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THE ENSILAGE QUESTION.

It is evident that the ensilage question is not yet fully settled, and that a further and more careful study of it is needed before we can obtain a true balancing of its merits and demerits. An Ensilage Congress was held in New York city a few weeks ago, when a number of dairymen bore testimony to the value of ensilage as an article of fodder for milch cows. They all claimed that it increased and kept up the flow of milk; but when they came to speak of the quality of the milk they were content with the use of negative terms. "No bad results have been experienced," "customers did not complain of it," "no injurious effect on the cattle was seen," etc., were current phrases of the several speakers. Perhaps the fact that the milk from ensilage fed cows had been rejected by the New York Condensed Milk Company rendered them somewhat cautious; and perhaps also the statement contained in a paper read by Prof. Manly Miles, to the effect that bacteria were bred in ensilage during the process of fermentation, contributed to their reserve. Prof. Miles is of opinion that bacteria produce the acidity which is said to affect the milk, and that if they could be killed there would be no acidity. He suggests that the silo be filled leisurely, and that no weights be put on until the temperature is high enough to prevent its falling below the point necessary to kill the bacteria, say from 115° to 122°. The result he believes would be uniformly sweet ensilage. Prof. Brown, of the Guelph College, has also been conducting a series of experiments with it, but chiefly with a view to ascertain its value as a fodder for milch cows; and while he hesitates to make a positive statement, it is apparent that he entertains grave doubts of its usefulness.

OUR DAIRY INTERESTS.

The annual meetings of the Dairymen's Associations of Ontario, East and West, have been held during the past month, and a good deal of valuable discussion has taken place at both. As usual at these meetings cheese and cheese-making were the leading topics, and it is needless to say that they were discussed with much ability; we hope with profit also. But it appears to us that at the present time the Associations might render a greater service to the country did they give at least an equal prominence to the subjects of butter and butter-making. No one can deny that Ontario has made wonderful progress in the cheese industry, under the factory system, during the past twenty years. In fact the industry has almost been created within this period, and its product adds millions of dollars to the wealth of the country. It is now an established industry, and for that result much credit is due to the Dairymen's Associations. It is now about time for them to take up the creamery

system, and see if it is not possible to do for butter what they have done for cheese? The neglected industry is no less important than the cherished one; nay, we think, that the making of butter is of greater importance than the making of cheese, and is deserving of a greater measure of encouragement.

THE GRANGE AND ITS WORK.

The granger's parliament was held this year in Toronto. It made no noise; it opened and closed without the firing of cannon, or any other tomfoolery of a kindred sort; and its deliberations were carried on with as much decorum as though a speaker with a cocked hat had occupied the chair, or a golden mace had been displayed to exercise authority over them. The parliament was in session for a week, and during that time members applied themselves diligently to the work before them. There was no bunkum talk, no short sittings, no obstruction of business, no needless motions for information; but a sensible, practical, earnest consideration of subjects that interest the whole community, and especially the farmer. The members worked hard, as well as late and early, and possibly the results might have been more satisfactory had the session been prolonged to a fortnight. But any one who has taken care to inform himself of the proceedings of the body cannot fail to have observed that they were marked by good sense, and that the aim of members was to make the occupation of the farmer more important and more valuable than it now is, and to lift it to a higher place in relation to all other affairs of the people. There are a great many questions of a public nature that concern farmers only, and the solution of which can only be arrived at by patient study and discussion. The local granges gather up the local wisdom, and the representatives of these lodges in the Provincial Grange meet together well qualified to weigh the pros and cons of a subject, to eliminate error and to crystallize principles. As an educating body the grange has certainly done excellent work in this Province, and we hope it will go on and prosper. There are vast fields of usefulness before it.

ANOTHER WATER-DROP.

EDITOR RURAL CANADIAN,—I am in receipt of a copy of the RURAL CANADIAN, sent, I suppose, as a specimen. In it I find an article on "A Drop of Water Magnified." Sir, I am in very grave doubts of the propriety of publishing such things. You do not state where the water was got, whether in a dirty puddle or in a clean spring well. If from the last, such representations as you make are enough to frighten and terrify any moderate person from taking a drink of water, as nothing but the veriest filth can be got. Assuming that you are correct in your representations, it behoves the citizens of Toronto to pause and consider what kind of stuff the liquid called water they are supplied with, taken from the bay of Toronto, a place notoriously dirty as it was forty years ago, when all dirt and filth was washed into it, and all the dead dogs, cats and other animals who are thrown or washed into the lake. These things are accumulating as population increases. What a nice medley of water you must be drinking in your city of

Toronto. No wonder I see in the Toronto papers from time to time that your water is foul. Taking all these things into consideration, your article to which I refer is fitted to do injury to many such as myself who are very particular how many toads and lizards we have to drink, and what will be the fate of them or us after drinking.

BIDDULPH.

[We almost regret giving the illustration of "A Drop of Water Magnified" in last month's RURAL CANADIAN. We did not realize the consequences. Our good friend "Biddulph" appears to have been fascinated by it. He has gazed on the picture so long that it has taken possession of him. By this time he can, we hope, look upon the hideous monsters calmly. "Tis forty years since" he has looked on the beautiful bay. Times have changed, and Toronto has changed with them. The horrors of which he speaks so feelingly have disappeared. The city water supply is derived from the limpid waters of Lake Ontario. It is pure, healthful and good. The water containing the animalculæ is not pure spring water. Our good friend is not, we hope, laughing at us and merely talking in a roundabout way as an excuse for drinking his spring water with a qualification. Those who continue to do so for long end in seeing wonderful things in drops of water and elsewhere—snakes!]

SEED CATALOGUES.

We have received the following catalogues of Seeds, Plants, Shrubs, Roses, Vines, etc. Our readers should write at once for such as they wish, and make their selections now. Catalogues are sent free upon application:

Steele Bros. & Co., corner Front and Jarvis streets, Toronto.

Wm. Rennie, corner Adelaide and Jarvis Streets, Toronto.

James A. Simmers, King Street, Toronto.

James Rennie, East Market Square, Toronto.

George Keith, 124 King Street East, Toronto.

Peter Henderson & Co., 35 and 37 Courtlandt Street, New York.

B. K. Bliss & Sons, 34 Barclay Street, New York.

James J. H. Gregory, Marblehead, Mass.

D. M. Ferry, Detroit, Mich.

Hiram Sibley & Co., Rochester, New York.

James Vick, Rochester, New York.

Chase Bros., Rochester, New York.

The above-named parties are believed to be reliable in every respect, and orders intrusted to them will have the best attention.

WE refer our readers to a "SPECIAL OFFER" in another column. The company publish an attractive national map, giving full and reliable information respecting northern Minnesota and north-eastern Dakota which is mailed free to every one writing for the same.

THE attention of our readers is directed to the "Combined Milk Bucket and Strainer" as advertised in another column. It is claimed that the new combination secures cleanliness, convenience, and the safety of the milker. We notice that it is endorsed by Professor Brown, of the Ontario Agricultural College, Guelph.

WE shall be pleased to see an increasing number of intelligent farmers make use of THE RURAL CANADIAN to give their practical experience on every-day work. If they write short letters and ask questions, we shall try and give useful answers. Our paper is for the farmer; and we hope to make every succeeding number better than the previous one.