CURRENT COMMENT

HYDRO RADIAL SUCCESS.

With the purchase of the Mackenzie electric and radial properties by the City of Toronto a new impetus has been given to the proposal that the Hydro Radial Union should acquire the radials now operated by the Canadian National Railways, the offer of which at cost was made before the issue of the Radial Commission by the Ontario Government, which offer still holds good according to Ottawa authority. The lines in question are the Toronto Eastern, the Toronto Suburban, and the Niagara, St. Catharines & Toronto railways, all of which had been provisionally recognized as to be included in the proposed provincial radial lines. The offer of the federal government is a most generous and advantageous one, and will enable the Hydro Radial Union should the offer be taken up to make a most auspicious start in the proposed radial system. The recent purchase of the Mackenzie interests provides a right of way from Niagara to Toronto and this in combination with the three lines comprised in the Ottawa Government, Ottawa constitutes the backbone of the new system. The evidence brought out at the Radial Commission sessions to an imprejudiced mind would warrant the flotation of a $100,000,000 company to carry out the project. The people do not want dividends, but service at cost and the lower the cost of construction and the consequent investment the more successful will be the service. No one who has watched the operation of the Hydro services has any doubt about the success of the radials. The London & Port Stanley railway has confounded all the critics, and a second example of Hydro Radial success is at hand in the Windsor & Sandwich lines. After nine months of operation they have done what the promoters of the radial inquisition said it was impossible to do, and have increased wages by 25 per cent. without any increase in fares. Private ownership could not do this, and critics of Sir Adam Beck asserted that he could not do it. Not only have the 25 per cent. increases in wages been paid, but for the last four months ten per cent additional. These facts are of more value than all the contrary opinions in Ontario, and Premier Drury appears to have a wholesome respect for facts.

KEEPING ONTARIO ORDERLY

Orders have been issued to arrest all men found carrying concealed weapons, sheath knives, bowie knives, daggers, stilettos, knuckle-dusters, life-preservers, revolver, pistol, bomb or other fire-arm. Since the war there has been a great increase in the number of people carrying concealed weapons and while the conditions are not so bad here as in the United States it is feared that evil communications may corrupt good manners. In United States cities conditions have become fairly awful. Since New Year in New York there have been over 100 unsolved murders. In Philadelphia 100 murders in eleven months and fifty hold-ups in one day recently puts the city of brotherly love on the Quaker map of violence. Records of murder in United States cities is appalling and it is to be doubted if Sodom and Gomorrha had such a lust for slaughter. Cleveland has had 70 murders this year, and Cincinnati, Pittsburg, Detroit and San Francisco acknowledge similar depravity. In 1916 New York with less than 6,000,000 people had six times as many murders as London with its population of over 7,000,000. Chicago in the same year, one-third the size of London had 105 murders or twelve times as many as London. In three years, 1916-18 Glasgow had 38 homicides; Philadelphia, about the same size, had 281. Liverpool and St. Louis are about of a size. In 1915 St. Louis had eleven times, and in 1916 eight times as many murders. Los Angeles, one-twentieth the size of London in 1916 had two more homicides. Cleveland, one-tenth the size of London, had three times as many killings in 1917 and about twice as many in 1918. It is believed that human life has never been so insecure in a "civilized" country as in the United States at the present time, and the number of murders and homicides in 1919 exceed all previous records. The authorities in Ontario cannot be too careful to prevent any spread of such violence to this province. Canada may be glad to be free of such tendencies the result of system, had temper, variety, and quarrelsome undisciplined characters combined with a too ready access to fire-arms.

