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TOPICS FOR THE WEEK

"Farming" Better Than Ever.

That FARMING as a weekly is day by day growing in favor among the practical and leading farmers cannot be doubted. The following is only one of the many letters which come to us commending our weekly edition. It should be a weekly visitor in every farm home. Its weekly market reports and up-to-date matter is just what every farmer needs:

DEAR EDITOR,—Enclosed please find express order for \$2.50 for one year's subscription for FARMING and also for *The Canadian Magazine*, according to your clubbing list. I am much pleased with FARMING as a weekly paper, especially with the different breeders' associations' lists of names and stocks and prices, also with the market reports and forecasts. I have been a subscriber through all the stages since it was started in Hamilton about seventeen years ago. Long may it continue its course of usefulness is the wish of its friend.

MAJOR J. VARCOE.

Carlow, April 18, 1898

Agricultural News and Comments.

The Ohio Experimental Station recommends farmers to mix their own fertilizers. It is claimed that this can be done quite readily and will save the farmer considerable outlay in purchasing fertilizers. The mixed fertilizers sold in Ohio are known to contain practically three materials, tankage, acid phosphate, and muriate of potash. The station claims that these materials can be purchased separately, and mixed by the farmers themselves and would lessen the cost at least one-sixth as compared with the cost of commercial fertilizers.

A great International Horse Show will take place at the Crystal Palace, London, England on May the 28th, 30th, and 31st. Since the outbreak of hostilities there has been some apprehension on the part of many American horse fanciers as to shipping horses. The show authorities wish to point out that there will be no danger whatever in making shipments under the British flag. The international character of this show will furnish an opportunity to breeders on this side to show off the good qualities of their horses before the purchasers of fine horses in Great Britain.

The western pork packers for the year ending March 1st last, slaughtered 20,201,260 hogs, an increase of 3,372,282 over the previous year and of 2,448,186 over the greatest year on record. The packers paid for their raw material—the hogs—\$174,382,000, which is \$38,926,000 more than for

the preceding year, and the largest amount ever paid in a single year. The average cost of hogs last year was \$3.70 for the summer, \$3.53 for the winter, and \$3.63 for the year, against an average of \$3.30 for the previous year; with the exception of 1896-1897 the average cost was less than for any year since 1880. The average weight of the hogs packed during the winter season was 235.35 pounds, against 244.80 and 240.71 pounds, respectively, the two preceding years.

According to the Wisconsin Experimental Station the average milk yield from mature sows ranges from 4.1 pounds to 5.8 pounds daily. From experiments made with four sows the highest yield of milk in any one day was 8.7 pounds, and the lowest 1.2 pounds. Nine samples of sows' milk gave the following average composition: Water, 80.35 per cent.; fat, 8.24 per cent.; solids, not fat, 11.41 per cent. It is about twice as rich as the milk of average cows. Microscopic examination shows that the fat globules of sow's milk are of very minute size, on an average only about one-quarter that of averaged sized fat globules in cow's milk. A sow will yield about one-third of a pound of fat per day.

A few years ago it was not thought possible to ship eggs from far-off Australia to England and have them in a fresh condition. To-day, eggs arrive from Australia in such first-class condition that they pass as new-laid. This has been rendered possible by the universal employment of refrigerating apparatus on ship board. The eggs, while perfectly fresh, are forwarded by the Australian farmers to the cold storage, and are shipped to England at the time when eggs are scarce and consequently at their dearest. Many thousands of dozens, packed in boxes with cardboard divisions filled up with dry pea-husks, are now forwarded to England from November to January. In a recent consignment the local price of eggs in Australia was fivepence-halfpenny per dozen, the freight and packing cost about threepence per dozen, and they realized one shilling and sixpence per dozen retail on arrival in England. Why cannot Canadians follow the same plan?

