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EDITORIAL.

Watch the crowd, and step in where it rushes out, is a policy which more than one shrewd farmer has followed to his great advantage.

There is probably no country under the sun for which some excuse to drag it into militarism could not be found. Grant the militarists their desire, and where may the evangel of peace retain a foothold?

"As I received good advice from you before, and since one good turn deserves another, I have another question to ask," wrote a Prince Edward Island correspondent some time since. At that rate, if all inquirers were similarly minded, we would soon be under some rather extensive obligations. If inquirers really wish to return the compliment, let them enclose some bit of helpful experience when writing for information.

It is significant and gratifying to note a popular sentiment across the line against precipitating a tariff war with Canada, the best per capita customer of the United States. Our trade is too valuable to lose, and we have some raw materials, such as pulpwood, that are particularly needed in either the crude or manufactured form. A permanent system of reciprocity would be a grand thing for both countries, but the Republic must make the next move. We have been repulsed often enough.

An item last week gave the comparative attendance of students at the agricultural colleges in Canada this year and last, showing a very encouraging ratio of increase. Figures to hand from Macdonald College, Que., show a similar increase, the total being 329, as compared with 268 in 1908-09. The number is distributed among the several classes, as follows: School for teachers, 161; increase, 34. School for household science, 71; a decrease of 5. School of agriculture, 97; increase, 32, representing a net betterment of 61.

In the clay-road sections especially, one of the best items of fall work is to go over the highways several times before freezing-up with the split-log drag or leveller, crowning them up, and letting off the water. A combination of heavy traffic such as we have in the dairy and fruit sections, with occasional heavy rains, will wear any road into ruts and holes, and freezing up in that shape means months of discomfort. The water does the damage. Get out with the drag, and have a smooth road to ride over.

The capacity in which criminal lawyers score their greatest notoriety is the very one which should be denied them entirely, viz., appeal to the jury. In these appeals, counsel are actuated, not by a supreme desire for the triumph of justice, but by a tremendous desire to win their cases and make names for themselves. Thus, trials become keen competitions of wit and forensic ability between opposing counsel, with the ends of justice a mere incident of the affair. A final summing up of the evidence is probably desirable, but the judge is the man to do it, and he should review it dispassionately and impartially. Then let the jury decide, helped, as they would be, to a sound judgment, instead of having their minds beclouded, their reason confounded, and their judgment biased, as is so often the case to-day. It is facts that should weigh, not oratory.

Mutual Insurance of Live Stock.

A system of mutual insurance of live stock has been for some time in operation in England and the Continent, by what are known as cow and pig clubs. In 1905 the Board of Agriculture ascertained the existence of 1,021 pig clubs in England. Cow clubs are less numerous, and are known to have decreased of late. Some, however, have been in existence for many years. One in Shropshire was established in 1838, had 518 members in 1907, and a reserve fund of £997, while another cow club in the same county dates from 1842, and, with 296 members, has accumulated a reserve fund of £1,440. The oldest registered society is one established in Lancashire in 1807. In England, live-stock insurance societies can be established by mutual agreement, and are not required to be registered or formally incorporated in any way, but the Friendly Societies Act provides for the optional registration of societies called in the Act. Cattle Insurance Societies for the purpose of insurance to any amount against loss of cattle, sheep, lambs, swine, horses and other animals by death from disease or otherwise.

It is generally found desirable to limit the operations to a comparatively small area, such as a few adjacent parishes. One objection to the small area is that, in the event of great mortality, such as an epidemic of contagious disease, the Society may be unable to afford help when it is most needed. To provide for such contingency, it is well to adopt a rule to the effect that, if the demands on the funds, owing to an epidemic, exceed the total amount of funds in hand, the proportion of compensation payable may be reduced. Provision is made by many clubs for a levy on all the members, in the event of the funds being insufficient.

Compensation is frequently paid at the rate of three-fourths of the full value, but in some the value is allowed up to, but not to exceed, £10 for a cow, with a lower limit for calves. In the case of pigs, it is not uncommon to pay the full amount at which the pig is valued.