WEEKLY GROCERY MARKET REPORTS

TORONTO—The sugar situation is gradually clearing as depressed stocks are fairly well cleaned up. One refinery has resumed operating. Raw sugars are again lower but it is the opinion that refined has now reached a stabilizing level. Reductions are announced on practically all cereals in bulk. Wholesalers are buying cereals in small quantities, in fact one miller stated that wholesalers who previously bought in one hundred bag lots are now just buying five bags at one time. Spot stocks of shelled walnuts and almonds are fairly well cleaned up, and it is doubtful whether there will be sufficient to meet demands before the new goods arrive. Those that have supplies of shelled walnuts have not changed quotations, although in some instances they have had to pay a higher price owing to re-purchasing from other jobbers. Reports from India and Ceylon state that some tea plantations have closed and the Coolies dismissed. The reason for this, it is stated, is because stocks of coarse teas has accumulated to such proportions in London that prices were forced down far below cost of production and the only remedy to bring prices to a profitable basis was to cut down production. Another report states that fully seventy-five per cent. of the huge stocks of tea held in British warehouses have deteriorated with age and will have to be sold for chemical purposes or destroyed. Under these conditions it is not unlikely that a firmer tea market will develop. There is a fair demand for canned goods but only in small lots. In this respect the market is no different than it has been for some time, but quotations are merely nominal, wholesalers offering canned goods considerably below list prices and it is possible to get several prices on any one line. Spice manufacturers state that this past week has shown considerable improvement in business. Orders are coming in more freely but mostly in small lots, and many of them rush orders. This indicates that retailers' stocks are getting low and business will soon become normal. Cream of tartar appears to be the weak spot in the spice market, and quotations are reduced. Wholesalers and importers repart business as active on dried fruits but state that they are selling at a loss, as in many instances goods are sold below replacement prices. Currants are scarce, both spot and primary stocks are fairly well cleaned up. Raisins are picked up as fast as they arive. Evaporated apples show a fair movement for the Western trade, but not nearly as great as last year. Brokers in close touch with the evaporated apple situation state that evaporated apples are now offered at a price below cost of production, which would indicate that there is a possibility for firmer prices later in the season. Business on beans has shown an improvement, but like other lines, orders are confined to small lots.

In the produce and provision markets, fresh pork cuts, smoked bacon and hams are marked lower. Butter continues easy while eggs show firmer prices.

MONTREAL— The hog market shows more strength this week with smaller offerings on the market. Despite this there is a reduction in many lines of bacon. Quotations on the hog market may strengthen the market for bacon. Lard and shortening have had a further reduction. An advance of two cents is quoted on fresh eggs. There is a continually improving demand for fowl with a very good supply except of turkeys. The butter and cheese market are unchanged. Fish prices hold firm with an excellent demand, and dealers state that supplies arriving are only sufficient to meet the demand. There is an exceptionally good demand for dried fruits and nuts. Italian chestnuts feature the nut market. Dates and figs are a shade cheaper, and slightly lower prices are quoted on the new pack of California prunes. There is a big supply of oranges of various kinds on the market with lower prices, and indications that the prices will be still lower. Celery and pumpkins are quoted dearer this week and the potato market holds firm. There appears to be a shortage of canned peas due to the big drain on the new pack. The tea market shows no improvement and dealers state that the sales are limited. Japan teas are getting low in supply and this may serve to strengthen the market until the new crop is ready. Some firms have made further reductions on rolled oats. Lower prices are quoted on honey with a big supply of Canadian honey offered at the ruling prices. The first supply of French castile soap that has been offered for some years is on the local market.

THE IMPORTANCE OF MICA.

The main importance of mica in modern industry lies in the fact that it is one of the poorest conductors of electricity and therefore desirable for the purposes of insulation. It is almost indispensable in the electrical industry.

Each year Americans use $320,000,000 worth of buttons.

GETTING THE SHORTHORN INTO AFRICA

The American thoroughbred stock-breeder, who thinks he encounters trials and adverse conditions, is invited to take a look at this picture. It shows the difficulties of the South African breeder in trying to introduce the shorthorn into Northern Rhodesia, and a plan recently adopted in getting shorthorn bulls from the Union of South Africa, through the Tsetse-fly country. The animals are enveloped in a specially constructed khaki mackintosh, leaving only the eyes, horn and nose exposed. The exposed parts are covered with wagon grease and the herd marches only by night when the fly is less on the wing. The native cows are then bred to the shorthorn.

