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EDITORIAL.

Do Not Lose Faith in Fresh Air.

Not without some apprehension, we publish in this issue a review of the bulletin, "Stable Ventilation," by M. H. Reynolds and C. C. Lipp, of the Minnesota Experiment Station. The subject is so very important, and all information pertaining to it of such consequence in our present discussion of the stable question, that we decided to run the risk of printing it with this caution, lest some may misconstrue it.

The bulletin, which is the first of a series, adduces considerable scientific information bearing on the subject, and records the results of certain preliminary experimentation with a couple of steers, each of which was kept for irregular alternate periods in a "closed stall," where the ventilation was very bad; and in an open stall where it was pretty good. Various laboratory methods were used to determine the physiological effect of keeping the animals in the closed stall. So far the results have shown a surprisingly small effect of bad ventilation, and the opinion is ventured that in northern climates it may be possible to get along in winter with less ventilation than commonly advised by writers. The fact was brought out that the animal system is very adaptable, and when either of the steers was in the closed stall for a time he became accustomed to the conditions and evidenced no apparent discomfort.

While the investigators are to be congratulated upon having essayed this difficult task of deciding what may be accepted as a minimum standard of ventilation, it cannot be emphasized too strongly that the experimentation thus far reported on has been of such a nature that one would not be justified in drawing positive conclusions therefrom. Neither of the steers was in the closed stall for more than a few weeks at a time, hence there was no evidence to show what would be the ultimate effect of continued confinement in it. We have in mind instances where fattening steers have been kept in warm stables, and did well enough for a time, then stiffened up, and were only brought around by turning into an airy shed for a time and given exercise. There is the further effect, or assumed effect, to consider, viz., the influence of bad ventilation on the health and vigor of succeeding generations of stock. It is conceivable that a slight impairment of the stamina of one generation might prepare the seed-bed for tuberculosis in the next or perhaps a later one. The notable success attending the fresh-air treatment for consumptive humans indicates the extreme probability that it would be good as a preventive of a similar disease in the lower animals.

So, while we welcome the efforts of scientists, we are by no means inclined to formulate conclusions without practical feeding tests covering the lifetime of several animals, and, better still, a test extending to the second, third or fourth generation. Most people have a sort of intuitive faith in fresh air—though some do not manifest it in a very practical way—and we surmise the faith is well founded. At any rate, pending undeniable evidence to the contrary, let us not lose faith in fresh air, and when the scientists have got their bearings, we shall probably find we have not been far astray.

While the subject is being settled by scientists, what is the proper attitude for the stockman? Surely, to keep away from the danger-line. A gentleman hiring a coachman, asked the first of three applicants how near he could drive to the edge of a precipice and not go over. "One inch," was the reply. No. 2 ventures "Six inches," but the third man proclaimed his in-

tention to drive just as far from the edge as he possibly could, and he was at once entrusted with the position.

Ontario Wants Cheap Power.

At the municipal election in Toronto, on Wednesday, January 2nd, the ratepayers of the Queen City voted on a by-law to authorize the council to enter into negotiations with the Ontario Government's Hydro-electric Commission to secure cheap electric power from Niagara Falls, on a plan provided by an act at the last session of the Provincial Legislature. The by-law carried by an overwhelming majority. On Tuesday, January 7th, over a dozen other important cities and towns in the western portion of the Province took plebiscites on similar by-laws, and, without a solitary exception, the issue resulted in a sweeping victory for the desired measure.

The by-law so emphatically endorsed does not bind any municipality in any way. It simply authorizes the local councils to go ahead in negotiations which, it is hoped, may lead to the submission at a later date of a definite business proposition. The fact that the by-laws do not tie the municipalities up to any particular scheme, doubtless accounted in some measure for the ease with which they passed.

