

enced during the past year has been a tremendous object lesson. It is estimated that in Indiana 670,000 head of swine have succumbed to the disease in twelve months, and in Iowa nearly 1,200,000. In other States the losses have been almost equally great. The general opinion is that the prevalence of the plague and the rapidity with which it spread were due mainly to the fact that the hogs in the districts infested were fed on a too soft, a too unvarying diet. The animals were principally *corn fed*; and they had not stamina enough to resist the attack of the disease. A more varied and a stronger diet is recommended. In this there is a consolation and also a lesson for our own swine men. Fortunately our own corn crop is never so large that there need ever be a temptation to our swine-raisers to use it exclusively or even mainly as a swine-fodder. But lest the temptation *should* occur at any time to use it or any other feeding stuff as an exclusive ration, let the terrible losses suffered by the Western swine-men in the year 1896 be a warning of the evil effects sure to follow from such an imprudence.

Lamentable as the calamities above described are, the breeder of pure-bred swine, whether American or Canadian, will, without doubt, reap benefit therefrom. Hogs are scarce. Old herds have to be built up anew, and entirely new herds will have to be founded. But in this reorganization of the swine industry a change will be made. The old fat-making machine will be discarded, and the modern, up-to-date, fat-streaked-with-lean bacon hog will be taken on in his place. The foundation stock for herds of this sort of hog will have to be bought from men who have it; and of such men we believe there are more in Canada to-day than in the United States.

Sugar Beets in the United States.

We have remarked once or twice on the energy the United States authorities are displaying in their endeavors to establish beet-root sugar manufacture as a general industry of the country. Secretary Wilson says that the United States people are paying \$100,000,000 a year to German beet-root sugar manufacturers for sugar which could just as well be manufactured at home if the American farmers only grew the beet roots. To test whether the beet roots can be grown profitably in the United States, and in what parts they can be most profitably grown, he has imported this year eight tons of sugar-beet seed and has distributed it for trial among 22,000 farmers in different parts of the Union. In the fall he purposes to publish in bulletins the information which all this experimenting will furnish, and he will distribute these bulletins among the people generally. He has full faith that the beet root can be grown successfully and profitably in many parts of the States, and that the manufacture of beet-root sugar can be established as a native industry, so that the American farmer can have the advantage of the business of supplying the necessary beet roots. What is more, he says that the pulp obtained from the beet roots after the saccharine matter has been extracted is a highly nitrogenous feeding stuff of the best value as a food for dairy or beef cattle.

The Export of Corn.

The time was when American corn could scarcely find a market in Europe. This year, partly owing to the scarcity of home-grown cereals in Europe, partly owing to the growing taste for maize as an article of human food, and to the growing use of maize as a valuable feed-stuff for animals, the importation of American corn into Europe for the first seven months of the year has been nearly 116,000,000 bushels, as against 64,000,000 bushels last year. In the meantime, the price of corn has gone up. This is partly in sympathy with the advancing price of wheat; but it is also partly because of the growing determination all through the corn-growing American States to go again into stock-feeding and stock-raising—occupations which had been largely abandoned. Hogs and cattle are again occupying their old

time position of supremacy with the Western farmer. This, of course, means to the Canadian stockman an enlarged market for his purebred cattle and swine. All along the line the look of things is brighter for the farmer than it has been for years.

The Farmers' Free Mail Again.

In our issue for Sept. 21 (page 19) we described the experiment of "free rural postal delivery" now being made in some districts by the United States government. *The Rural New-Yorker* has been obtaining the opinions of farmers living in districts where this experiment has been tried. We subjoin short extracts from some of these opinions (it will be noticed that they are from widely different sections) for we believe the readers of *FARMING* will be interested in them. Canadian farmers are business men, and need free mail delivery as much as their fellow-traders in towns and cities:

"I think it a grand success. I do not see why farmers should not receive their mail at home daily as well as city people." M.S.L., Loveland, Colorado.

"All are just perfectly happy over it, and will not be satisfied to lose it. In this community it is a big success." A.W.F., South Deerfield, Massachusetts.

"I would rather be taxed \$10 a year than return to the old way." J.E., Somerville, Ohio.

"It is a great convenience and a blessing to the farming classes." D.M.B., Opelika, Alabama.

"The more progressive farmers are radically in favor of the scheme." M.B., Farmington, Minnesota.

"The farmers are benefited by it in numerous ways, and will be very glad if it can be continued." J.M.S., Uniontown, Maryland.

"The free delivery of mail in rural districts is giving perfect satisfaction." R.E.S., Vermont.

The Rural New-Yorker declares itself in favor of free mail in rural districts. So does *FARMING*.

NOTES AND IDEAS.

States and provinces acquire good business methods and others bad ones, just the same as individuals. Missouri is one of the most prosperous agricultural States in the Union. The reason of this is because she sells her grain in the finished product, and not as raw food. Her corn crop last year was 176,000,000 bushels. But of this enormous quantity she hauled to market only 9,600,000 bushels, scarcely a nineteenth part. The rest she kept in her own cribs to feed her live stock. In the same year her farmers sold 1,016,760 head of cattle and 3,142,074 hogs.