THE ROUND TABLE

"Captain Macedoine's Daughter" by William McFee. Published by S. B. Gundy, Toronto.

Any one who reads "Casuals of the Sea" or "Aliens" needs no further recommendation of their author's latest book, "Captain Macedoine's Daughter," than the statement that this novel has the same durable excellence, the same maturity and depth that marked those two previous stories.

"Captain Macedoine's Daughter" is first of all, a masterful portrayal of two colorful personalities—the supreme illusionist, Macedoine, who retires from the sea with his bestowed title of "captain," and his richly vital daughter, Artemisia. But it is more than that; it is a contrast between Occidental and Eastern civilizations and philosophies, a commentary on human nature, particularly an analysis of love, and an achievement in beautiful prose. More than all these, perhaps, is it an artistically restrained protest against the banishment of Romance from the world, and a plea for broadness in judging people whose outlook upon life differs from our own.

We know Captain Macedoine for exactly what he is—a pretentious, unmoral old fraud, pathetic, in his pose as a man of fine family and of large affairs, who tries to make his alluring daughter a pawn in his scheme to swindle sailormen; we see the daughter in her true light as an unregenerate pagan of not too admirable conduct. Yet Mr. McFee succeeds in making us feel affection for Captain Macedoine, and both affection and admiration for the daughter, victim of an implacable destiny.

Contrasted with this father and daughter are "good old honest Jack Evans," English sea captain, and his wife, "with her soul like a parched pea." And, inconsistently enough, the reader cannot help sympathizing with their viewpoint, too.

This ability to make his readers like characters as far apart in their philosophies as the poles is one of the most unusual feats Mr. McFee performs in his latest novel.

Besides that, he is master of the secret of saying things by suggestion; of leaving to the reader's imagination just the things that, unwritten, stamp an author as an artist.

Miss E. A. H. Brantford:—I would like to know of a thrilling story of adventure on travel to be given to a boy of fifteen. I would prefer that it did not belong to that class labelled "boys' books."

* * *

"The Flying Bo'sun," by Arthur Mason, is a sea story in which you take one long breath as soon as the action gets under way and let it go on the last page.

It is extremely realistic Swanson is as brutal as any sailor depicted by Jack London. One-Eyed Riley and Broken-Nose Pete and other individuals are as well characterized as those in "The Nigger of the Narcissus." They tell yarns like the old salts whom W. W. Jacobs describes. Most of them deal with the superstitions of the sailor, but as sea stories they make the book rank with the best of Jack London or Morgan Robertson.

"The Terrible Island," by Beatrice Grimshaw, is another absorbing tale. This author is very popular in England and it is easy to understand why, for she knows every trick to keep the reader reading.

Both these stories are meant for grown-ups as well as young folks.

ELINOR MURRAY.

WINTER CARE OF THE FLOCK AND PREPARATION FOR LAMBING

One argument advanced for the keeping of sheep more generally upon our farms is that but little labor is involved in the care of a flock. This idea is far too out to be considered as equivalent to "but little attention is required."

It is quite true that no stock requires less hard labor in its care than does sheep, but this does not mean neglect, and this is especially true after the flock goes into winter quarters with the comparative confinement under cold and storm-weather conditions.

If the breeding ewes have been well seen to during the fall months and, while in good condition, bred between the 15th of October and the 1st of December they will give a god crop of lambs and wool the next spring, if good treatment is accorded during the winter months.

Free range until the snow comes is generally best for the ewes, but they should not remain out in heavy rains or snowstorms, as a drenching of the fleece at this season may leave the sheep wet and chilled for days.

The best winter quarters for sheep is a shed in a dry location partly open to the south, so that it affords ample air and the flock should have free range of the yard continually,—an old motto is "Never close a door upon a sheep."

