

Our Scottish Letter.

Educational problems are still causing great excitement here. The Government has introduced an Education Bill for Scotland, which in its main lines has been received as a statesmanlike measure. It proposes to render the whole educational machinery of the country homogeneous. Its aim in broad outline is to make the passage from the primary school to the university a straight, unbroken journey. It also brings the system of technical education into line with the other departments of education. It provides more adequately than is done at present for the support of educational work. The funds at the disposal of the country for technical education at present come in a kind of roundabout way from the duties on whiskey, but they are not necessarily earmarked for agriculture, and sometimes the local authorities set them aside for the reduction of the rates. All this is to be done away, and the money is to go for education, and for education alone. Then it is proposed to extend the areas embraced in the operations of the School Board. Hitherto the unit has been the parish, and as parishes vary greatly in extent, the number of members in each board varies. The lowest possible is five, and the highest fifteen. The former is good enough as a minimum, but the latter is absurd as a maximum, say in a city like Glasgow, where there is work for a board of at least three fifteens. The city areas are to be left untouched, but the parish areas are to be made co-extensive with those of the county councils, which look after the local government of each county area. An absurd system of cumulative voting is also in force at present, but is to be abolished. It was intended to be a safeguard to minorities, and to secure representation for them, but it has played some fantastic tricks, and constituted some queer boards. If a board consists of 15 members, each elector has 15 votes, which he may give in whole to one candidate, or spread over the candidates as he pleases. If the great majority of the electors be supine, and there be a small, energetic, homogeneous minority in an area, it is easy to see what pranks may be played with this style of voting. The whole management of affairs might very easily fall into the hands of the aggressive minority. There is a general sentiment in favor of the abolition of this fancy style of voting. Some difficulty will be experienced in adjusting the new arrangements under the bill, and no doubt modifications may be made in the House of Commons and in committee. It is to be hoped that the general features of the measure may be preserved.

Another important measure before Parliament aims at a revolution in our system of weights and measures. It proposes to make compulsory in two years time the Metric system, which has been adopted by the principal continental nations. There is a consensus of opinion in favor of a uniform system. The existing system in this country is chaotic to a degree. There is no uniformity, and even the same denomination, e.g., a stone, may mean half a dozen different things. An imperial stone is 14 lbs.; a stone of beef in London is 8 lbs.; a stone of cheese in Scotland is 20 lbs.; a stone of anything less in some districts is 22½ lbs. The hundredweight with us is 112 lbs.; with you it is 100 lbs. The Metric system introduces new nomenclature, and advances by decimal stages. The difference between it and the decimal system which holds the field in America, is very slight. All traders here are in favor of a uniform system, but some desire that the existing imperial measures should be made compulsory and universal. Others desire the decimal system, while the vast majority, I rather think, will support the Metric system. Their feeling seems to be that when a change is being made it may as well be thorough. If made effective once for all, no more is likely to be heard of the business for many a generation. The chief drawback to the success of the whole scheme is, I think, the fact that America and Canada have not adopted the Metric system. In view of the volume of trade between this country and the other side of the Atlantic, it is very desirable that the systems of weights and measures should be uniform. Farmers have a deal of influence in this connection, and they should let their voices be heard.

AYRSHIRES ARE SELLING WELL these days. In my last I think mention was made of the Croftjane dispersion, at which 62 head made an average of £12 11s. 11d. This was very fair business, but better results were obtained at the High Newton dispersion this week. Mr. John Steel had a very old herd. For about a century high-class Ayrshires were kept on the farm of High Newton, not far from the Borderland between Ayrshire and Lanarkshire. The Steels could be traced as settled on the same farms for

a period of about 400 years. Now the last of them has been removed, and new names appear on the register. At the dispensing sale Mr. Steel sold 66 head of Ayrshires at an average price of £13 13s. each. The highest price was £40, paid for the cow which last year as a three-year-old was first at Glasgow. The 24 cows made an average of £15 18s. 3d., and the ten three-year-old heifers sold for an average of £23 1s. apiece. Mr. Ness, Jr., from Howick, Quebec, is with us at present, investing in Ayrshires. He has purchased a select lot, and will shortly ship them.

