

Notes on Model Farm Reports.

SIR,—The last paragraph on page 235, FARMER'S ADVOCATE for December, is fit comment on the cattle-feeding experiment at the Model Farm given in same number, pp. 274-5. Give the paragraph referred to another insertion, please, in large type, and farmers will learn more from it than from all that the Agricultural School has yet published. Of what interest is it to know that the Superintendent of our Model Farm compliments the State of Michigan on having "thorough gentlemen in the management of their Agricultural College"? Would not one suppose them to be gentlemen? Why does the Commissioner of Agriculture send out from his Department a report which, however useful in some respects, overflows with the characteristics of the Superintendent's extraordinary style of composition? In the range of English literature can the following paragraphs be matched:

"I am of opinion there is within every man's reach a way of ascertaining the relative value of all our farm crops, much more simple than any form of analysis yet in use. What that is or may be for each I shall not at present indicate, but with reference to turnips it is worth enquiring whether there exists any plan by solidity, density and weight, or specific gravity, call it by any name you choose. Is it possible to make a standard as a fair guide to give an idea of value?"—Report 1877, page 27.

Who cares to know that the superintendent has an opinion which he "shall not at present indicate"? With reference to turnips, it is not worth enquiring whether specific gravity indicates value because it is a well-known test universally used for determining the value of sugar beet. The report is addressed to the Commissioner of Agriculture. Why ask him to give the specific gravity test any name he may choose? It is not the Commissioner's duty to give it any but its right name, and I crave leave to doubt if it is his duty to print, at the public expense, that the Superintendent knows a thing or two, but he will not tell it, like many other matters of like value to be found in the Model Farm reports. Business is business, sir. If an agricultural teacher desires to indulge in the use of the words "condition" for conduct, "a large batch of Ireland's choice tuber" for "a potato patch," "manchy, danchy" for muddy or dirty, "professor" for occupation, applied to farming—he should choose some other place than a report to a public department. Writing of a fine sugar beet crop, the Superintendent says:—"We are subject to analysis for check on sugar value." It is to be hoped the professor of Chemistry will content himself with the specific gravity test, and not subject the Superintendent to a course of acids, philters and re-agents. As reports upon agricultural experiments and farm labors, the Superintendent's will be of value if given in simple language, so that they may be understood by the great body of farmers who look upon their calling as an occupation, and many of whom would scorn to call it a profession.

RUSTIC, Kingston, Ont.

SIR,—Please inform me, through your valuable paper, what kind of roots would do best on marsh land that never was ploughed before, and how to keep the grubs from destroying the young plants, and also if carrots could be grown on land where young grape-vines were planted this fall without injuring the vines?

N. M., Chippewa, Ont.

[The first step in the improvement of marsh land is to drain it. Plough it some months, if possible, before cropping it. The exposure of the soil when exposed by ploughing to the influence of the atmosphere will add greatly to its productive powers. A light dressing of lime will be of great service to it in decomposing the inert vegetable matter, and converting it into available plant food. Mangolds would then do well in such a soil; so would turnips—not swedes. Carrots would do well between young grape-vines.]

SIR,—This is the first year I have taken your publication, and am well pleased with it. The farming community stand in need of such a journal. I am glad to notice that you invite and encourage farmers to give their experience in the different topics of interest to themselves through the columns of the ADVOCATE, and this is a privilege they should take advantage of. Much good might be done if there could be a freer intercourse amongst farmers, and I would be glad to see common farmers freely telling to other farmers what they know about farming.

H. D.

The Grange and the Farmers.

SIR,—A great commotion was made throughout our country a few years ago by the "Grange." It promised to do fine things for the farmer. It was to be the panacea for all his evils. It was to be the lever that should lift him from his down-trodden condition, and place him on the high vantage ground which nature designed him to hold. It promised him higher prices for what he had to sell, and (by doing away with "middle-class men") lower prices for what he had to buy. It was to be social, intellectual, educational, co-operative, and a bond of union linking in one great brotherhood the agriculturists of all lands. It was to do banking and insurance always advantageous to the farmer. But have these lofty pretensions, even in a moderate degree, been realized? By no means. Like most novelties, the "Grange" spread rapidly, put forth a sort of mushroom growth, and has passed—or is passing—rapidly away. Whether owing to its being a Yankee institution or not, it never took a firm hold of our people. The fact is, farmers have no faith in "secret societies" in agricultural matters. The "Grange," then, I repeat, has failed. And although it may, by shifting to new parts, and by extraordinary effort put forth by a few designing men who are making money by the concern, linger along for a few years, yet it is doomed. The report of the last meeting of the Dominion Grange is now before me. Anything more doleful than the President's address and the Secretary's report need not be looked for. "The returns clearly show signs of decay in parts of the heritage." Comfort is sought to be drawn from the statement that "in the annals of any society more or less unsound wood, unnatural growth and lifeless branches have to be pruned off." This language cannot apply to the Grange. There is no pruning—no lopping off. The whole body dies—dies voluntarily rather than live. Witness Brant, Middlesex and other counties where the Order was first planted, and show me what life there is in it. The Secretary says that 32 subordinate lodges have been formed within the year; but when he tells us that 4 of these are in Parry Sound and 21 in Nova Scotia, 1 in Quebec and 1 in Manitoba, leaving only 5 for Ontario, we need no one to tell us that it is faring hard with the Grange. Furthermore, no less than 12 have forfeited their charters within the same time, and these all in Ontario. Thus, then, more than two die for each one organized, and this, too, in the Province where they were first planted and which is best adapted for their growth. Let your readers judge, then, whether or not the Grange is a success.