They should be fed winter rations after the ground freezes, as grass then has but little nourishing power. Plenty of green feed, either in the form of rape, clean turnip tops or roots, is relished at this season and only such hay as will be eaten up clean should be given. The hay is best fed in racks. Some shepherds prefer a rack into which the sheep can get its head, others, including the writer prefer one with slats placed just far enough to enable the sheep to enter its nose and pull the hay out. A little hay is pulled out under food in this way, but less is wasted than where the sheep get a chance to get their heads in the muss the whole lot. When sheep enter their heads into a rack they invariably tear the wool along their neck and spoils their appearance, as well as the neck wool.

Whether or not some grain should be fed during November, December and January is a question that must be decided by the sheep owner himself. If the hay is young-cut, well cured and with plenty of clover and the sheep are in good condition, grain is unnecessary. Succulent feed as above mentioned should, however, be provided. After tops are done turnips should be fed daily at the rate of from 2 to 4 pounds per head per day.

As the winter passes a grain mixture of oats 8 parts, bran 2 parts and oil cake one part should be started, gradually increasing the daily allowance up, to from one to two pounds per head, and the turnips may be gradually decreased as there is a tendency for the lambs to develop rather large and weak if the turnip ration is heavy. However, some sheep men seem to have the best of luck with full feeding of four pounds of turnips per head per day.

While sheep will not perhaps drink a great deal of water before lambing if they are getting roots and there is snow available, yet it is a better plan to see that they have access to clean water every day. Salt should be placed where access may be had to it at all times.

As the lambing season approaches, all long wool around the udders should be clipped away and a number of individual pens, 4 feet by 6 feet in size provided, where each ewe may be placed before or immediately after lambing. This plan prevents the disowning of lambs by the ewes and enables the attendant to give the ewe and lambs individual attention. When a ewe has twins she is very apt to lose one of them if she is in the pen

BEST VARIETIES OF FRUITS AND VEGETABLES

A country as large as Canada and with so many differences in climate, needs fruits and vegetables that can be grown under a great variety of conditions. There is still room for improvement in these varieties yet available, particularly for the oldest parts of the Dominion, but efforts are continuously being made by the Horticultural Division to originate better sorts.

Fruits.

Apples: There are between thirty and forty varieties of apples which might be called the best for planting in Canada, and in the following list they are given in about their relative importance:

Summer: Duchess of Oldenburg, Red Astrachan, Yellow Transparent, Crimson Beauty, Williams Favorite, Charlamoff, Blushed Calville, Lowland Raspberry, Langford Beauty.

Of these, Duchess of Oldenburg, Blushed Calville and Charlamoff are particularly valuable where winters are severe.

Autumn: Wealthy, Gravenstein, Alexander, Blenheim, Dudley, McMahan, Hibernal, Antonovka, Patten Greening.

Early Winter: McIntosh, Jonathan, Tompkins King, Rhode Island Greening, Fameuse, Ribston, Hubbardston, Wolf River.

Crab Apples: Transcendent, Virginia, Florence, Martha, Hyslop, and for the severest parts of the prairies, Osman, Columbia, Jewel, Silvia, Robin, and Elsa.

Winter: Baldwin, Northern Spy, Wagener, American Golden Russet, Grimes, Delicious, Stark, Roxbury (Nonpareil), Yellow Newton, Winesap, Bethel, Scott Winter, Milwaukee.

Of the winter apples in the above list, Delicious Yellow Newton, and Winesap are only satisfactory in parts of Canada where the seasons are hottest and longest, and they succeed best in Southern British Columbia.

Peaches in Order of Ripening:

St. John, Early Crawford, Greensboro, Champion, Brigdon or Garfield, Fitzgerald, Reeves, Niagara, Elberta, Carman, Beers, Smock.

Pears, in Order Ripening:

Giffard, Clapp, Bartlett, Boussock, Flemish, Howell, Louise, Duchess, Boss, Clairgeau, Anjou, Kieffer.