During the three months ending March 31st the imports of live animals for food, into England, amounted in value to £2,634,215 as compared with £2,319,300 in the corresponding period of 1897. The number of oxen imported was 139,526, against 122,249. Of these 110,789, against 100,958 last year came from the United States; 23,358, against 16,756, from the Argentine Republic; 288, against 369 last year, from Canada, and 5,091, against 4,166 from other countries. There were 182,069 sheep imported against 137,826 for the same period last year, of which 59,901, against 53,051, came from the United States; 116,338, against 82,189, from the Argentine Republic; 3,511, against 2,586, from Canada; and 2,319 from other countries. The number of pigs imported during the quarter was 188, none having arrived last year.

Mr. W. T. Crandall, commercial agent of the Dominion Government in Great Britain, in his evidence before the Agricultural Committee in reference to the export apple trade, pointed out that much injury has been done to Canadian reputation abroad by the dishonesty of shippers, who have been putting good apples at the ends of the barrels and culls in the centre. He suggested that only the best fruit should be sent to Great Britain, and that second grades should be evaporated for domestic use. Professor Robertson said

that he did not find more than 2 or 3 per cent. of the total Canadian shipments dishonestly packed. More than these were landed in poor condition, owing to the methods of packing and shipping. Buyers in Great Britain were prone to magnify the bad points of Canadian shipments and overlook the good points. The results of last year's shipments of fruits were most encouraging.

The number of horses imported into Great Britain during the three months ending March 31st last was 13,470, against 11,517 last year. Of these 10,970, against 8,407, came from the United States, 274, against 807, from Canada, and 2,226, against 2,303, from other countries. The value of the horses imported was £370,812, against £294,980 last year. This is an average of nearly £28 each, against less than £26 for the corresponding period last year. The number of horses exported from Great Britain for the same period was 9,616, against 7,662 last year, and of these 6,033 went to Belgium, 1,649 to Holland, 1,301 to France, and 627 to other countries. The value of the horses exported was £212,757, against £155,349 in the corresponding period last year.

Our British Letter.

(From Our Special Correspondent.)

London, Eng., April 13, '98.

Canadian Cheese in Favor: Canadian Apples to the Front.

Your readers will remember my saying in a recent letter that Canadian cheese is improving in popular favor here, and that it was becoming considered by shop-keepers as better than "American," (American is the term used in Great Britain for anything coming from the United States, and it is in that sense I employ it now). An ounce of practice is better than a ton of theory; and ocular demonstration is superior to any amount of mere statement. I wish, therefore, to quote in support of the latter contention from a circular now before me, and which has been issued within the last few days to all the residents in a London suburban district of some 40,000 to 50,000 souls. The circular is issued by an important retail trader and is some eighteen inches long by twelve inches broad. It is boldly printed in red and black. What does it say? After quoting Brittany and Australian butter it goes on to state the prices of the cheeses sold at the retailer's establishment, and as to these, it offers "Finest American cheeses" at "6d. per lb.," then comes "Canadian Cheddar, very mild, 8d. per lb."

This I think amply proves that Canadian cheese is holding its own very well against "American," and this in spite of the statements in the last report of the United States Secretary for Agriculture against United States cheeses.

My wife, a farmer's daughter, considers she knows a bit of English Cheddar when she tastes it, but she has, I am bound to confess, been mistaken more than once, and has purchased Canadian in mistake for our own Cheddar. Good English Cheddar is mild, flaky, and possesses the whole of the cream of the milk. Canadian Cheddar seems to possess, generally speaking, the first and last of these, but lacks the flakiness. This may be accounted for by the selling of the cheese in a less ripe or less old state than that common to our best British Cheddar. Of course, Canadian farmers may say that to dispose of their cheese early is more profitable than to keep it till old, and if that is so, then I need perhaps say nothing further on the subject. Anyway, 8d. a lb. is not an ideal price in my opinion for the Canadian commodity whilst the British article placed on a slab side by side with it realizes 10d. and 11d.