

THE FARMER'S ADVOCATE

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EDITORIAL.

Dealing with Tuberculous Animals at the Iowa Experiment Station.

In conversation with Prof. C. F. Curtiss, Director of the Iowa Agricultural Experiment Station, a member of our staff learned recently that from time to time (once in four or five years being considered sufficient where the herd is properly cared for) their herds of cattle are subjected to the tuberculin test, and out of quite a large number of animals injected never more than three or four have responded at any time. We also made enquiries as to their method of procedure in case of animals responding to the test, which is an important point for the consideration of stockmen at the present juncture. Such animals are at once separated from the others and are fitted rapidly for beef. When fat enough for the market they are sent to the Chicago yards and subjected to the regular yard inspection, which is very rigid, and if, upon slaughter, the condition of the flesh is found to be wholesome, the station receives beef price for them; but if otherwise, they go into the tanks for soap grease, fertilizer, etc., the station receiving tankage value. Very seldom has an animal ever had to be sacrificed to the latter purpose, as in almost every case the disease has been in very early stages or thoroughly encysted so that the flesh was regarded as perfectly healthful by the inspectors.

Live Stock at the Dominion Experimental Farms.

Recurring to the subject dealt with in a leading editorial in our last issue on the topic above indicated, we desire to say we are persuaded that in the case of these experimental stations where there is no school of agriculture connected with them and no pupils are to be instructed regarding the distinctive characteristics of the different classes of pure-bred stock, it is a mistake to undertake to keep on exhibition representative animals of the various breeds of stock.

In the first place, they are not needed at these stations for educational purposes, and if, at a public institution to the maintenance of which all contribute, samples of a few breeds are kept, to the exclusion of others which have equally as honest admirers and as strong advocates, the procedure savors of favoritism and an invidious distinction, while as a matter of fact all the established breeds are entitled to recognition on equal terms, and it is manifestly impracticable to keep on one farm representatives of the forty different breeds of horses, cattle, sheep, and swine. An example of the folly of favoring one breed was afforded by the Dominion Government a few years ago in their engaging Percheron stallions, from a company in the Province of Quebec, to stand at the different experimental farms at a nominal fee for the improvement of stock, the result being that a beggarly few availed themselves of the privilege and that many others protested against the introduction at the public expense of stock which they claimed was not suited to the needs of the country.

In the second place, the men in charge of these stations may not all be good judges of all the breeds of stock, and if they were they are not allowed a free hand to purchase the best within reasonable limits as to price for that sort.

In the third place, the official in charge of the stock department may have predilections and prejudices with regard to certain breeds and may be disposed to favor one breed in preference to another and to give his favorites better care and treatment, and thus to create a prejudice against some breeds. In the fourth place, the sale of surplus breeding stock from these farms for breeding purposes must, in order to be free from suspicion,

be made by public auction or tender—thus they improperly come into competition with breeders—and if the stock offered is inferior, as it is liable to be, judging from what we have seen at the farms, the low prices obtained set a low standard and a false one of the value of good stock, which reacts upon the business of breeders and gives a wrong impression of the value of improved stock.

We submit that the proper sphere of these stations, in their agricultural sections, outside of the regular operations of the farm, is to conduct experiments in the management and feeding of cattle, sheep and swine with a view to ascertaining the possible gain of weight in a given time or the quantity and quality of milk and the cost of production, the quality of meat produced from the feeding of different foods and rations, and so on. For the purposes of these tests suitable animals could readily be purchased at the market prices and their slaughter conducted under inspection of expert judges of the quality of meat, so that valuable lessons might be demonstrated which would be helpful to farmers and feeders in determining the best methods to be pursued in breeding, selection and feeding. Limited herds of grade beef and dairy cattle might also be kept on the farms and experiments conducted to determine the advantage or otherwise of such points as feeding beef and dairy animals tied in stalls or loose in large covered enclosures part or all of the time during winter months, a system followed at the farms of Hon. Mr. Mulock; W. C. Edwards, M. P.; John McMillan, M. P., and others, and by some dairymen as well. The question of the relation of constant or periodical water supply to milk flow is one of special interest to every dairy farmer from Prince Edward Island to British Columbia. The effect of exercise and the length of the fattening period on the production of the modern type of bacon, cross-breeding, and grading and rations, toward the same end, all open up important lines for continued investigation. The consumptive demand for food products is all the while becoming more critical and competition keener, so that we must produce a more fancy article at a lower cost if possible. Then there is still work to be done in the line of experiments to determine the best means of producing the largest quantities of fodder and foods for fattening or producing flesh, milk, butter, wool, etc. So important are these and the problems arising in connection with animal diseases that the U. S. Secretary of Agriculture in his annual message the other day recommended the establishment of a national experiment station on an extended scale solely for such work. It would therefore seem that the time is ripe for an advance movement along these lines at the Dominion Experimental Farms, where comparatively little has been attempted in the past.