The Flemish Beauty is one of the hardiest pears, and Dr. Jules Guyot is a variety which has done particularly well in British Columbia.

Plums, in Order of Ripening.

European — Bradshaw, Imperial Gage, Shipper Pride, Lombard, Yellow Egg, Reine Claude, Golden Drop, Italian Prune, Grand Duke, Shropshire Damson, Ronarch.

Other varieties succeeding well in Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island are Arctic, Field, Gueii, and Quackenboss, and in British Columbia Diamond and Pond.

Japanese—Red June, Abundance, Burbank, Chabot.

American and Nigra—Assiniboine, Cheney, Mammoth, Schley, Brackett.

Hybrid—Emerald, Omaha, Shiro, Waneta.

Cherries:

Sour—Early Richmond, Montmorency, English Morello, Olivet.

Sweet—Black Tartarian, Governor Wood, Napoleon, Windsor, Elkhorn, Lambert and Bing succeed particularly well in British Columbia.

Grapes:

For districts where grown commercially in order of ripening:

Black—Moore, Campbell, Worden, Concord, Wilder.

Red—Delaware, Lindley, Agawam, Vergennes.

White—Diamond, Niagara.

Additional varieties where earliness is the chief consideration:

Black—Early, Daisy, Manito, Merrimac, Peabody.

White—Winchell (Green Mountain).

Red—Brighton, Moyer.

Blackberries:

Agawam, Snyder, and for warmer sections, Kittitinny, and for west coast, Loganberry, Himalaya, Mammoth and Evergreen.

Currants:

Black—Champion, Victoria, Boskoop Giant, Saunders, Climax, Magnus, Kerry.

Red—Perfection, Red Cross, Red Grape, Fay, Victoria, Red Dutch.

White—Grape.

Gooseberries:

American Varieties—Pearl, Downing, Josselyn (Red Jacket), and Oregon Champion especially for British Columbia, and Houghton for the Prairie Provinces.

Raspberries:

Black—Older, Cumberland, Gregg.

Red—Cuthbert, Herbert. On the Prairies Sunbeam is desirable because of great hardiness.

Strawberries:

Parson (per.), Glen Mary (per), Senator Dunlap (per.), Portia (imp.), Williams (per.). In British Columbia Magoon is one of the best, and Marshall and Paxton do well. Beder Wood is one of the best early strawberries.

Everbearing Strawberries: Progressive, Americus.

VEGETABLES.

Asparagus, Argenteuil, Palmetto.

Beans.

Dwarf—Round Pod Kidney Wax, Stringless Green Pod, Early Red Valentine, Refugee or 1,000 to 1.

Pole—Kentucky Wonder, Scarlet Runner.

Beets—Detroit Dark Red, Early Model, Crosby Egyptian.

Borecole or Kale—Dwarf Green Curled Scotch.

Brussels Sprouts—Improved Dwarf.

Cabbage—Early Jersey Wakefield, Copenhagen Market, Succession, Danish Ballhead, Drumhead Savoy, Red Dutch.

Cauliflower—Early Snowball, Early Dwarf Erfurt.

Carrot—Chantenay, Danvers Half Long, Early Scarlet Horn.

Celery—Golden Self Blanching, Winter Queen, Evans Triumph, Perfection Heartwell. White Plume is desirable for the prairies and cooler parts.

Corn—Golden Bantam is the most popular early variety, but still earlier Stewells Evergreen and Country Gentleman are good late sorts.

Cucumber—Davis Perfect, White Pine.

Egg Plant—New York Improved, Long Purple.

Lettuce—Grand Rapids, Iceberg, Giant Crystal Head, Improved Hanson, Salamander, Crisp as Ice.

Muskmelon, green fleshed—Long Island Beauty, Hackensack, Montreal Market.

Salmon or yellow flesh—Hoodoo, Emerald Gem, Paul Rose, Surprise.

Onions—Yellow Globe Danvers, Early Red Wethersfield, Early Flat Red. Prize Taker is good for transplanting. Dutch sets are desirable where the season is short.