THE SHOW SEASON here has fairly opened. Castle-Douglas show was held on Thursday, in wretched weather. There was a very good display of Ayrshires and Galloways, and the Clydesdales were fully up to the average. The Galloways were specially good, and the first-prize two-year-old heifer, owned by Mr. David Brown, Stepford, Dumfries, was quite an outstanding animal. It is seldom a Galloway of such uniformity is seen.

The Galloway men have had rather a lively time of it lately, discussing the presence of scurs or rudimentary horns in some of their tribes. Strong things have been written on the subject by Major Wedderburn-Maxwell, of Glenlair, a stewartry laird, who got his fingers burned at the outset of his breeding ventures. He invested in a high-priced bull, which bred stock with the scurs, and he naturally felt mad about it. He has been backed up by Mr. Wm. McConnell, Glasnick, Newton Stewart, who wields a vigorous pen, and rather enjoys a battle. The upshot of the matter seems to be that the council of the Galloway Cattle Society will require to look sharply after some of its members. There has undoubtedly been gross carelessness in some quarters. Imagine a breeder like the late Mr. Cunningham, of Tarbreoch, calmly breeding with a bull which a buyer had rejected because he (the bull) was decorated with scurs! This bull is named Colin of Tarbreoch, and it would be interesting to know where he got the decorations. Imagine another breeder of distinction (still alive) following a scurred heifer, which had been fattened and sold as beef, to the shambles, buying her, and breeding from her! Conduct of that kind is simply incomprehensible, and the men who are guilty of it should be severely dealt with. The explanation of the presence of occasional scurs in Galloway cattle appears to be that at some time a Galloway cow had been crossed by an Ayrshire bull unknown to the owner of the cow, who in all good faith credited the calf to a Galloway sire by which the cow had been timeously served. This is the only possible explanation, as several of the scurred tribe have been found in a herd whose owners have in successive generations been characterized by honor and probity of the highest possible type. It is inconceivable, and not alleged by any responsible person, that they were responsible for the appearance of occasional scurs in their herds, and in other Galloway herds which drew upon theirs for bulls. "SCOTLAND YET."

15th April, 1904.

Disappointments in Raising Pigs.

This spring we hear numerous reports of big losses of spring pigs from the time farrowed until four weeks old. We find that the sows nursing the pigs that died when promising so well, have been fed almost exclusively, before and after farrowing, on barley chop. In conversation recently with one of Manitoba's most noted swine-raisers, he agreed with us that an exclusive barley diet was dangerous, as it constipated the sows before farrowing, and that such a condition resulted disastrously to the young pigs. In-pig sows are better to be fed on a mixture of barley, oats and shorts, or bran and chopped barley, equal quantities, by bulk. Then, again, the feeding of such strong food as barley chop to the nursing sow seems to cause an inflamed condition of the udder, a milk fever, as it were, with very quick and fatal results to the nursing pigs. Oastler recommends a mixture, of equal parts bran and shorts, made into a thin slop with skim milk or water, for the sow a few weeks before farrowing; after pigging he feeds lightly for a few days, giving all the milk the sow will take, and recommends plenty of exercise, and after the pigs are three weeks old, all the feed she will take, and that feed, shorts and milk. Thumps, rheumatism, canker, sore mouth, apoplexy and sharp teeth all tend to wipe out the profits of pig breeding, as do cross sows, pig-eating sows (due to errors in dieting the sows previously), and the non-prolific, fat, lazy, lay-on-the-progeny type of sow. Haphazard methods do not serve in pig-breeding any more than any other line of stock-raising.

\$10 Worth.