BRANT, Brantford, Ont.

SIR,—Please give answers to the following enquiries and oblige: 1.—Which is the best way to make a root-house on a rented farm, when the landlord will not build it, and how much sawdust does it take to turn frost? 2.—In what proportion are mangolds equal to turnips for cattle? 3.—Which is the best feed for horses in the winter-time that have little or nothing to do?

SUBSCRIBER, Bartonville.

[1.—A root-house such as you propose can be easily and cheaply constructed of logs, or of boards lined also with boards about a foot apart from the outer ones, the space between being filled with sawdust or tanbark. If the root-house be built on porous soil, or if it be well drained, the surface may be sunk, say a foot; the earth so removed will serve to bank up the house. It is necessary to have a chimney or flue by which the moisture from the sweating roots will escape. A double roof interlined with straw or sawdust will keep out the frost above. The flue should be stopped in case of frost. 2.—The principal difference between mangolds and turnips for feeding is that the former are better for milch cows and young stock, and the latter for fattening. The quantity fed of each may be about the same. Mangolds will keep well late in the season, better than turnips, and in this respect they are more profitable. 3.—What is the best food for horses in the winter that have little to do? The best food for horses is well-saved hay, retaining the freshness of the meadow, with oats also well saved. If fed exclusively on hay and oats, the required amount for an ordinary horse is 12 lbs. of oats and 14 lbs. of hay. This is for a horse doing moderate work. It is well that it be varied at least occasionally to aid digestion. For this purpose bran is very useful, and when used a proportionate diminution of oats may be made. We have sometimes given swedes for this purpose. Carrots may in a measure take the place of oats.]

Manitoba and the North-West.

SIR,—I have taken your valuable and interesting paper for the past year, and am well satisfied that the information and advice therein is fully worth the sum of one dollar.

I was three months in Manitoba and the North-West last summer, and was very much pleased with the land and the crops. I think your picture of the country was a little strong. No doubt they have lots of mud, especially in a wet season like last spring. The roads were good from Winnipeg west; the first week in August I drove a team out to the Portage, and the roads were in good condition. I was out to the Rocky Mountains by the North Trail, and then west of the Little Saskatchewan. There are some wet tracts of land that will have to be drained before they will be fit for farming; but there are lots of high, dry lands—room for thousands. I agree with you about the reserves in Manitoba. I think it will be a drawback to the Province having so much land reserved and held by speculators. I see by the last ADVOCATE that you were afraid to drink the Manitoba water in sloughs and holes dug in low spots about two feet deep. This water is not good, but those who have wells mostly have good water. There are lots of spring creeks running from the mountains, and I drank as good spring water in Manitoba and the North-West as we can get here, and we have "A 1" water here; in fact, the chief things we can brag about are plenty of wood and water, with any amount of stone.

Can you inform me if cattle can be taken through in bond to Manitoba the same as before the U. S. Act came in force prohibiting cattle going to the States? S. T., Haliburton, Ont.

[We inquired of the U. S. Consul in this city in regard to the subject of your enquiry. He could not furnish us with the information required, but informed us of the following ridiculous, amusing and vexing incident: A few days ago a Canadian farmer left our fair Dominion under some brief delusion or temptation (as we did on one occasion), thinking to better his condition in Uncle Sam's territory. The Canadian was moving bag and baggage a car-load of goods. The Americans allow an emigrant to take his teams and implements free of duty, if for actual settlement; but the Canadian had put a cow in his car among other goods. He left Windsor in Canada all right, but as soon as he touched Detroit, on the American side, the Custom-house officer would not allow him to land his car and cow on their coast. The farmer shipped his car back to Canada; there the Canadian Custom-house officer would not allow him to land either, as cattle were prohibited from importation. We know not how long the poor man and beast were detained on the water, but after a good deal of "red-tape" work he was allowed to land on the American side. The Consul directed us to apply to the Custom officer at Port Huron, which we did. The following is the reply: "In reply to your letter, you are informed that the importation of neat cattle is prohibited absolutely in the circular instructions from the Secretary of the Treasury.—J. P. SANBORN, Collector."]

SIR,—You will oblige by forwarding me name and address of F. C. E., who writes in December number on manufacture of starch from potatoes. If you can furnish me with ways and means of obtaining necessary information for starting a factory next fall, you will be conferring a great favor.

D. M., Sauris East, P. E. I.

[With the consent of our correspondent we give his address: F. C. Eastwood, in care of McNair, Greenbow & Co., Manchester, England.]

SIR,—I may say I would be pleased to have you publish information respecting starch factories, and the cost of erecting and running them. Sugar beet can grow here exceedingly well. I had a quarter of an acre this summer in not very good ground. Yield, 120 bushels. I made also some syrup from the beet, and I see no difficulty in the way to prevent our farmers making their own syrup or molasses. In fact it can be done with as little trouble as most of them take with making soap. When every farmer raises beets, that is the time for a sugar factory.

R. McN., Stanley Bridge, P. E. I.

SIR,—A good substitute for Paris Green, and one that farmers can have cheap, is boiled cedar branches. Use the liquor as you would Paris Green. Sure death to potato bugs.

J. M. D., Fredericton, N. B.