

FARMING

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Thanksgiving Offer.

Our readers are requested to note carefully an offer made in the advertising columns of this issue of FARMING, of a very generous proposal by which they may secure a copy of "The Life of Christ for the Young." This is a book of 400 pages with 74 full page half-tone illustrations,—a book that will be prized in every home where there are young people; in fact, children of an older growth will be benefited by it. It is really a beautiful book. Read the advertisement and then send for a copy.

Canada's Live Stock Interests

Mr. Richard Gibson's letter in our correspondence columns this week, and written from the Pacific coast, will be read with interest by every Canadian breeder. His summary of what live stock men are expecting of Mr. Hodson, when he assumes his new duties at Ottawa, is both timely and to the point. A new line of work of the greatest importance to Canada's great live stock interests is soon to be undertaken, and we presume that both the Department of Agriculture and Mr. Hodson are desirous of knowing something of the feeling of the breeders in regard to it and what they are expecting a Dominion Live Stock Commissioner to accomplish for them. Consequently the time is very opportune just now for making their wants known, and we trust that other leading breeders will come forward in the same way.

A very important suggestion made by Mr. Gibson is that regarding the development of a trade in purebred live stock in South America. His statement that that portion of America has imported from Great Britain ten times more bulls and rams than all other portions of the world combined is no exaggeration. Anyone who has followed at all closely the records of sales of English purebred stock the last ten years cannot help but come to the conclusion that the Argentine and those portions of South America bordering upon it are the largest purchasers of purebred stock in the world. But not only are they by many times the largest purchasers in regard to numbers, but, as Mr. Gibson very aptly points out, they pay the very highest prices for the stock they buy. About all of the very highest priced animals sent out of Great Britain have their destination in South America.

A market of this description is worth looking after. Canadian purebred stock ranks high in quality and there seems to be no good reason, providing transportation facilities will admit of reasonable freight rates, why some of the fine bulls and rams which this country produces should not find a good market in South America. The Argentine is now our most formidable rival in supplying beef cattle for the British markets, and if we can arrange to supply the cattle-raisers of that country with new blood for replenishing their herds we shall not feel the other competition so keenly. This whole question, as well as the others Mr. Gibson draws attention to, are well worthy of consideration by the new Live Stock Commissioner.

The Shortage in Beef Cattle

A great deal has been said and written during the past few weeks, especially in the United States, about the shortage in beef cattle. While some authorities are agreed that a serious shortage exists, there are others who are not quite so confident that there is anything in the situation to be excited about. The prices for dressed meats have materially advanced both in Canada and the United States, and more particularly in the latter country. This advance is thought by some to be due more to the increased demand for meats that has come with better times and better wages for the workman than to any great falling off in the number of beef cattle. But be this as it may, there is considerable evidence to show that the number of beef cattle in both countries is not as large as it was several years ago.

Secretary of Agriculture Wilson, in an interview at Washington a few weeks ago in regard to the American cattle situation, said :

"The American people are great meat eaters. Even the laboring man wants meat two or three times a day when he has the money to buy. He has the money now, because he is earning good wages. With prosperity has come an enormously increased demand for meats. Wherever our flag goes meat eaters will multiply and make business for the stock raisers of America. . . . For various reasons the number of meat animals in the country has been growing gradually less for several years. Hard times forced people to economize by using less meat. The result was a smaller demand for live stock, with a lowering of prices, which in turn led stock raisers to grow fewer animals. Large losses from disease and exposure last year also had some effect in the same direction."

Another reason advanced by the secretary for the advance in the price of beef was the great decrease in the area of the western ranges where cheap cattle are raised. This has arisen partly from the settling up of the country and the necessity of fencing the ranges and the owning or leasing of the land.

The following table gives the number of cattle other than milch cows, of sheep and of swine in the United States on January 1st for ten years past :

	Cattle.	Sheep.	Swine.
1890	36,849,024	44,336,072	51,602,780
1801	36,875,648	43,431,136	50,625,106
1892	36,651,239	44,938,365	52,398,019
1893	35,954,196	47,273,553	46,094,807
1894	37,608,168	45,048,017	45,206,498
1895	34,364,216	42,294,064	44,165,796
1896	32,085,409	38,298,783	42,842,759
1897	30,508,408	36,818,643	40,600,276
1898	29,264,197	37,656,960	39,759,993
1899	27,994,225	39,114,453	38,651,631

It will be observed by the table that the number of cattle has decreased nearly 10,000,000, or about 27 per cent. since 1892 ; at the same time the population or the number of meat consumers has been increasing.

The *Cincinnati Price Current*, a recognized authority on all trade matters, in commenting on this scarcity says :

"Much is being said of the scarcity of cattle, and of the cause. In some instances the government exhibits of estimated number of animals yearly are taken as indications of relative supply. But such data are liable to be misleading for two reasons. First, the comparison may be questioned, on the evidence that such information, based on percentage estimates and not on enumeration, has shown a tendency to fall short of reflecting a true comparison. If this understatement be say 5 per cent. annually, it requires but a few years to get greatly out of line. Therefore such information is to be received with more or less allowance for such cumulative error. In the second place, there