The improvement in the outlook for sheep growers in the United States is resulting in a very great development of the sheep-raising industry on the ordinary American farm. Many districts are taking up the industry throughout their whole length and breadth, especially in Eastern Ohio, Western Pennsylvania and West Virginia. But the demand for stock with which to do this stocking is almost altogether for mutton-producing sheep. These the ordinary sheep-raisers of the United States are not able to supply, at least in sufficient quantities to meet the demand. The prospects are, therefore, that there will, for a few years at any rate, be a very decided demand for Canadian ramlambs of the mutton producing breeds.

England keeps 27,000,000 sheep on land three or four times the price of Canadian land. France keeps 20,000,000 sheep on land that is even held in higher value, because it is all in small farms. Holland keeps several millions of sheep on land that is almost priceless. It is not the low price in the value of the land that determines the profitability of sheep-raising, but the excellence of the shepherding and feeding.

We have said a great deal lately on the advisability of the Canadian farmer "keeping more sheep," but we find that our words of advice are only weak compared with the strength of the words

of American friends of sheep in the same direction. This ought to be encouraging to our sheep raisers rather than the reverse, for the more the American farmer goes into sheep-raising the more he will want our pure-bred rams and our high-grade ram lambs. But we must be sure to be able to supply him with the best mutton-producing breeds. He wants none other.

Irish butter, since the introduction of dairy instruction into Ireland, is beginning to recover the position it had lost because of inferiority. It is now finding a good sale in England, but owing to its bad reputation it is sold as "Danish butter." How well this fact illustrates two economic truths: (1) that instruction, if practical, does really help the producer; (2) that a reputation for the production of good products is an easy thing to lose, a hard thing to get back, and a good thing when it is got back. In some districts of Ireland the average price of butter made in the districts has improved 3d. a pound because of dairy instruction.

The Ontario Department of Agriculture reports the number of sheep kept in the province in 1895 to have been 2,022,735, and the number kept this year to be 1,690,350, a decrease of 332,385. The English *Live-Stock Journal*, commenting on these figures, says that "the small number of sheep kept in a province much larger than the United Kingdom, seems remarkable." England alone keeps nearly seventeen times the number of sheep that Ontario keeps.

Some time ago (Sept. 7, p. 2), we commented severely upon the proposition put forward by Mr. J. H. Monrad, the well-known American dairy expert and writer, that American butter-makers should use "preservative" in the butter they make which is intended for "English cousins." We are glad to see that ex-Governor Hoad, in *Hoad's Dairyman*, comes out as strongly as we did against the proposition, and condemns it as being both wrong and foolish. His words are:

"We have already suffered too much from the tricks of trade, whereby the inferior grades of butter and cheese were made to resemble and pass for what they are not, to justify further experiments in similar directions. Let us endeavor for the future, to establish a reputation for honest goods that will conform in every particular to the representations made concerning them, and which can be guaranteed free from any foreign ingredients or chemicals of any kind."

CANADA'S FARMERS.

V. Lieut.-Col. McCrae, Guelph.

Among "Canada's Farmers" there are none who deserve to have higher mention or greater public recognition than Lieut.-Col. McCrae, of Guelph, or David McCrae, as he is more generally called. Inasmuch as we gave a somewhat extended account of Mr. McCrae's life and work as a farmer in *FARMING* for November last (see page 145), we need not here mention any biographical facts concerning him. But we wish to call attention to one other fact, namely, that for some years past Mr. McCrae has been most indefatigable in his endeavors to persuade his brother farmers to "keep more sheep"; and the general movement which is now noticeable in Ontario towards the "keeping of more sheep" on the ordinary farm is largely due to his efforts. In his addresses at Farmers' Institutes, and in the public press, he has time and time again demonstrated the unwisdom of the Ontario farmer in neglecting to avail himself of the great natural advantages which our province affords for sheep-raising. And, being a practical and successful sheep-raiser himself, and in addition one of the best informed men in Canada on the market values of muttons and wools, his advice is all the more deserving of being listened to. We are glad to say that Mr. McCrae thoroughly approves of the course *FARMING* is pursuing in urging the "keeping of more sheep," and in a recent interview he expressed to the editor the opinion that the matter could scarcely be urged too strongly.—As is well known, Mr. McCrae is an authority in regard to cattle tuberculosis, and he has been appointed by the Ontario Government to give lectures and practical demonstrations in regard to tuberculosis and the application of the tuberculin test before Farmers' Institutes and other gatherings of farmers whenever and wherever his services are desired. This is an excellent move on the part of our Government, for it is of the utmost necessity to our cattle-breeding industry that all herds from which cattle are sold for breeding purposes shall be known to be perfectly healthy.