

THE FARM BULLETIN.

DISCUSSES THE HOG-FEEDING QUESTION.

Editor "The Farmer's Advocate":

I was rather amused upon reading the letter of J. C. T. in your issue of December 26th, at the onslaught he was making on an article of Prof. Day's on the hog question. Although I consider J. C. T. put up a rather "lame" argument against the Professor's view of the matter, yet, no doubt, his criticism will be rather looked upon with favor by perhaps nine out of ten farmers at the present time. I must say that this matter which Prof. Day brought before the rural public should be the means of checking to a certain extent the marketing of breeding stock, which is reported being done. One thing he neglected to explain to the farmers was that there will in all probability be another panic, in perhaps less than a year, when hogs will be soaring high, and likely grain will be what it used to be. In order to make a profit out of hogs, or any other live stock, one must stay with it through thick and thin, and grade up to a standard of perfection, rather than go out of a certain line just because the market is low for a few months. Even at 4½c. per lb., according to the figures set forth by Prof. Day, a farmer realizes an average price for his grain, etc., and then he is not selling what means fertility off his farm, to the same extent as he does when he sells his grain. Now, 4½c. is below the average, 6c. per lb. being nearer the mark. I must ask J. C. T., since he condemns the Experimental Farms, if each and every farmer can experiment, or gather results, on about 300 hogs, in order to bring out facts similar to what Prof. Day has done? No, of course not. That's where the Experimental Farms come in; they do work which is impossible for the average farmer to perform to the same perfection, and yet what a large majority of farmers deem those farms an unnecessary luxury and expense. J. C. T. further remarks, where there is one man alone on a 100-acre farm hogs do not receive proper attention. I might say to this, that, in this case, he had better drop the hogs out altogether, for it is during the summer season that hogs can be fed cheapest, as they can be pastured cheaply on rape and clover in summer, and artichokes and other roots in the fall, which will take the place of skim milk, etc., and also of the grain ration to a certain extent. Mill-feed can also be bought cheaper during the summer, which will hardly prove detrimental to the fertility of the soil, and yet farmers claim they can't afford to, although money spent on this is money well invested, and will yield a good interest, so you do not have to sell grain in order to buy millfeed. There is, no doubt, a little difficulty securing this millfeed, especially in winter, but this can be overcome largely by buying in bulk, as it will keep if in a dry place. Any systematic farmer is well able to feed his stock regularly, excepting on a very odd occasion.

To his next question, I might say that any farmer not having proper buildings had better get his hogs in shape to dispose of earlier in the season; or, better still, go out of hogs altogether. Any ambitious farmer, however short of means he may be, can put up or fix up a building that would answer the purpose for a few years at least. Now, Prof. Day does not say he bought the pigs in question. They are only valued at \$1.50, and even at that price pigs are sold at a profit. There is no doubt farmers' bins are, on the whole, not very full, and I attribute this as one of the chief causes for the present low prices, the reason being that a large number of unfinished hogs and also sows were rushed into the market. Another cause is that there is less pork consumed in December, as poultry, etc., is on the market at that time. Now, I think if a merciful man is merciful to his beast, he would have had his surplus stock disposed of before this, as several months have elapsed since last harvest, and any man with a head must know how much stock he can winter. No doubt, if the market had not dropped, J. C. T. and a few others would have been merciful enough to feed their hogs, even "starvation" rations! Now, take a look back on Prof. Day's table of profits, and see what a man realizes on his grain when hogs sell for 6½c. per lb. If he can realize that at 6½c., what will the result be when he gets from 7c. to 7½c., as the market has reached that figure at times? I must say that hog and poultry raising must be taken largely into consideration when a young man with small capital starts out. The reason for this is that he has to wait too long for "ready money," as it takes at least two years for cattle and horses to bring returns; whereas hogs and poultry, and also sheep, will bring like returns within a year. Of course, dairying will bring like returns, but it takes more capital to start with than in the case of hogs and poultry. For a beginner without capital, it would be better for him to start with only a few head of cattle, and let these be either well graded or pure-bred, and also a good brood mare or two, and go principally into hogs and poultry for a few years, until he gets into more cattle and horses, as it is cheaper to raise than to buy even half-grown stock. Of course this fall has been an exception, as now the price of cattle has almost been cut in two. As I have said before, hogs can be raised and finished for the market very cheap on rape and clover pasture, etc., excepting the last week or two, when the ration should be largely grain, in order to avoid soft pork. Where possible, a few acres of artichokes and alfalfa would prove also of great benefit, as once started, such root and clover pasture will not need much further attention. Roots, such as sugar beets, mangels and turnips, will take the place

