

The Farmer's Advocate

AND HOME MAGAZINE.

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his time to one line of work only. A District Representative has a very broad field to cover and those who have not had experience with a flock of sheep would not be able to handle the shears with the same dexterity as a good shepherd. It would be ridiculous to expect that they should, but there is nothing to prevent them going about doing good by explaining away the overhead feeding rack, which allows the neck wool to become filled with hay and chaff and thus rendered almost worthless. They can show how the fleece should be kept intact, so far as possible, at shearing time, and how it should be folded and tied. The importance of keeping the different parts separate, and the whole product dry, could be emphasized and much could be accomplished to facilitate grading at the central depot. Such things as these are important, but they represent only a few of the points which must be considered if the wool clip is to realize anywhere near its actual value. Two courses of instruction, one in Western Ontario and the other in Eastern Ontario, for the District Representatives in those parts would be in order, for in this way the requirements of the co-operative system could be learned at first hand from experts with experience, and carried broadcast over the country much to the benefit of wool producers generally. We believe the District Representatives' time would be well spent in such a movement, for the average price of graded over ungraded wool throughout Canada last year was 5¼ cents per pound, and it only costs between ¼ and ½ cent per pound to grade and market it. This average increase in price should be even higher in Ontario on account of our proximity to manufacturers and the wool market. Whatever the District Representative does in support of this movement will be rewarded in most cases with immediate results of a pecuniary nature, and nothing could have a more wholesome influence on the declining sheep-breeding industry of Ontario. A whirlwind campaign conducted by forty District Representatives in this Province would awaken interest in sheep and their products. There never was a more opportune time for such an awakening than during the coming three months.

Horse Racing and Gambling Should Go.

The general public read the report, recently published, of W. E. Raney's address on commercialized racing before the Social Service Congress recently held in Toronto, with considerable interest, particularly as the subject of controlling race tracks was before the Dominion House at the same time. Mr. Raney made some very strong charges in connection with the commercializing of race tracks in this country, going so far as to state that some stock in certain clubs was paying as high as 1,700 per cent. per annum. Mr. Raney charged that the Toronto and Hamilton Jockey Clubs lost their character as sporting clubs at the time of the enactment of the law of 1910, and had become thoroughly commercialized and that public men of Toronto and Hamilton and members of the Dominion Parliament and of the Ontario Legislature had a great deal of money in these Clubs, which, he claimed, represented the proceeds of race-track gambling profits on an investment of a few thousand dollars made by them when the Clubs were really sporting Clubs. He went so far as to charge that the Toronto Club at that time were earning 700 per cent. per annum on their investment, and the Hamilton Club 1,700 per cent. per annum. He further charged that the amendment to the Criminal Code of Canada made in 1910 was class legislation of the most pernicious character brought about by these men in their own interests and in the interests of professional rake-off men from the United States. Mr. Raney also charged that the so-called Jockey Clubs of Fort Erie and Windsor never were sporting Clubs but were controlled by professional race-track men from the United States and were located, the one opposite Buffalo and the other opposite Detroit, because race-track gambling is prohibited in Michigan and in New York State. Amongst a number of other charges Mr. Raney said the profits on the different race tracks in which some public men of Canada had participated had ranged from 200 to 2,000 per cent. per annum on the original investment and that a rich harvest had been made, particularly since the war began, and finally that the race-track gambling business of Canada is the greatest graft business in existence.

Good clean sport is always to be commended, but commercialized sport is not in the best interests of the game, the player, or the community, and when it amounts to gambling, which makes such prodigious returns as those mentioned in Mr. Raney's charge possible, and particularly when the names of leading public men are connected therewith, it seems high time to investigate or call a halt. Before Parliament adjourned for recess to allow the Premier to attend the Imperial Conference in the Old Land, Oliver J. Wilcox, Member for North Essex, introduced a Bill in the Dominion Parliament to amend the Criminal Code to limit the number of days for racing on race tracks in this country. Those who have followed the situation believe that until the end of the war it would not be a very bad mistake to discontinue the race meets in Canada, and if Mr. Raney's charges are true most of our readers will agree that the kind of commercialized sport which has been carried on might well be eliminated altogether. In the earlier days, racing and its development undoubtedly did something for the light horse breeding industry, but at the present time the races carried on on Canadian tracks are not of very great value to that industry. Furthermore, the laws of Michigan and New York are such that the race meets of Canada have a tendency to draw those who make the rounds of the race track for the money there is in it. If the stockholders in these racing clubs are making anything like the returns on the original investment that Mr. Raney has charged, and if conditions are as described by him, it is high time Ontario was free from the whole thing, at least till the end of the war and free from the gambling forever.

In Wintry Weather.

