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EDITORIAL.

Our soils are not exhausted so much as the common methods of handling them.

"The time of the singing of birds is come." Let us also rejoice and be glad.

If there was any smut in your oat or wheat crop last year, treat the seed with formaldehyde before sowing.

Insulation and ventilation—these, with convenience, drainage and light, are the important problems in stable construction.

"While the earth remaineth, seed time and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night, shall not cease."

Occasionally the tables turn. Foot-and-mouth disease in England has again led to the enforcement of a Canadian embargo on British ruminants and swine.

It is the hopeful man that can do the very best of which he is capable, and enjoy doing it. The pessimist cuts the nerve of his own strength and drags along at the work. "A merry heart doeth good like a medicine."

A great many experiment stations and public officials are engaged in demonstrating the beneficial results which follow the application of certain recommended methods, but, as a rule, they stop short of proving that their methods will pay when applied commercially in ordinary farm practice. The widespread interest in, and value of, "The Farmer's Advocate" demonstration orchard work lies in the fact that these tests are carried out to the final conclusion, which is to say, the balance sheet.

After waiting four years for horse legislation in line with that in vogue in other Provinces, Australia, and many States, the friends of the Ontario horse industry were encouraged by the introduction of the mildest kind of a mild stallion-enrollment law. The rejoicing was short-lived, however, for, after exhibiting it a few days, the Minister of Agriculture withdrew the bill into the safe recesses of his Departmental offices, lest some timid voter should take alarm at too sudden enactment of such a radical measure. We hope that the next time it is brought forth, both the bill and its sponsor may exhibit a little more backbone.

A very great deal of interest was taken by the farming public in the demonstration orchard of "The Farmer's Advocate." But it was as nothing, compared with what is being aroused by the demonstration farm, where "farming without frills" is to be carried on. A farmer remarked recently to a member of the staff that he wished they had bought the farm adjoining his. "I would like to have seen them at it," said he. He clinched an unfavorable comment on the prospects of the venture, by saying very meaningly, "They will learn two or three things about farming in a year or two." Some other opinions are more hopeful. Nearly everyone is pleased to see the experiment tried.

What Kind of a Wall?

Prof. Wm. H. Day's illuminating article last week, entitled, "Why Stone Stables Are Damp," raises for consideration by intending builders some very important points about the construction of stable and dwelling-house walls. Prof. Day points out that a wall of stone and mortar, so far from being a "warm" one, is about thirty times as poor an insulating material as an equal thickness of wood. It is open to the further criticism that, unlike wood, it allows no escape of moisture worth mentioning through the pores of its substance. Considered in the light of the fact that a 1,000-pound steer will exhale through his lungs and skin over a gallon of moisture per day, at which rate a stable of 100 cattle would charge the atmosphere with over half a ton of water daily, not allowing anything for evaporation of urine, it is not strange that an ordinary, unventilated stone or concrete stable should be damp, and that the walls should often be clammy or frosty from condensation of moisture upon them in the form of dew or hoarfrost, according to the temperature. The eighteen-inch stone wall is also open to the serious objection that it is hard to light properly without a very large area of glass, and glass, like stone, is a poor insulating material, allowing heat to pass through it by "conduction," and rendering it difficult to keep the interior temperature up to a comfortable degree. Without going into details here, but proceeding from the editorial in our issue of March 23rd, it is sufficient to state that, in order to permit of free ventilation without lowering temperature below a given point of comfort or safety, we must have well-insulated walls—the more so, the better. It is economy to provide such walls. In a house it saves fuel; in a stable, feed. We were in a large farmhouse lately, the ten or twelve spacious rooms of which had been comfortably heated up to the middle of March with about three and a half tons of coal. The construction of the walls explained it: One thickness of brick, three of siding, one ply of building paper, and two coats of plaster, with a space between, the one coat being what is known as "back-plaster," constituted a wall which reduced waste of heat almost to a minimum. While a little expensive to build, such walls make a house dry and comfortable, and in forty years' time would save from five hundred to a thousand dollars' worth of coal, as compared with a cheaper form of construction. In stables, we would not go quite this length, but even here insulation pays. From the standpoint of brightness, geniality, insulation and warmth, the ideal stable wall, to our mind, is one of two or more thicknesses of wood, with building paper between, the wooden wall to be set on a cement or masonry footing, which not only conduces to durability, but will help to exclude rats. A much better insulating wall could be built by filling with shavings between two thicknesses of boards, as the effect of the shavings is to create a large number of small dead-air spaces. A so-called dead-air space without shavings is liable not to be a dead-air space at all. Fillings of this kind, however, are open to the objection that they tend to settle down, becoming in some cases damp and mouldy, and, moreover, are liable to harbor rats and mice. If some way could be found to render them uninhabitable to these rodents, the settling difficulty might be largely overcome by a series of transverse partitions.

Of course, on the score of solidity and durability, stone or cement walls have a decided advantage. Since many will prefer them on this account, it is well to know how they may be improved. Last week's issue contained an excellent article on construction of hollow cement walls, by N. Day, of Victoria Co., Ont., father of Professor Wm. H. Day. The idea is commendable. On no account would we build a solid cement stable wall, when it is so easy to improve the insulation by an air-space. Of course, good drainage should always be provided to keep the foundation dry.

It is a question whether it is, on the whole, more desirable to build a slop wall with a core, or a cement-block wall. The latter is more expensive, but looks better. If the blocks are well made and laid, it should prove durable.

The large, hollow building brick, made of clay, are an ideal material in some respects, but, as usually laid, they do not make a very strong wall, as some farmers learned last season to their sorrow, through the devastation of local hurricanes. Some of them also tend to discolor in time.

Those who have already built solid stone or cement walls can improve them greatly by lining with boards.

Summing up, we would say, build a well-insulated wall. A frame stable is in many respects preferable to any other kind. Next to this comes a hollow cement or cement-block wall. Do not build a solid slop wall, and do not build a stone wall, unless in your circumstances it is much more economical than the other materials named. If you have a stone or solid cement stable wall, consider carefully the advisability of lining it, especially if it is inclined to be damp.

This is the net result to date of our many years' study of the stable-wall question, but we do not claim to have exhausted the subject, and discussion by readers is invited, particularly from those who have had experience with hollow-wall construction, and can give helpful hints based thereupon.

Another Farm Chosen.

The public will be interested to learn that "The Farmer's Advocate" farm has changed its location. The place at St. John's, which was advertised, represented and purchased as 135 acres, turned out to be 15½ acres short when the title came to be delivered. Overtures for proportionate decrease in price not being satisfactorily met, we had no option but to renounce the bargain and demand return of the deposit paid down. Fortunately, we have since been able to secure another property, very much more conveniently situated. The new place is what is known as the Robert Fraser farm. It is situated just south-west of Glendale, four miles from London, fronting on the Wharncliffe Road, along which runs the London & Lake Erie Railway and Transportation Company's electric line. The cars may be hailed hourly each way at Station No. 10, directly in front of the farm. The land comprises 112 acres of medium-heavy clay loam, lying with a gentle slope, ideal for drainage. It is a good strong soil, though at present rather dirty, and not in first-class condition. It is full of Canada thistles, and there is a certain amount of bindweed, besides mustard, ragweed, and the like. The barn is a good one, 40 x 70 feet, with part wooden basement, on a three-foot stone footing. The house is poor, but will be replaced by a new one in the course of a year or two. Some fencing will have to be done; but, beyond the points mentioned, the place is a good one, and our only regret is that we could not obtain, conveniently