strict experiments to see whether the test is reliable. Blame can hardly be attached to farmers for declining to accept reports over which no one in this country has control as conclusive evidence of the reliability of the test, and it is only trifling with a difficult problem to postpone such a trial indefinitely. The collapse of the attempt to stamp out the disease compulsorily in Belgium and Massachusetts is well known, although much else is unknown, and it is not at all likely that any other county or state will adopt similar measures. What is wanted is a series of tests on the lines followed by Bang in Denmark, under strict Government control and supervision. By such means thoroughly reliable information could be obtained at first hand, and there would be no excuse for scouting what is advanced as a purely foreign importation. It is increasingly evident that something will require to be done, because the pressure from foreign customers will compel breeders to face the situation. On the other hand, no one can blame leading breeders who get such prices for their stock as were realized at the autumn sales, without giving any guarantee, if they prefer to remain as they are.

"Lectures on the subject of tuberculosis have been delivered at many places, and we had one in Glasgow from Mr. James Wilson, B. Sc., Fordyce, lecturer on agriculture in Aberdeen University, the author of the official report on the Castlecraig experiments. The lecture itself was a masterly production, its main point being that as tuberculosis is an infective disease, due to a germ, it can be eradicated. The basis of the lecturer's whole argument was, of course, the reliability of the tuberculin test; and the three stages in his treatment are: (1) Testing, (2) Isolation, (3) Disinfecting. The feature of the discussion which followed was the determination of the farmers present not to admit the theory of infectivity, their strong assertion of the belief that the disease is hereditary, and their absolute contempt for tuberculin. Unfortunately, most of those who spoke in this sense know nothing about tuberculin, and their action is notable as revealing an obscurantist disposition alien to the general reputation of their countrymen.

"Principal McCall, F. R. C. V. S., a singularly cautious and far-seeing member of the veterinary profession, made a notable contribution to the

discussion, asserting his belief in the infectious nature of the disease, and suggesting that any cases found in calves were quite as likely due to congenital as to hereditary causes. What puzzles me most of all in listening to the average Scottish farmer when he speaks on this subject, is his blindness to his own interest. If the disease be as he avers—hereditary—there is no possibility of his overcoming it, but if it be as the scientific world now declares—a contagious disease due to a germ—surely there is hope of its being controlled and its ravages reduced to a minimum. Public health officers are taking up the matter, and sooner or later a working plan of operations will be drafted. Meantime the situation is strained as between town and country, and may probably continue in that state for some time, unless the Board of Agriculture accelerate its movements and do its part in the business."



HON. SYDNEY FISHER.  
THE DOMINION MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE.  
(From his latest photo by Lancefield, Photographer, Ottawa.)

### An Agriculturist Appointed.

The announcement comes from Ottawa that the position of Agriculturist and Live Stock Experimentator at the Dominion Central Experimental Farm has been filled by the appointment of Mr. J. H. Grisdale, of Russell County, Ontario. Mr. Grisdale secured an Associate diploma at the Ontario Agricultural College at Guelph, 1898, where he took a two-years course, and graduated last year at the Iowa Agricultural College, at Ames, Iowa, securing the degree of Bachelor of Agriculture. In the Inter-Agricultural College contest in judging cattle, sheep and swine at the Trans-Mississippi Exhibition at Omaha last summer, Mr. Grisdale won the first prize of \$125. There is a good field for experimental work in stock-feeding at Ottawa, and we wish Mr. Grisdale success in his work in his new position.

### The Department of Agriculture and the Cheese Trade.

The announcement made by Prof. Robertson at the recent Ontario dairy conventions, that the Dominion Minister of Agriculture, Hon. Mr. Fisher, had authorized a number of experiments, or, rather, demonstrations, to show the advantages of proper curing-rooms for cheese, will commend itself; in fact, we are inclined to think the minister might go further. Last September we ventured the statement, on very good authority, "that of English and Scotch Cheddars and Cheshires, considerably more than the whole quantity of cheese exported from Canada, is sold at from 10 to 18 shillings, or practically from 2½ to 4 cents per pound higher than Canadian cheese!" No doubt the Old Country dairyman has some natural conditions in his favor, but there is little doubt that Canadian cheese are cured and carried to market at too high a temperature in summer to develop that cool, mild flavor and rich body that the consumer must have. A good many make as well as curing rooms are away behind the times, and some of them positively dilapidated in appearance, the result of carelessness or false ideas of economy. In the words of the politician, it is time for a change. The Dominion Department of Agriculture has been devoting itself with zeal to the improvement of the butter trade, even to the extent of a small bonus to encourage the equipment of creameries with cold storage compartments. A very few years ago the butter export business had dwindled to a deplorable state, but we are of opinion that whatever advantages accrue to the industry through the attention of the Government to cold storage and transportation should be shared by cheese as well as butter so far as is necessary, and no doubt, from the present move by the Minister of Agriculture, that is the intention.

### A Correction.

We have received complaints, on behalf of the Co-operative Knitting Company carrying on business in Toronto, of the article in our last issue headed "Farmers' Wives and Daughters Duped"; that the article reflects unfairly upon them, and we have received a letter from the Knitting Company's solicitors in Toronto stating that "they have been at some pains to enquire into the business which has been carried on, and, so far as 'they' can see, the business is a legitimate one, and a very large number of persons are making an excellent livelihood by knitting for the Company with their machines." And further stating: "We have, however, to offer you facilities of having the business of our clients examined by an inspection of their methods, correspondence, and work, and we think that if you will accept this offer you will come to the conclusion that you have done them a great wrong."

We would regret very much being the means of injuring any bona fide concern, and we therefore desire that the Company shall have the full benefit of their denial, and as the ADVOCATE may have been misinformed, or not fully informed, of the Company's affairs, we desire to, and do hereby, retract the statements and imputations contained in the said article.

Some fifty young women are reported as students during 1898 at the Minnesota State School of Agriculture.