BY PETER MCARTHUR.

They say there is no fool like an old fool and I am inclined to think that holds good of animals as well as of men. Dolly, the mare we used to have for a driver, is now a sedate dowager, with a couple of well-grown colts occupying stalls near her in the stable, and I thought she had settled down to a peaceful and unusually slow-going old age. I thought I could certainly say of her "The heyday in the blood is tame, it's humble, and waits upon the judgment." The last time I had her hitched up I had to feed her "long oats" to keep her from going asleep on the road and I thought her days of cutting up were over, but she gave us a surprise.

A couple of nights ago, after a seven-mile drive, the boy was putting her away and thought that she would be in a hurry to get back to her stall and well-filled manger, especially as it was three degrees below zero. To save himself the trouble of unharnessing her in the dark stable he slipped off the harness out in the moonlight and left her to walk through the open door. That seemed to be just the chance she was looking for. She no sooner felt herself free than she started with a jump and squeal and galloped through an open gate. For the next fifteen minutes she acted like a village cut-up, plunging through snowdrifts and then stopping to snort in a way that roused the frosty echoes for a mile around. At last I was called out to help catch her and Sheppy and I joined the chase. With Sheppy at her shoulder she romped through the orchard, around the house, among the haystacks and over the place generally. Only by developing high strategic talent were we able to corner and catch her. As she was being led into the stable I heard vows being registered to the effect that the next time she was hitched up she would have to show some speed. If she has so much steam in her she may as well be used to it.

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Some weeks ago I asked if anyone could tell me the words that they used to say over soft soap when boiling it. I had often heard that such words were used but never managed to get the formula. This week a correspondent sent me what she assures me was the formula used and I am inclined to think she was not aware that what she gave is a direct quotation from the Witches scene in Macbeth.

"Double, double, toil and trouble,
Boil cauldron, boil and bubble!
Cool it with a baboon's blood,
Then the charm is firm and good!"

She explained that "baboon's blood" means cold lye, an interpretation that will probably surprise Shakespearean scholars. She did not give the list of horrible ingredients that the witches used to

"Make the gruel thick and slab"

though that would be the most important part. I am inclined to think that my correspondent has been imposed upon by someone, for the rough dames who used to say words over the soft soap could not read, and it is doubtful if they ever heard of Shakespeare. Possibly I can offer an explanation of how the mistake occurred. I remember that when we put on the witches scene at a High School entertainment thirty years ago, not far from where my correspondent was living at the time, we used a soap kettle for the witches cauldron and it is possible that the impression got abroad that the words recited by the handsome young witches were the ones used by the soap-boilers. It is possible that my correspondent has put me on the right track to get the old words, for the formula she gave reminded me of the fact that in one of the tragedies of John Webster, a contemporary of Shakespeare, there was a scene of unrepeatable Elizabethan humor in which soap boilers figured. It is many years since I read it, but it is just possible that they used the magic words. The next time I visit a public library I shall look up the old play—not because the matter is of any importance but because I have a curiosity about such things.

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One hates to suggest anything further in the shape of censorship, but so many well-meaning people are saying exasperating things that I am tempted to suggest a little bit of advice. We all want to do what we can to promote production and thrift but it irritates us to have some earnest person entirely ignorant of conditions make impracticable suggestions. If we cannot have fool schemes censored perhaps the people who have schemes might profitably consult the authorities and have their schemes passed upon before giving them forth as samples of necessary wisdom. For instance, there is the bit of advice to farmers, emanating from Toronto, in which it was urged that farmers plant sunflowers in the fence corners so that no land would be allowed to go to waste this year. To begin with the author of that scheme over-looked the fact that fence corners are not so plentiful on the farms as they used to be. Straight wire fences have done away with them and you could travel through miles of country without seeing a fence corner. And finally there is the outstanding fact that there will be few farmers this year that will not have acres and whole fields unworked owing to the scarcity of labor. If the people with helpful schemes would first show how ordinary land is to be worked properly under existing conditions they might talk about taking care of the fence-corners. If the originator of this great thought had asked anyone engaged in farming about the value of his scheme he would have found out at once how futile it is and would not have made a laughing stock of himself. And I am assured by those who know that many of the recipes for making cakes without eggs or butter are really more expensive than the old fashioned cakes made with these ingredients. After hearing the scornful remarks of a couple of competent housewives on this subject, I felt that Marie Antionette must have been a type of a certain class of public spirited enthusiasts. You will remember that when told that the people had no bread to eat she retorted: "Then why don't they eat little cakes." History does not record that she offered them a recipe for making the little cakes. Now, I do not want to discourage anyone from making helpful suggestions, but if they have no personal experience along the line of their suggestion they would be