

With regard to Professor Gamgee's suggestion of wholesale slaughter, or "stamping out," as this method has been forcibly called, the same journal has the following: "Now that it seems probable that our whole stock of animal food is liable to be affected, shall we persist in the barbarous practice of slaughtering indiscriminately every animal in which the disease appears? When a plague among human beings carries off 70 per cent. of its victims does any one propose to slaughter the remaining 30 per cent. in order to prevent contagion? Suppose that seven-eighths of the cattle attacked sink under the disease, why should we lose the remaining eighth? At all events, it is the only treatment with which veterinary surgeons can provide us, we beg to suggest one practical conclusion to the British farmers—that is, not to put themselves to the expense of employing veterinary surgeons. They can slaughter their cattle without the assistance of the veterinary college. We hope, however, a more civilized manner of treatment may be soon adopted, and that those veterinary surgeons who believe in the usefulness of their art, and are willing to extend its resources by the light of experience may take every opportunity of doing so."

The *Field* combats the foregoing expression of opinion by the *Times*, as follows:—"The contrast drawn by the leading journal between the attitude of the public towards the human and veterinary medical professions is by no means justified. Can the former claim any greater mastery over cholera than the latter is entitled to over the cattle plague, in spite of its experience during the three visitations with which this country has been afflicted? Preventive measures are absolutely all that can be relied on; and whether we adopt the saline treatment, or calomel and opium, or homœopathic doses of arsenic, the mortality in severe cases will be the same, as has again and again been proved in actual practice.—The fact is really as stated by Professor Gamgee, than when the mucous membranes lining the stomach and bowels are either disorganized, as in the cattle plague and the malignant scarlet fever of man, or derelict as in cholera, no absorption of salines or other medicines takes place, and death of the rest of the body follows as certainly as of the lobster when he has been so far acted on by boiling water as to turn his shell red, although his muscles continue to act. It is a strong symptom of ignorance in the physician to refuse to admit his want of remedial power over certain diseases, and, on the contrary, it will generally be found that the more skill and experience he possesses, the more ready he is to allow that, while he can assist nature to a very considerable extent in the majority of diseases, there are unfortunately but too many over which he has no control whatever. It is hard enough to be obliged to confess ignorance after years of study, but it is doubly hard for the veterinary surgeon to be told in the leading columns of the *Times* that 'he has fallen into disrepute, because, by his own confession, he is absolutely useless in the presence of disease, and because, avowing himself unable to cure it, he would resort to the most reckless measures in order to avoid its contagion.' We cannot always agree with Professor Gamgee in his conclusions, and we have sometimes thought that he rides his hobby somewhat too hard, but, nevertheless, he stands forth as the most scientific man in his profession, and certainly he cannot be accused, in the instance of the cattle-plague, of either idleness or delay. He was the first to warn us of its approach, and to tell us, without circumlocution, of its arrival among us. He has undoubtedly worked hard in the examination of its symptoms, its treatment, and its pathology, and when he says, in opposition to his own pecuniary interests, that all he can advise is to put an end to its dissemination by wholesale slaughter, we surely ought to be grateful to him for his candour, instead of twitting him with his uselessness and ignorance."

From a careful consideration of all the circumstances of the case, the *Irish Farmer's Gazette* is led to the startling conclusion "that our learned, skilful, and practical veterinary professors have made a mistake, and that it is not the rinderpest that has got amongst the cattle, sheep, and horses in England and Scotland, which all considered heretofore to be confined to the bovine race, but that it is the Siberian plague, which is acknowledged to be communicable from one species or genera of animal to others. If this be so, the case of our neighbours across the channel is a fearful one indeed, and unless through the mercies of an offended Deity he puts a limit to it, it is out of all human calculation as to when or how it may end."

In this fearful crisis we are not surprised to find that the Archbishop of Canterbury has felt it his duty to direct appropriate prayers to be used in schools, households and families within his archdiocese "to entreat the Almighty, who alone has the power, to stay the plague's frightful ravages."

A word to the wise is said to be sufficient. The careful experiences of Britain in the present visita-

tion ought to incite our Canadian stockholders to increased care and vigilance in the treatment of their live stock. Prevention is at all times better than cure. Therefore, see to it that domestic animals are provided with clean, well ventilated dwellings, and a regular and plentiful supply of wholesome and nutritious food.

### Unusual Weather.

The weather, like fortune, is proverbially fickle, and occasionally it indulges in strange freaks. That ubiquitous personage, "the oldest inhabitant," has taxed his memory in vain for anything to match the premature, but short-lived winter which set in upon us during the closing days of last month, and the early days of the present month. On the 26th October, a copious rain fell throughout the greater part of Canada West. In many places it was welcome, for the ground had become so dry and hard that the fall transplanting of trees had been little short of impossible, and other necessary operations were obstructed. The rain continued through the night of the 26th ult., and on the morning of the 27th, fell gently, but was accompanied with such a degree of cold, that the drizzle was converted into hoar frost as it fell. During the afternoon and evening of the 27th, the rain again became heavy, and at times during the night fell in torrents. Freezing as it fell, the outside world presented a singular and unprecedented spectacle on the morning of the 28th. The roads and streets were a perfect glare of ice. Trees, plants, shrubs, and even blades of grass were coated over with ice, the crystalline incrustation being upwards of half an inch in thickness. Had the sun burst forth upon the scene, it would have been one of dazzling splendour. But the weather continued dull and cloudy, until gradually the coating of pellucid varnish fell from twig and shrub; and nature again wore its usual russet autumn garb. Great destruction, however, was made among fruit and ornamental trees. Orchards were sadly damaged. Many a fine evergreen lost its leader, and large numbers of the softer-wooded lawn and shade trees, were broken to pieces by the weight of ice. We have rarely had such a storm in mid-winter, but nobody remembers the like as having occurred during the month of October. Encouraged by the boldness of its predecessor's exit, November came in like a lion. Turnip-lifting was out of the question during the first few days of the month, so hard was the ground frozen; and many feared they would not get the few roots spared by grub and drought housed at all. These apprehensions, however, proved unfounded, and the precocious young winter, like most precocious growths, had but a short career.