Parsley—Double Curled.

Parsnip—Hollow Crown.

Pepper—Harriet Earliest, Early Neapolitan, Cayenne, Chili.

Peas:

Early—Thos. Laxton, Gradus, Sutton Early Giant, English Wonder, Gregory Surprise is earlier but pods are rather small.

Medium to late—Sutton Excelsior, McLean, Advancer, Heroine, Stratagem.

Tall varieties—Telephone, Champion of England, Quite Content.

Potatoes:

Early—Irish Cobbler or Eureka Extra Early.

Main Crop—Green Mountain, Gold Coin, Wee MacGregor, Carman No. 1 (all of the Green Mountain Group). Early Ohio is a good extra early pink sort but is not so productive as Irish Cobbler. Rural Group including Dooley where summers are hottest.

Radish—Scarlet White Tipped Turnip, White Icicle.

Salsify—Long White, Sandwich Islands.

Spinach—Victoria.

Squash—Long White Bush, Summer Crookneck. Late—Delicious, Hubbard.

Tomatoes—Extra Early: Alacrity, Sparks Earliana. Early and Main Crop: Bonny Best, Chalk Early Jewel. Late good sorts are Matcheless, Trophy, Livingston Globe, Plentiful.

Swede Turnip—Champion Purple Top.

LOW GRADE PLANTFOODS.

There are forms in which plantfood can be put on the market in which it is of vastly inferior value. This fact is recognized in some of the states to the south in the matter of their treatment of plantfood values in various carriers. Under pre-war conditions, for instance, the Purdue Agricultural Experiment Station, Indiana, valued 1 per cent. phosphoric acid in acid phosphate at $1.60, while they valued 1 per cent. of the same plantfood constituent in rock phosphate and low grade slag at 40c. This did not mean that these materials could be always purchased at these prices, but it did form a constant basis for valuation on which comparisons have been computed and was indicative of the relative value the station put upon these forms of phosphoric acid. Hence it is evident that the question of the readiness with which plantfood dissolves constitutes an item of great value when you are purchasing fertilizers. This fact the Canadian Fertilizer law, amended January 1, 1920, takes into account when it requires on the tag or bag a statement of the nitrogen the percentage of available phosphoric acid and total phosphoric acid, and the percentage of potash soluble in water.

The quantity of plantfood you get in the ton and the availability of same is the measure of the fertilizer's intrinsic value.—Henry G. Bell, B.S.A.

Who ever heard of a female deer with horns, and horns in velvet this time of year? Yet a correspondent writes us that John Ward, of Orillia, Ont., shot a two hundred pound doe at Carling, on November 13, with horns, which had velvet on them.

A DOG HERO.

The following story is sent in by a subscriber: Last December when the steamer Ethele ran ashore on the coast of Newfoundland a new-born infant was in immediate danger of death in the heavy sea, Reuben Decker of Bonne Bay called his dog and, putting the end of a rope in his mouth, started him off to swim to the wrecked ship. The dog, holding the rope fast, plunged into the heavy sea, and after struggling for more than an hour reached the steamer. With the line aboard, the passengers were sent ashore in a breeches buoy, the baby being carried in a mail bag. Now the dog has a silver collar, the gift of a number of humane sosieties of Philadelphia.

NEED NOT EAT WHOLE EGG.

The late Ambassador Walter Hindes Page was formerly editor of The World's Work and, like all editors, was obliged to refuse a great many stories. A lady once wrote him:

"Sir: You sent back last week a story or mine. I know that you did not read the story, for as a test I had pasted together pages 18, 19 and 20, and the story came back with these pages still pasted; and so I know you are a fraud and turn down stories without reading same."

Mr. Page wrote back:

"Madame: At breakfast when I open an egg I don't have to eat the whole egg to discover it is bad."

The cats of New York state, it has been entimated, destroy 3,500,000 birds annually.

Cotton of good quality is being grown in the Belgian Congo.