

FARM AND DAIRY

AND RURAL HOME

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The Rural Publishing Company, Ltd.

PETERBORO, ONT.

"Read not to contradict and to confute, nor to believe and take for granted, but to weigh and consider."—Bacon.

Relief for the Rennet Situation

SINCE our last issue went to press, we have received two important communications, one from J. A. Ruddick, Commissioner of Dairying for Canada, and the other from Prof. H. H. Evans, of the O. A. C., regarding the rennet situation. These authorities agree that though for a short time considerable inconvenience may be experienced by cheese makers in securing sufficient rennet to meet their requirements, there does not appear to be any cause for apprehension that the cheese industry will be seriously damaged later in the season, owing to a failure of the rennet supply.

As is usual in such cases, the relief is due to several causes. The release of half a million rennets through the port of Archaipel will result in a considerable increase in the supply of extract as soon as it can be manufactured. The establishment of a factory in Toronto to manufacture extract from Canadian rennets, most of which have hitherto been wasted, helps to relieve the situation. The use of pepsin is also important, not only in that it assists in meeting the present condition, but also in the possibilities that it holds for the future. The high prices at present prevailing will be an inducement to companies to strive for the discovery of satisfactory substitutes for rennet, and it is possible that the present shortage will result in the perfecting of a coagulating substance that will free us from such complete dependence on the rennet supply.

Reimbursement for Sheep Losses

IMPORTANT changes were made during the last session of the Ontario Legislature in the act under which sheep owners are reimbursed for losses due to the dog nuisance. Municipal councils were empowered to indemnify such owners to

the full value of the sheep destroyed instead of to two-thirds of the value as formerly. It was made compulsory under a penalty of a fine of ten dollars for assessors to include all dogs in the assessment roll. Municipalities were also given the power to increase the dog tax, if this was found necessary to meet the increased demand for money to cover sheep losses.

These changes in the act met with no opposition in the legislature, and should be received with approval throughout Ontario. "The pestiferous dog" is acknowledged to be the chief cause of the rapid decline of the sheep industry in the province. The danger of having the result of years of painstaking and careful breeding in building up a flock destroyed in a night by a band of useless, roving curs, has prevented many farmers from keeping sheep. By taking advantage of their power to reimburse farmers in full for sheep killed by dogs municipalities can do much toward encouraging the sheep industry. If this necessitates an increase in the dog tax the result should be that the number of useless or ownerless dogs would be decreased, and the damage to flocks from this source materially lessened.

Depreciation Charges

DEPRECIATION is one of the heaviest charges against the farm machinery account. It is usual to write off ten per cent. annually from the value of farm equipment to meet this charge alone, whereas the interest rate is seven per cent. or less in most districts. Ten per cent., however, may be a rather excessive charge for depreciation. Investigations conducted in Minnesota, where the care bestowed on machinery is presumably not greater than in Canada, showed the depreciation to be about seven per cent., but since this was the average it may be safe to assume that on many farms the equipment decreases at least ten per cent. in value annually owing to ordinary wear and tear.

Since the loss by depreciation is variable there is an opportunity of effecting a considerable saving by keeping it down to the minimum. Such an opportunity is not afforded in all divisions of the farmer's expense account. Take interest, for example. He has little to do with fixing the rate that he has to pay. Governments have frequently tried to do that with but indifferent success. But by giving his equipment proper care a farmer greatly prolongs its usefulness and reduces the annual loss due to depreciation.

Of the factors that enter into the proper care of machinery shelter is the most important and the one most frequently neglected. Our field representative reports that almost everywhere he goes he sees evidence of this neglect. On one trip by rail of only twenty-five miles he counted nearly a dozen machines standing where their owners had finished using them last season. The list included two binders and several mowers. There was no lack of buildings on the farms where they could have been run in out of the sun and rain. It is safe to say that on such farms the depreciation losses are well above the average as found by the Minnesota investigation. Good care would keep the loss below instead of above the average.

Making the Railways Pay

THE annual deficits that two of our three great railways are facing, are due largely to the fact that they have laid thousands of miles of steel across vacant land, held from production for speculative purposes. As long as such lands remain unoccupied, the deficits will recur with the regularity of the seasons. It is an agricultural impossibility with the land at present under cultivation to furnish business enough to make the roads pay expenses. If it were, they would be paying now after the abnormal acreage and the abnormal yield of last year. If with the largest crop in the history of the west to move, they

require a \$23,000,000 loan to avoid falling into the receiver's hands it is probable that they will require still greater annual contributions until the vacant quarter sections are filled up.

But the quarter sections will not begin to fill up until after the war. European immigration has ceased. The movement from the United States, checked by the war prosperity that exists in that country, is now almost negligible. Western Canada has contributed more than her share of the troops for overseas service. The question now is not how to increase production and acreage, but how to maintain them while the war lasts. Until the war is over, therefore, the country will in all likelihood be called upon annually to meet constantly increasing deficits for the railway companies involved.

After the war, what? When emigration is again established, probably in greater volume than ever before, will the land already served by the railways be available to those who wish to settle on the land? Under our present land policy it cannot be available to many of them. The vast majority of them will be in an impoverished condition. The price that speculators will demand for the land will be a sufficient barrier to keep most of the immigrants from settling upon it. If they are forced, in order to secure available land, to go still further back into the wilderness, the cry will come for more railways. We will have a repetition of our railway blundering of the past, and our railway problem will still remain unsolved. If the land already served by the railways is made available, the situation will soon be relieved. Our railway problem is the result of our land policy in the past. Its solution depends on our land policy of the future. The clue to the solution is the taxation of land values such as has already been done to some extent in Alberta, and which has the effect of prying the speculator free from the land and making it available to those who want to use it for productive purposes.

The well-read town dweller has more to learn about the social problems of the farm than the well-read farmer has to learn about the problems of the town. Each, however, ought to know the other's problems, for the problems of each are the problems of the other. They are all problems of the nation. As long as all men, however, derive their living from the soil, so long will the problem of the farmer be the fundamental problem of the nation. Until recently, on account of the great development in industrial conditions, the problems of the town and the city have seemed most insistent; but now the more fundamental problems—the problems of the agriculturalist—are making themselves heard.—The Outlook.

A very strong, self-reliant people neither easily learns to act in concert nor easily brings itself to regard any middling good, any good short of the best, as an object ardently to be coveted and striven for. It keeps its eye on the grand prize, and these are to be won only by distancing competitors, by getting before one's comrade, by succeeding all by one's self; and so long as a people works thus individually, it does not work democratically.—Matthew Arnold ("Mixed Essays").

The first and greatest essential to a better social life is a common interest—whatever it be makes little difference—which shall lead to cooperation of all in a true spirit of service for a better welfare. All rural social arrangements should cut across class lines and command the interest of the whole rural population—Report of address of Prof. T. N. Carver, of Harvard, at Bangor Seminary.

He who is unable to live in society, or who has no need because he is sufficient for himself, must be either a beast or a god; he is no part of the state.—Jovett ("The Politics of Aristotle").