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EDITORIAL.

The Vilest Evil is Not Dirty Meat.

It is remarkable, although by no means surprising, that Upton Sinclair's book, "The Jungle," which, tracing the fortunes of a Lithuanian family in the district of Packingtown, Chicago, exposed the rotten greed and graft which has made the district a veritable inferno, and has led to the pursuit of economies which endanger the health of meat-eaters—it is remarkable that the book has excited but little comment on the heartless brutality practiced upon the workers. Had Sinclair contented himself with showing how the ignorant foreigners were seduced to Chicago by false representations on the part of the packers' agents, how, in buying their homes, they were cheated by political bosses and grafters, more or less closely in league with the beef trust; how they were driven to death by a system of "speeding up"; how they were compelled to work in unsanitary environment; how they were reduced to despair in trying to keep the wolf from the door and to maintain the semblance of respectability; how death and disease marked them out; how fruitless were their efforts to rise; how hopeless their future; how they were driven to the tramp's beat, to the jail, and to the house of prostitution, and how the only chance by which one of them succeeded temporarily was getting in alliance with a thug, and thus being introduced into the favor of the political bosses which run the city and prey on the helpless hordes of Packingtown—had Sinclair attempted to arouse feeling on the strength of this horrible narrative, his work would have brought him small fame and little success. A few philanthropists would have been stirred to sympathy and perhaps to action, Socialists would have pounced upon such a revelation of the evils of monopolistic power, and used the book to advance their propaganda; but the ordinary run of people who read it would have shrugged their shoulders and said, "Chicago must be an awful place. I wonder if those ignorant folks mind living that way. No doubt it is about as good as they have been used to at home." But when the writer told the public they were being fed by the packers on "doctored" meat, sausages containing the ground carcasses of poisoned rats, flesh of diseased cattle, "slink" veal, and lard made out of cholera hogs, while with this they stood a chance of consuming tuberculous spittle and all kinds of filth, then the packers' boasted economy was seen in a new light, a storm of public indignation exploded over their heads, and an outraged public sentiment enforced the Presidential command, "Clean up!"

It is well that good should be accomplished, whether the motive be direct or indirect. The packers deserve the severest censure for any remissness in preparing food, but we fancy the menace to public health has been greatly exaggerated. The foulest scandal unearthed in Packingtown is moral, economic, sociological. If the whole situation could be seen in its true light, we fancy the gravest charge the packers would have to answer would be the responsibility for bringing over these Pollocks and Lithuanians, and then so handling them as to fill the nation's jails and brothels with outcast humanity, besides letting loose tramps and moral lepers to spread contagion, vice and crime. It is curious how little is made of this, but the day is coming when it will concern the people more.

Meanwhile, a little local application may be made of the whole business. Let those who wish to see a large foreign element introduced into Canada to perform our menial labor, pause and

reflect upon the probable consequences. Do we want these people among us as citizens, whose descendants will finally intermarry with our own? True, the effect of distributing such classes among the wholesome environment of Canada will be nothing like the results of having them in the slaughter-house quarter of Chicago. But as our industries increase in extent, there will ever be a temptation to employ such for the rough and dirty work, and they will swarm into the congested centers of population. This will most certainly be the case as the railway-building era of Canada, which naturally attracts that class of labor, draws to a close. Native Canadian or American laborers, by revolting against repulsive tasks, compel invention to find means of dispensing with unnecessary drudgery and brutality. Ignorant foreigners are simply cogs in the industrial wheel. If we desire progress; if we have humane, not to say Christian, sympathy, for the rights of the laboring classes; if we abhor the despotic era under which the masses slaved for the few, and if we wish to see the upbuilding of a commonwealth of intelligent, independent citizens, in which the producers of wealth will receive a gradually-increasing share of the products of their effort, then let us not encourage the indiscriminate introduction of a European proletariat. The mercenary interests of the few are not always in harmony with the best interests of the nation. Whose shall prevail?

Can't we Beat the Egyptians in Road-making.