The lesson taught by this unseasonable spurt of hard weather, is that of timely preparation for winter. Our seasons are short, much requires to be crowded into them, and it is not easy to get all things "taut and snug" as the sailors phrase it, by the last week of October. But it is well, as far as possible, to take time by the forelock, so as not to be caught at a disadvantage by an unusual turn of the weather. Especially is it important that stock should be comfortably housed at an early day. When chill nights come, animals should have shelter. Like human beings they keenly feel the first nip of cold, and there can be little doubt that in consequence of inattention to their comfort, many poor creatures receive a check before winter fairly sets in, from which they do not recover during the entire season. Exposure to such a storm as we have now chronicled, could not but be very detrimental to the health and vigour of live stock, and yet large numbers of cattle and horses passed through it with little or no protection. If creatures are left out of doors late in the fall, we believe they shiver off by night all the flesh they gain by grazing through the day. Early housing of animals, is without question, a very great help to their being successfully and comfortably wintered. It has been proved over and over again that it requires far less to keep stock in good condition when snugly housed, than it does when exposed to all sorts of weather, so that considerations of economy as well as those of humanity, urge attention to this important matter.

### Veterinary and Agricultural Instruction.

It will be seen by referring to our advertising columns that arrangements are again made, under the auspices of the Board of Agriculture, for a familiar course of instruction in the various branches of science that relate to the principles and practice of Agriculture and the Veterinary art. The object is as follows: To provide suitable instruction for young men preparing for the Veterinary profession. Considering the constantly increasing number and value of our domesticated animals, the great expenses incurred by importation of superior stock from Europe, and the little professional skill at present available in the country to meet effectually serious emergencies, this department cannot be otherwise regarded than of great and pressing importance. The losses constantly occurring in consequence of neglect or unskilful treatment of disease, would, if correctly ascertained, assume serious dimensions; and the only way of preventing, or even mitigating them, is to diffuse among the rising generation of farmers sound and practical information on the various subjects treated of in the above-mentioned course of instruction, and thoroughly to prepare individuals for the practice of the Veterinary art as a profession. Both these points may be readily attained by the scheme herein mentioned, at the least possible expenditure of time and money to the student.

The course, as regards professional students extends over three terms, and includes dissection and anatomical demonstrations, with a certain amount of practice. We understand that some three or four pupils will present themselves for final examination next spring, when, if they succeed in passing, they will acquire the Diploma of the Board, certifying that they possess a necessary amount of scientific and practical knowledge to enter on their profession in Canada.

The facilities thus offered to young persons intended for, or actually engaged in the business of farming, for acquiring a competent knowledge of such branches of natural science as have important relations to their pursuits, ought to interest and attract no inconsiderable number. The course is purposely limited to six weeks, with the view of rendering it generally available. Many young men might conveniently spend that length of time in the depth of winter, and acquire an amount of information which they could turn to good account during the more active periods of the year. Many an agricultural youth never rises to a perception even of the dignity of his vocation, from the fact that his mind has never been earnestly directed to observe and reason on the every-day phenomena of life.

The whole subject of Agricultural Education in this country, both as regards schools and societies, demands a much fuller attention than it has hitherto received. Our agricultural societies, spread over the length and breadth of the land, might do much more for the diffusion of light and knowledge, in relation to subjects having both a scientific and practical value, if suitable machinery were introduced adapted to the purpose. After all, however, but comparatively little can be done till the farming community, as a whole, is earnestly aroused, and made to feel and appreciate the vast importance of the subject. With this view we are glad to learn that Professor Buckland has made such arrangements with the authorities of University College, as will enable him to spend the greater portion of the year in visiting and lecturing throughout the Province.

### A Graceful Acknowledgment.

We copy the following paragraph from the columns of a British contemporary with unminged satisfaction at the evidence it affords of just appreciation of an agricultural editor's merits:—"A testimonial, in the shape of a valuable piece of plate and a purse containing one hundred and thirty sovereigns, has been presented to Mr. Robt. Oliphant Pringle, by a number of gentlemen interested in the agriculture of the country, on the occasion of his vacating the editorial chair of the *Irish Farmer's Gazette* to become editor of the *Scottish Farmer* in Edinburgh. The plate bore the following inscription:—

"Presented, with a purse of sovereigns, to Robert Oliphant Pringle, by a number of friends in Ireland, in appreciation of his services in promoting agricultural improvements, especially while in connexion with the *Irish Farmer's Gazette*.—Dublin, 28th September, 1865."