of clover and rape and other such summer pastures during the winter months. Now, my theory is that a farmer can realize a large price per bushel for his grain, as well as good interest for money invested on millfeed, when he feeds such to hogs, in conjunction with the above-mentioned pastures, etc. Of course, as I have intimated before, care should be taken in this case to avoid soft pork. As corn has a like effect of producing such, and peas have the opposite, the grain ration should contain a good percentage of peas to offset the bad results obtained otherwise. Hogs on pasture should get a very small ration of grain at the start, and such grain ration gradually enlarged, until the last week or so, when they should be confined to pens and given almost wholly grain. Now, I think such treatment ought to, where a good breed of hogs are kept, bring them up to the 200-lb. mark in seven or eight months, and even less where conditions are most favorable. I will now, in defence of what I have already said about hogs as money-makers, refer you to what "M." of Elgin Co., has to say, in the December 5th issue, one remark being: "A reasonable number of hogs are a necessity on every farm, and as rent-raisers and mortgage-lifters, have a record that is probably unexcelled by any other line of live stock." I also refer you to the first number of the new year, in an article by "Amateur," under heading, "Some Possibilities in Feeding Pigs." See what he realized on grain fed. I think over \$35.00 per ton pretty good. I notice this to be about the same as what Prof. Day realized for hogs sold for the same price, which was \$6.50 per cwt. Also, take note of what "Amateur" realized for his different grains as well. I think every farmer, when possible, should keep similar records, as no doubt some overfed with grain, trying to get them on the market at six months, which is a mistake, as a great deal of such grain will be wasted in so doing. This is where pasturing has the advantage, as hogs can be carried over a longer period—giving a chance for better development at little extra cost.

Now, in conclusion, I must say that under present conditions hog-raising and grain selling can hardly be considered at par, but I do not think a farmer would do himself justice to go out of the former, for a change will, in all probability, be shortly at hand. Now, so much on hog-raising, etc., but I wish to ask, before concluding, those, who have not already done so, to keep on file all issues of "The Farmer's Advocate" for at least a year back, as they will be greatly benefited thereby, as has been my experience. You will find by doing so you will reap a benefit far exceeding the price of the paper. Also, that every farmer who reads this paper should ponder over the article on "Farm Management," as set forth by Thos. McMillan, Huron Co., Ont., especially about adopting Western ideas in general agriculture. J. W. Y.

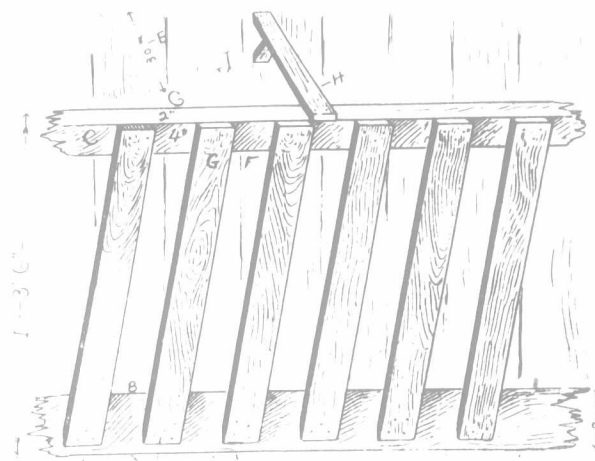
Bruce Co., Ont.

A CONVENIENT FEEDING RACK.

Editor "The Farmer's Advocate":

Enclosed is a rough sketch of my feeding rack, which I use in a shed about 30 ft. long. I find this a very handy and economical rack in all ways. The foundation of this rack, you will see, is the bottom beam of my shed. The rack is 3 ft. 6 in. high. It is high enough that the cattle must take their feed from through the spaces and not over.

I took a scantling, 2 x 4, placed it cornerwise, thereby giving a straight edge from side of scantling to beam, giving me this straight edge on which to nail my boards. Spiked this scantling solid in place, and



A, outside of beam; B, inside of beam (distance from A to B, 8 in.); C, scantling set on corner; D, wall of shed; E, width of rack at top 30 in. from D to C; F, width of space for feed, 6 in.; G, width of lumber used in dividing, 6 in.; H, stay used in center of rack; I, height in front, 3 ft. 6 in.; J, height in back is wall of shed.

stayed it to the wall, in center. Next, I took boards five inches wide and placed them along the rack, running them from beam to scantling, six inches apart. Through which space cattle take their feed. Any straw or food which falls on the ground is not trampled or soiled, and can be gathered up for bedding, or even replaced in rack again; thus one has no waste. This rack is a model on a small scale of those used in the Montreal stock-yards. It has given me the greatest satisfaction. I trust I have made this plain enough to be understood, and that it may be a benefit to others. Carleton Co., Ont.