Our readers will find in this issue of "The Farmer's Advocate" a practical article on road-construction by Mr. A. W. Campbell, Provincial Highway Commissioner of the Province of Ontario. Mr. Campbell expounds plainly the why and the how of metalling roads, and it will pay the officers of municipalities who are thinking of expending money in surfacing their highways with gravel and crushed stone to read carefully what he has to say. Emphasis is properly laid on drainage. As a general rule, roads tiled without gravel are better than roads gravelled without tile. Tiling prepares a firm subsoil to bear the metal crown and keep it smooth and protective. Hence the wisdom of tiling any sections at all liable to require it, before investing money putting gravel or stone into a sink-hole.

It is time for two innovations in rural road-making. The first is more knowledge, and the second is more application. Our methods are painfully crude. George Ade, an American humorist, writing recently of his experiences in Egypt, indulged in a witticism that had point as well as fun. In touring the country, his party came to a place where laborers were engaged in "improving the road." They had to get out of the conveyance and walk past the "improved" section, after which they got in and sped merrily along. He took a special interest in observing how they were doing the work, and he noticed that down there, in that benighted country, where they had no agricultural weekly, no Department of Agriculture, and no Farmers' Institute, to guide them, they were pursuing the identical policy that had been followed in his native State; that is to say, they were scooping dirt out of the ditches and piling it in the center of the road for the traffic to consolidate.

Surely, with our facilities for instruction, we ought to evolve a better system than these unprogressive Orientals. Let us study up the question in earnest, think out some advanced ideas, and then get busy putting them into practice.

Rotation the Best Remedy for Weeds.

Elsewhere in this issue will be found several letters from the men who toured various sections of the Province of Ontario in June, addressing the series of seed meetings held under the joint auspices of the Dominion and Provincial Departments of Agriculture. The leading subject discussed is weeds, of which several species, notably the perennial sow thistle, seem to be spreading more or less widely. We publish a few short articles dealing with this, the ox-eye daisy and the Canada thistle, but we take occasion here to point out that the sovereign preventive measure against weeds, and the first step that should be taken in their eradication, is a short rotation of crops, coupled with thorough cultivation.

The advantages of rotation are manifold: First, it increases the soil fertility, and thus enables whatever crop is sown to possess the land successfully and crowd out weeds. It is an important point in this connection that few weeds can cope with the regular farm crops under conditions of high culture and fertility, any more than scrubs can compete with well-bred animals under select conditions of environment. But the weeds, like the scrubs, are hardy, and when for any reason conditions are made unfavorable for the crops sown, the weeds promptly spring up and occupy the vacuum that Nature proverbially abhors. An excellent example of the smothering effect of crops is buckwheat, which is commonly employed to choke out the most pernicious weeds, but note how the weeds grow in any spot where the buckwheat misses. Other farm crops have an effect similar to buckwheat, only not quite so marked. Good cultural conditions, therefore, such as are brought about by underdrainage and by rotation introducing legumes, are the first, the best, and by far the most economical means of battling with weeds.

Then, there is a second reason why rotation helps. The number of weeds is legion, their adaptability astonishing, and some of their means of propagation most insidious. The weeds we are bothered with are but a few of the thousands of plants that have striven with us for the possession of the soil, but these are the few fittest, that have survived by reason of their special adaptability to the crops we grow, and to the particular tillage we give them. For instance, wild oats never trouble in districts where no oats are grown, because any wild-oat plants appearing would be eradicated, or at least would have but small chance of maturing seed. But keep growing oats repeatedly, till the land gets partially exhausted, then introduce an odd wild oat or two in the seed grain, and see how soon the farm is overrun with *Avena fatua*. It thrives because it grows up and ripens unnoticed in the oat crop. Rotation gives one a chance to clean each piece of ground in turn; then, care in selection of seed will do the rest. Similar remarks apply to chess in wheat. Take a farm that has been allowed to remain indefinitely in sod, and ten chances to one it has become infested with twitchgrass, Canadian blue grass, or some other undesirables. In all probability, too, it will have become a harboring place for cutworms and wireworms. When this field is plowed up, it is extremely difficult to keep the grass from choking out grain crops. Introduce a three-year or four-year rotation of crops, seeding liberally to clover, and the above grasses will not only have small chance of getting established, but if they do they can be eradicated periodically by the cultivation given the hoe crop following the meadow. Thistles, and a host of perennials may be effectually subdued by this cultivation of the corn, potatoes or roots, which should be the cleaning crops par excellence. Only