Yet, the magnificence of the majorities throughout the whole "Niagara zone" means something. What it means is partly deducible from the circumstances. It is a notorious fact that the promoters of the electric-power enterprises at Niagara Falls poured out their money lavishly in effort to hoodwink the people. The effrontery of their methods, and the shallow transparency of their arguments, or rather pretences, were an insult to the intelligence of the Ontario public. The Ontario public resented it. It was not convinced by anonymous articles, paid for by the Pellatt-Nicholls syndicate, to inform (?) the electorate concerning the points at issue. The Ontario public wilfully declined to be enlightened regarding the immense economy of power at \$35 per horse-power (which is what the power syndicates, in their beneficence, would charge us) over the same kind of energy at \$15 to \$20, which is about what we may expect to get it at through the instrumentality of the Hydro-electric Power Commission. The Ontario public went perversely ahead and held up both hands for its own interests, deaf to the representations of syndicates which need the money to make up dividends on millions of watered stock.

The people of Ontario seem pretty thoroughly convinced that if they want electric energy at a price that will make it more economical than coal, they must see to it themselves. The development of electric energy requires so much capital, and the water-power franchises are so easily cornered, that to leave it for competition among capitalists to fix prices of power, would simply be to put ourselves in the grip of an inexorable monopoly that would maintain the price of electric power at the standard fixed by coal and destroy the scenic beauty of our splendid waterfalls, with but the merest incidental benefits to the people as a whole.

The power by-law majorities are a significant sign of the times—a sign of the irresistible tide of public opinion, which is asserting the rights of the masses, as opposed to the privileges of the few, and demanding that where private control fails to insure public services at reasonable cost, public control must supersede to either own and operate, or, as in case of the present movement, to regulate. Public operation of public utilities is a way beset with many dangers and disadvantages. It is a way at which the average man inclines to look askance. But a rapidly-increas-

ing number of people are coming to regard it as being, in certain cases, the lesser of two evils, and it will pay the beneficiaries of public franchises to pursue a policy of more intelligent selfishness, and seek to promote their interests by consulting earnestly the welfare of the public which is constrained to use the services they provide. Government ownership of railways and telephones, and the municipalization of water-works, lighting plants and street-car services are encouraging developments of the age, but overshadowing all in immediate importance is the manifest determination to bring power companies to time.

In Search of Facts About Stable Construction.

Three weeks ago two members of our editorial staff journeyed forth from London into the southeastern corner of the County of Middlesex, not with lanterns in search of an honest man—though let us hope we encountered many—but with eyes open and ears pricked, on the qui vive for ideas in barns.

The quest for a complete and satisfactory ventilation system was not entirely successful, some of the stables having nothing but windows and chinks for admission of fresh air, and feed chutes for outlets. The best intake system was that in the MacVicar barn, a plan of which appeared in "The Farmer's Advocate" of February 15th, 1906. The air is admitted from a revolving cowl on the roof through a 30-inch galvanized-iron pipe down into a cement air cistern in one end of the barn. Thence tile lead underneath the floor, being doubled back and forth under the alleyways, so as to make the air traverse as much distance as possible before being admitted into the stable. This warms the fresh air many degrees before diffusing it. But an outlet system is necessary before this ventilation is as thorough as it should be. The owners are well satisfied with what they have done, and are considering such at present.

In this connection it may not be amiss to note that many of the stables our recent correspondents have been writing about have no special system of ventilation, but still are fairly well supplied with fresh air, owing to numerous doors, windows, feed chutes and other openings. A more systematic provision for admission of fresh air is, however, generally conceded, and a consideration of the MacVicar system is earnestly advised.

One of the good ideas we found generally adopted in the determination to simplify things was the plan of having no front to the mangers except a drop of from two to ten inches from the raised cement floor of the feed passage. One man thought he could feed thirty cattle with this manger as easily as twenty with the old lumber contrivances. As no partition divides one cow's portion of the trough from her neighbors, his long mangers are easily swept clean. The backs of the mangers in most cases consisted of a six or eight-inch plank on edge, into which swinging stanchions were fastened. In other cases, where chain ties were used, a horizontal bar served to keep the cattle back into place.

A feature in several stables was the pens at one side where young cattle were running loose, six or eight together. There were stanchions along the feed passage to fasten the cattle while feeding. The general verdict was that this system requires a great quantity of bedding, if the cattle are to be kept reasonably clean, but it makes a large amount of manure, the straw soaking up the urine, and the tramping of the stock preventing any great deal of fermentation between times of cleaning out, which is done in