Transportation of Pure-bred Stock.

A question which may well engage the attention of the stock breeders at their annual meetings at Brantford during the week of the fat stock show is the feasibility of securing reduced freight rates on pedigreed stock eastward on the same terms as are now conceded by the C. P. R. for the transportation of registered animals to Manitoba, the Northwest, and British Columbia. This would greatly facilitate the interchange of "fresh blood" and enable Eastern breeders, such as those in the Maritime Provinces, the more readily to obtain extra supplies for their provincial trade should their own stock run below the demand, because we look for a great impetus to breeding operations throughout Canada at an early day. More reasonable transportation charges is the one thing needed to bring this about. We will go further and say that we see no reason why the privilege granted for the Manitoba and Northwest trade should not be granted for the carrying of pure-bred male animals

at least from one point to another anywhere in the Dominion. Viewed from a business standpoint, we are free to state our opinion that the railroad companies would ultimately be the gainers by this course, as the impetus which would be given to the live stock industry would in a very few years bring large returns to the roads in increased shipping of stock not only from point to point on the road but from the extreme West to the extreme East and for the export trade, as well as from East to West for breeding purposes.

The opinions given by Mr. Hobson, President of the Dominion Cattle Breeders' Association, in an interview since his return from Great Britain, where he studied the requirements of the cattle markets, emphasize the necessity of improving the breed of our beef cattle if Canada is to get her own share of the export trade, which she is not now enjoying, for the simple reason that so small a proportion of our cattle are good enough for that trade. The fact that leading Canadian exporters have for several years found it necessary to buy cattle in Chicago during the winter months, and lately in Buffalo, in order to meet their engagements, and that one of them has gone to Argentine for a larger field of operations, points to the absolute necessity of Canadian farmers and feeders taking vigorous steps toward the improvement of their offerings by breeding and feeding on up-to-date lines if they would not be left far behind in the race for supremacy in the British market, and one of the first steps toward that end is to secure reasonable rates of transportation for pure-bred stock, so that all who have the ambition may have the means of securing the new blood that is necessary to accomplish this end.

The Request of the Breeders.

Below we give the resolution adopted by the Dominion Cattle Breeders' Association at the last annual meeting, held in Guelph, Ont., on Dec. 7th, 1896, a similar memorial being passed by the Dominion Sheep Breeders' Association, and ordered to be forwarded to the Dominion Minister of Agriculture:

"That this association respectfully memorialize the Minister of Agriculture in the Dominion Government to appoint to the position of agriculturist at the Central Experimental Farm, not only a practical farmer, but also a man thoroughly in touch with and acquainted with the needs of the livestock raisers of the country, and that a copy of this resolution be forwarded to the Minister of Agriculture for the Dominion."

These emphatic declarations indicate very plainly the mind of the influential and representative agriculturists and breeders composing these organizations regarding the carrying on of work at the Central Experimental Farm. No one begrudges the \$73,000 or \$74,000 (some \$32,000 of which goes to the Central Farm at Ottawa) that it costs to run these institutions, or more if really needed, nor desires to belittle a good deal of what has been undertaken; but in a country like Canada, where live-stock keeping is the farmers' sheet anchor and where the natural adaptability and past achievements alike show that a position of pre-eminence is to be maintained, farmers and breeders have a right to insist on more appropriate recognition of these lines of investigation, which in comparison with others they have not received in the past.

Returned to His First Love.

To the Editor FARMER'S ADVOCATE:

SIR,—I am much pleased with your paper, the ADVOCATE. I have been taking it for about twenty years, with the exception of about three years. Lately I have been trying other agricultural papers that came from the other side, but I find none so good for this province as the FARMER'S ADVOCATE. I would say every farmer in Canada should take the ADVOCATE.

JOHN HOLBORN.

Elgin Co., Ont.