A. E. Gilmore, Ontario Co., Ont.: Enclosed find three renewal subscriptions for the 'Farmer's Advocate.' I hope to get some new names before long, but it is astonishing how some farmers hate to pay \$1.50 for \$10 worth of good reading matter.

FARM.

Agriculture in the Ontario Legislature.

The session of the Ontario Legislature just closed was memorable for many things. It was the longest since 1867, running from January 14th to April 26th; it was a session of keen contest, the two sides being very evenly divided, but neither making an inroad on the other, the majority of three persisting through all divisions; it was one of great popular interest, the people being keenly alive to the issues from start to finish. Sometimes the heat and smoke of personalities obscured the great questions of Provincial importance, and turned consideration aside from lines of calm judgment.

Out of a large amount of very important work performed, perhaps no line of discussion received a quieter and more generous hearing than did agriculture. Year by year agricultural questions have become removed from the field of party politics, and, on the whole, any great agricultural question now presented to the Legislature is more than likely to receive an unprejudiced consideration.

To enumerate all the bills in which farmers are interested, directly or indirectly, would mean a listing of from one-third to one-half of all the acts passed. Even the two great railway schemes to connect Toronto with the wheat lands of the West were promoted, it was said, in the interests of the farmer as well as the manufacturer. These acts of general concern we do not refer to here, though the farmer, like every other citizen, is intimately concerned with them. The party papers have given him all the arguments for and against. It is interesting to note that the contentious matters were those in which great franchises were concerned.

What we are going to refer to here are votes and acts that passed without keen party controversy, and about which the daily press said little. And yet they are matters that concern the farmers in their daily work, and mean more to them than even transcontinental connections.

AGRICULTURAL SOCIETIES.—Four new districts were provided for, as follows: The northern townships of Hastings County were set apart to form a new society, with headquarters at Bancroft; a new district was formed in East Parry Sound, having the township society of South Himsforth as its nucleus; the newly-settled townships on Lake Temiscamingue were cut off from East Nipissing and formed into a district; and another district known as Sudbury district was formed out of East Algoma and West Nipissing. A new move was made in connection with these by providing that practically the whole of the grant shall be used by the district society, the aim being to discourage the multiplying of small branch societies. Provision was made for the new office of Superintendent of Agricultural Societies, to which Mr. H. B. Cowan has been appointed, and \$4,000 was voted for providing expert judges at the exhibitions.

LARGE FAIRS.—Owing to the collapse of the Ottawa fair building, an extra \$6,000 was voted to help in reconstruction, and the grant for maintenance was fixed at \$3,500. Last year \$10,000 was granted for the dairy building at the Toronto Industrial; this year London receives a similar grant for a similar purpose, the plans to be submitted to the Minister of Agriculture for approval, and the educational work to be conducted with his co-operation.

FARMERS' INSTITUTES.—This work is evidently growing, for the grants are again increased, the \$3,000 for Women's Institutes, and \$1,000 for Fruit Institutes marking two features that are coming into greater prominence.

DAIRY WORK.—The Eastern Dairy School at Kingston has outgrown its quarters, so another story is to be added to the building, and other improvements made for which \$9,000 has been appropriated. The work of special dairy instruction, carried on at first through the Eastern and Western Dairy Associations, but last year in co-operation with the Department, is to be greatly extended, for there is an increase of \$5,000 for this purpose. We understand that the two associations have handed over all this work to be carried on under the two superintendents of the Department, Mr. Puhlow in the East and Mr. Barr in the West. The work of course will be done in harmony with the directors of the societies, and the two societies will be expected to extend their general convention work.

SAN JOSE SCALE.—The scale is still with us, and the fruit men are still asking for help, so the Minister put through a grant of \$3,000, to be used in assisting in the purchase of spraying material, and in giving instruction as to how to handle the mixtures. For some time there has been dissatisfaction in certain quarters at the small compensation allowed under the act. One-quarter of the value of trees destroyed was paid some years ago. As the result of continued and pressing representations as to the inadequacy of