

The Farm.

Irrigation.

"Here in the east, where we have excessive rainfall and drought, we are apt to think ourselves helpless in the matter and to depend on Providence to send us the proper quantity of moisture for our crops, and at the right time. We are helpless as far as rainfall is concerned, but many are independent, to a great extent, as to drought. Quite a share of the farmers living in mountainous or rolling sections of the country are asleep to the subject of irrigation and the opportunities they have for irrigating the whole or parts of their farm land." A farmer who expresses himself thus in Country Gentleman further says:

I know of but three irrigating ditches in use in the northern part of New Jersey, one of which I own. This has been in use for at least a century and covers four fields. As long as I can remember the water has been turned on the fields and run through the grass until near haying time, when it was turned off for the ground to dry out sufficiently for the haying to be done, after which it was again turned on and flooded the meadows as before and continued through the rest of the summer. By this method a large crop of timothy hay was each year secured regardless of rain.

We can give the water entire credit for the large crops, as they grow only within a couple of hundred feet of the ditches, after which the grasses gradually get poorer in quality and less in quantity toward the lower sides of the fields. The grass near the ditch grows up, falls down and grows up again, and we have trouble to get it properly cured when cut, unless everything favors. The hay now sells for \$9.50 per ton in the mow, which shows the quality.

The ground irrigated is upland, made from gneiss rocks, containing a considerable quantity of felspar and consequently potash. The head of the ditch is by a small dam across a stream 10 to 15 feet wide, and poles are so placed in the fall of the year that most of the leaves and floating material are turned in the ditch and eventually enrich the meadow. In the spring I open the ditch at a point above ground I wish to enrich and turn out a large stream of water, and then with a garden rake stir up the muck and leaves, thus flooding that part of the field, my object being to carry the fertility down to the poorer portion of the field and past where in the preceding years it had been allowed to stop. The ditch is three-fifths of a mile long, and if it were not for the water power rights it might be enlarged and extended 15 miles along the north-west side of the valley, watering farms all the way.

Where the water is cold in summer, as, for instance, spring water or snow water from mountains, the irrigating ditch should be made wide and shallow and have a very slight grade, so that the water may become warm before going on the fields. I may be flooding the ground too much for the real good of the grass, but I am getting better crops all the time from the enrichment of the ground.

In New Jersey a farmer has a right to use water from a stream, but must turn it back into the stream before it passes a water power.

The above is my experience in irrigating grass land, but in ever so many instances ditches can be taken out by the individual or several farmers, the water being used but little during a wet season, but during a dry one extensively used, thereby getting large crops, or at any rate average ones, when, owing to the failure or partial failure of the crops of those who do not irrigate, prices are high.

Cows and Skimmilk.

A seemingly unnatural use for skimmilk, but one which has been reported as satisfactorily practiced in a number of places, is as food for milk cows. Some German accounts are given of mixing skimmilk with water, a very little at first and gradually increased until the cows are taught to drink the milk alone. Others describe using milk and meal or bran of

some kind to make a paste, and claims are made that in this form ten pounds of skimmilk replace one pound of wheat or rye bran, having the same food value with cows. The method of feeding the skimmilk back to the cows producing it, which has been most practiced and advocated in Europe, originated in Sweden. The milk is heated to 155 degrees or 160 degrees F. for half an hour, then cooled to 100 degrees F. and rennet is added. While the milk is thickening an equal weight of chaff or finely cut straw is mixed in, and after being well stirred it is allowed to stand two or three hours in a large tub or tank. The separated whey is then drawn off and poured over the mixture, that as much as possible may be absorbed. The whole mass is then left to ferment from 40 to 48 hours, according to the weather, when it is regarded as prepared for feeding. Cows are given as much of this "skimmilk feed" as will equal a gallon of milk per day. It is claimed that as thus prepared a gallon of skimmilk amply replaces four pounds of concentrated grain food. Reports from Sweden, Norway and Denmark are favorable to this method of utilizing creamery skimmilk, and some who have tried it in this country make like reports, while others give a contrary opinion.—Western Ploughman.

President Tuttle on the Proposed New Freight Schedule.

In a recently published interview, President Lucius Tuttle of the Boston & Maine Railroad effectually disposes of the so-called "Baltimore plan" to reorganize the present basis of freight schedules adopted by the railroads of the United States by substituting a tariff of so much per ton per mile.

This scheme is the outgrowth of an effort on the part of the business men of Baltimore to forestall any unfavorable result upon the export trade of that city growing out of the enforced dissolution of the Joint Traffic Association, and it is announced that they intend to petition Congress to enact a law placing railroad freight rates on that revolutionary basis.

President Tuttle, while pointing out that the idea is wholly impracticable, and giving as his opinion that it will be a long time before the present "block" system of making railroad freight tariffs in this country is superseded by any other arrangement, at the same time presents some logical and forceful arguments in favor of large railroad systems, of which the Boston & Maine is itself an excellent example.

In the course of his statement, Mr. Tuttle says: "Competition between roads brings about that rate-cutting which may prove disastrous to those for whose benefit it was ostensibly devised. The competition here is no longer that of one town against another, but a contest in which New England is pitted against every part of the country in the attempt to market its products and manufactures in every part of the world. A great system of railroads can give to every customer upon its line equal territorial facilities for marketing its goods, and through its connections with similarly powerful systems makes its customers competitors everywhere under the most advantageous conditions. The effort of the railway manager today is directed to the cheapening of rates so that his customers can get their goods into the markets of the world so as to compete with those situated upon other systems, rather than to get more money out of the shippers or receivers upon his line. Thus the competition becomes territorial rather than local, and a great system, embracing a section, can best deal with the question and give those within its jurisdiction the better and cheapest service.

"The railroad business is not in a satisfactory way, notwithstanding the efforts of the Interstate Commission and the use of various expedients from which much was expected. The solution of the problem is one that taxes the ingenuity of practical railroad men and they are very much at a loss what to do. Is it reasonable to suppose that others who possess no natural aptitude for the work or experience in it, can settle this matter as is proposed by the Baltimore plan? When each section of the country has its own transportation system whose interest in establishing fair rates would be as great as the maintenance of them afterward, then will the troubles now complained of disappear largely and a better state of things prevail for everyone concerned."

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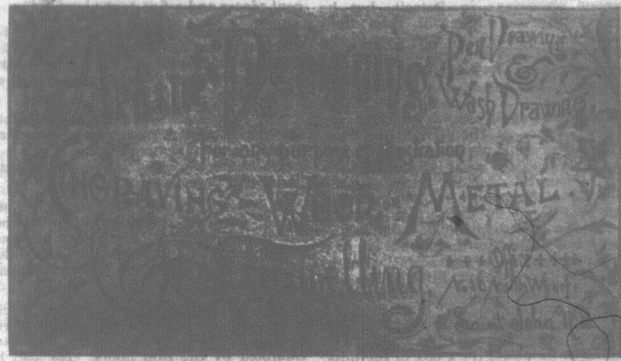
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