In the event of compulsory slaughter by order of the Board of Agriculture or a local authority, the compensation payable by the society would only be the difference, if any, between the sum for which the society was liable in the case of death, and the amount actually paid by the Board of Agriculture or the local authority.

Funds are raised by means of an entrance fee and a fixed annual subscription for each animal, in addition to a charge for inspection and marking on entry.

The Friendly Societies Act requires registered societies to make provision in their rules for the investment of their funds, and it is desirable that unregistered societies should specify in the same way that the funds not wanted for immediate use or to meet the usual accruing liabilities, shall be judiciously invested. It has been found that, on the average, about 3 per cent. of the insured cows die during the year, milk fever being the principal cause of death.

Who Gets the Difference?

The last United States Congress increased the duty on lemons, whereupon the railways in California put up their rates on lemons proportionately. This is said to be a common trick with some of the railways. When hay was \$14 a ton in Pasadena, Cal., the freight rate was ten dollars, but when hay rose to \$18, the railway clapped on \$4 more in transportation charges, thus leaving the hay-grower just what he had before, and gobbling the extra profits for themselves. This is a case where an efficient railway commission ought to shine.

Importance of Phosphorus in Soil Fertility.

An increase of six to ten bushels of wheat per acre in the year of application, and an improvement in the grade, with prospects for continuation of benefits in some degree for several successive years, all for an outlay of four dollars per acre for superphosphate, is the experience of a Manitoba farmer on a sandy loam prairie soil.

If artificial applications of phosphorus are required for best results on the prairie soils of the West, does it not stand to reason that they may be on many fields in the East? Not that it necessarily is so on all lands, for phosphorus is the element most abundantly stored in the average run of our soils. The trouble is that most of the supply of phosphorus is in the form of tri-calcic phosphate, which is very slowly soluble, and, therefore, a plant growing on land stored with enough of this element to supply the needs of hundreds of crops may be stunted for lack of enough in available or soluble forms. Then, too, it should be remembered that phosphorus is the element removed from our farms by either grain-raising or stock husbandry. If clover be raised, stock kept, and the manure carefully saved and applied, the farm may increase in its supply of humus and nitrogen. It may even increase in its supply of available potash, particularly if pains be taken to conserve the liquid manure, which is rich in potash; but whichever the system of farming, large quantities of phosphorus are either carried off the place as grain, or walked off in the form of bone. Thus the supply of phosphorus tends ever to reduce.

Cyril G. Hopkins, of Illinois, who has given much study to the question of soil fertility, maintains that phosphorus is the key to the problem, so far as the prairie soils of the Middle Western States are concerned. Potash, he finds, they have in abundance for ordinary purposes, but phosphorus they lack in some measure, and when this is applied, conditions are improved for the growth of legumes, which collect nitrogen from the air, and thus provide for perpetual renewal of the supply of that third element necessary for a balanced plant ration.

What he finds true in Illinois will doubtless apply in Eastern Canada, also, except that on some of our soils, especially the lighter ones, we may need to furnish occasional dressings of potash, as well as phosphorus. Potash may be furnished in wood ashes, where available, supplemented by commercial potash salts, such as sulphate or muriate of potash, kainit, etc.

Economical Way to Apply Phosphorus.

Phosphorus may be purchased in several forms, the most soluble of which is superphosphate, which is rock or bone phosphate treated with sulphuric acid to convert it into a more soluble form. Unfortunately, this form is the most expensive. Others that are cheaper per unit of phosphorus contained, but much slower in action, are bone meal, steamed bone flour, and basic slag. Cheapest of all, but likewise slowest in action, is the tricalcic or raw ground rock phosphate. Fortunately, the chemists tell us that this raw ground phosphate rock may be used to excellent advantage as a stable absorbent, not only soaking up the urine, and thus helping to retain the ammonia, but also being beneficially affected by the chemical reaction of the fermenting manure, and thereby rendered much more valuable than if applied separately without the manure. The use of phosphate rock in this way is attended by no indirect losses, as is the