SAMUEL NESBITT.

WINTER FAIR LOCATION.

Editor "The Farmer's Advocate":

Your editorial criticising the writer's letter in your issue of December 26th (?) hardly strengthened the case for Guelph. Our former suggestions were indited after considerable conversation with many men, both breeders and those interested in breeding, men in positions which give them authority to speak on the conditions as they exist, and they have agreed that in Guelph the future of the Winter Fair is more or less limited.

The Provincial Winter Fair should be "The Farmers' Fair" par excellence, and we take exception to your statement that the Royal City is "the all but unanimous choice of the stockmen," and we suggest that the present is an opportune time to have the matter thoroughly discussed in your columns. We contend that if the subject have the light of present circumstances thrown on it a different opinion will be unanimously held.

History proves your assertion, that Guelph succeeded in producing a creditable Winter Fair, and the County of Wellington being able to boast of such men as Col. McRae, Major Hood, Jas. Bowman, the Watts, Stones, Whitelaws, and very many more eminently successful stockmen, we can easily understand that the Fair's success was assured through local support. The experience gained in conducting the Guelph Fat-stock Club must have been of vast assistance, and the proximity of the Agricultural College would naturally have been a considerable element in past success. To-day conditions are materially changed, and there are many men throughout the Province making a success of cattle-feeding. Then when the Winter Fair was on its travel there was no central location so well suited in all respects for the holding of a winter fair as Toronto Junction is to-day. That the cause of agriculture is to be advanced materially by the instrumentality of the Winter Fair in familiarizing farmers with the College and her work, is doubtful. The farmers who frequent Guelph during Fair week are the most advanced in the Province; men who know farming must go hand in hand with science to be a success, and men who are turning more and more to the College for advice. The College has the June excursions to introduce her to the farming community at large, and she is in herself the most up-to-date, complete and best known agricultural college on the continent. Her place is so secure and so generally recognized that her accommodation is taxed to its limits to provide for the attending students. The College doesn't need the Winter Fair, but the Winter Fair no doubt at present benefits by the College being in Guelph.

The Fair is developing largely in the poultry department, but 1907 marked retrogression rather than progression in the exhibits of cattle and swine. Had it not been for the bringing of cattle from the Toronto cattle markets (cattle which, by the way, had just come from the small fat-stock show held in Toronto Junction, on Monday, December 9th), and for a draft from the College stables, the cattle stalls of the Fair would have been decidedly empty. Then, undeniably, with the exception of some half dozen exhibits, the quality of the animals shown was not up to the standard set in former years. Considering these facts, the present appears to be a good time to talk of improvement.

Proximity to the agricultural college alone is not enough to keep the fair at Guelph. The Royal City is not a city with a large transient population living in hotels, and the Winter Fair week would not warrant elaborate hotel improvements. One can hardly see how a city of Guelph's size is to satisfactorily arrange for the accommodation of an increase in the attendance at the fair. The expenditure made on the present buildings was almost a necessity for market purposes for a city like Guelph. In this the city would be the gainer, and would be repaid by having had Government assistance in their erection. Moreover, under present circumstances we can hardly hope to attract continental interest in our fair. We well know that the United States breeders are procuring the best stock in our country. Instead of our breeders sending consignments of stock to be sold at Chicago International, why could we not attract American buyers to our country, and allow Canadians to compete with them in public auction for the best.

When we consider the energy spent in conducting the Winter Fair and the Ontario Horse-breeders' Exhibition, both with the same Secretary-Treasurer, we can realize how easily these shows could be combined, and an Ontario International evolved. No one can refute the wisdom and value of such a step to Ontario live-stock interests, and surely if such a promising proposition were placed before the Government it would meet with earnest consideration.

The writer, though familiar with the conditions at Toronto Junction, has no interest, either directly or indirectly, in the Union Stock-yards, but having had an exhibit in the small fat-stock show held there on December 9th last, and seeing the interest and enthusiasm of the crowd, then going on to Guelph, he realized the gigantic possibilities of a show at the Junction, such as was outlined in our first letter.

We have to hand the prize-lists of the Ontario Horse-breeders' Association Exhibition, to be held a little over two months after the Winter Fair. Does it not seem a little ridiculous that the two shows should not unite? The prospects pointed out would surely indicate a successful show, catering to all classes of breeders and stock-raisers. A farmer visiting such a show could see the results of the best systems of feeding, of not only fat cattle, but of all kinds of farm stock, whether for market or for the stud, and he could hear