

fore the fiscal question is settled, Canada is going to be heard in these islands. When I hear British statesmen's caution against irritating Americans, I wonder how Englishmen can sing 'Rule Britannia.' The United States has humbugged England for years. The only way to fight her is to fight her as Canada has done."

ACETYLENE GAS MACHINES.

Apropos of certain recent explosions in Canada, connected with acetylene gas machines or gasoline plants, concerning which we had urged the need of municipal supervision or legal enactment, we have received a somewhat explosive letter from Mr. Frederick L. H. Sims, who represents a certain illuminating system. It is to little purpose that Mr. Sims points out, as he had already done in a letter to the World, that fires and accidents also take place where occupants use ordinary gas distilled from coal, or use gasoline, or kerosene lamps, or other forms of lighting, and that these are more numerous than fires or explosions arising through the use of acetylene. Of course they are more numerous, because ten times more of them are in use. The point is that gasoline and acetylene plants, being methods of lighting with which most people are not yet familiar, and which are shown by experience to possess features that necessitate prudence in their use, are properly subjects for regulation by law. Nothing that Mr. Sims has said in his rather hysterical letter has altered this conviction in our mind. To exclaim at the stupidity of newspapers or to call fire insurance inspectors fools and to laugh at "their dupes" is not argument. Mr. Sims may be a prodigiously clever fellow, and his machine may be a triumph of constructive art—neither of which propositions we have even attempted to deny. Our plain contention is that in the interest of the public, acetylene gas machines, or any other lighting machines, have some elements of danger attaching to them when carelessly made or carelessly looked after, or when time has worked its will upon them. Such machines, we know, are sometimes carelessly made and carelessly looked after. They will rust and they will wear. Therefore, we say, let them be examined and regulated by the Government, and if approved admitted for use. Perhaps Mr. Sims will pardon us for suggesting that when competent authorities in England, in Germany, and in France, have made rules regulating acetylene gas lighting machines, there may be some excuse for even Canadian fire underwriters (to whom he appears to object), desiring to have rules made which shall lessen the fire risk of such machines. But no! His letter declares that British, German or French ideas are four years behind the times in respect to acetylene lighting. Presumably, Canada has the only up-to-date machine.

To say, as he does, that "a modern carbide gas plant does away with all danger of fire or explosion except what the insurance men term the moral hazard," is a most extraordinary statement. Our readers may judge how true it is when we say that there are thirty or forty acetylene machines recognized by the

underwriters, and that in addition to what explosions have occurred in Ontario there have quite lately been three in Manitoba, one at Deloraine, one at Pilot Mound, of the third we have forgotten the locality. In the Pilot Mound case a fire occurred as a consequence of the explosion, and the premises were a total loss. It may be true enough, as Mr. Sims so triumphantly alleges, that a child can work his machine. That does not cover the situation. A machine grows old and exhibits faults. Can "a child" repair it? Corrosion does the mischief, as a rule, in such cases, as a chemist tells us: therefore supervision of a competent inspector is needed. We do not print Mr. Sims' letter, with its picturesque language and its abuse of all and sundry who do not agree with him, because we do not choose to repeat in print the abusive epithets he bestows on officials who are more entitled to confidence than he.

THE SCIENCE OF FARMING.

Such an exhibition as that which took place in Guelph last week brings into strong relief the fact that successful farming is based upon principles as stringently scientific as those underlying many other industries which in popular nomenclature are allowed to keep that term to themselves. The secrets of nature upon which hangs the improvement or the deterioration of a herd of cattle, or the development of a certain shape or quality, or power of resistance for a certain purpose, are no matter for mere dabbling; they must be delved into deeply or the problem remains unsolved. It was this aspect probably that Col. Ferguson had in mind when he referred to the grey matter which had been expended by the breeders of the Dominion in forcing their live stock to the front, a position of which Canadians can rightfully boast. For the reaching of that goal, in competition against the energetic strivings of our southern neighbors, means many things; it means judgment, and unwearying attention to details, close observation of the varying effects of different diets—the chemistry of food; an understanding of anatomy and physiology; and a practical insight into the hundred and one subtle tendencies which enter into the art of producing and reproducing points. In addition to all this is the business ability required to manage a breeding establishment on a commercial scale, to probe the best markets, in short, to make the occupation profitable.

And this phase of the subject leads us to ask the question: Is there, rightly considered, any other profession or human calling, which calls into play such a wide assortment of talents and sciences and keen intuitions as modern farming? We have already spoken of the live-stock breeder; but take the up-to-date mixed farmer, or still more the fruit-grower, and what a multiplicity of mental assets are ranged before one's view! He must be a judge of what constitutes good soil, not only intrinsically, but for the special objects he is aiming at; and to know this he must take into account its chemical constituents, its physical texture, its past uses and present vegetation; besides which its exposure and location must be care-