

Death of Donald Fraser.

[Lake Louise Farm, Emerson, Man.]

It is our painful duty to record in this issue the death of Mr. Donald Fraser, which took place on the 7th of July, at his home, Lake Louise Farm, near Emerson. His death was indirectly the result of an injury received last winter from the upsetting of his sleigh. Though the injury itself was not immediately serious, the suffering from it left him in a somewhat enfeebled condition, so that when he was attacked by pneumonia shortly afterward his naturally strong frame and splendid constitution struggled in vain against it.

Mr. Fraser was born in Inverness, Scotland, in 1829, and when 26 years of age, emigrated to Canada, settling at Ernestown, near Napanee, where he carried on stock-farming until, with his family, he came westward in 1881, and secured the large and valuable tract of land near Emerson which soon became widely-known as the Lake Louise Farm. There he, in company with his sons, began to farm extensively and also engaged in stock-raising, devoting special attention to pure-bred cattle, sheep and swine. In all these lines he had already a large experience, having been engaged in sheep-raising in the Old Country, and having been so successful and influential in Ontario that on his leaving that Province the Agricultural Associations of five counties (Lennox, Prince Edward, Hastings, Addington, and Frontenac) united in presenting him an address and a special gold medal in recognition of his valuable services in all departments of agriculture. In Manitoba he soon took a leading place in these departments, becoming especially noted for success in raising pure-bred Shorthorn cattle, Shropshire and Southdown sheep, and latterly Poland-China swine. In all these he was a large prize-winner at the Provincial Exhibition for several years past. Besides this, Mr. Fraser took a prominent part in advancing the interests of the various Associations which in this Province exist for improving methods and extending operations in all departments of farming and stock-raising, and his death is a very distinct loss to all these interests.

In private and public life Mr. Fraser was a man of sterling, upright character, of inflexible principle, and of straightforward manliness. He was for many years an elder in the Presbyterian church, and took a live and intelligent part in the deliberations of the various church courts.

He leaves a wife and family of three sons and three daughters to mourn his loss. The sons, W. W., and Archibald, were interested with their father in the farm, while the eldest, David, is engaged in business in the town of Virden. To the members of his family we extend our warmest sympathy in the great sorrow experienced by them, and gladly pay this poor tribute of respect to one who did such important and valuable work in his line here and elsewhere.

Western Stock Prospects Bright.

Mr. John Hallam, the well-known hide and wool merchant, of Toronto, has just returned from a business trip to the Canadian Northwest. Mr. Hallam has visited nearly all the ranching country, and informed our representative that the stock were looking better than he had ever before seen them; the season has been most favorable, the grass is good and prices for cattle, sheep and wool have ruled higher than last year, and in view of these encouraging conditions it is but natural for the ranchers to feel in much better spirits than for some time past. Mr. Hallam has this season secured the bulk of the wool clip, amounting to 377,000 lbs., and he states that the quality is, on the average, better than last, which we presume is in part at least attributable to the favorable weather during the past winter.

Mr. Hallam enjoyed his trip, and says the atmosphere of the Northwest is most exhilarating.

Dr. McEachren, chief veterinary officer, who has just made a tour of the Canadian Northwest, reports to the Department of Agriculture, Ottawa, that the cattle industry is in a most flourishing condition, (Gordon & Ironsides' purchases for export number some 10,000 head); horse-breeders are hopeful; large shipments at better prices going forward to Great Britain, France, and Belgium; the sheep industry is progressing very satisfactorily, and the crop prospects all over the country being most promising.

Sheep-Shearing Machine.

One very attractive feature at the late Royal Show of England was a "sheep-shearing machine," shown by the Newall-Cunningham Syndicate. It is adapted for flocks of from 200 to 1,500 sheep. It is simple in construction, and one man can easily take the moving parts out of the shear in fifteen seconds and replace them in thirty seconds, without the use of any tools. It is claimed for the machine that the sheep are shorn perfectly level; each man can shear from ten to fifteen per hour; about one half-pound extra wool is got off each sheep each season, and that the sheep are not cut.

AGENTS WANTED.—We want a good active agent in every township in Canada and the adjoining States, to secure new subscribers to the FARMER'S ADVOCATE. Farmers cannot spend a dollar in any other way that will give better returns.

"Stockman" on Fitting Shorthorns for Show.

SIR,—I have been a reader of the ADVOCATE for several years, and I get something good out of every issue. Your recent contributed articles upon fitting stock for the show ring are very practical and seasonable, and I am sure they would be eagerly read and re-read by many stockmen. As I have fitted a few Shorthorns for the show, I will just refer to Mr. Nicholson's splendid letter on that subject. Knowing Mr. Nicholson's career as an exhibitor, one cannot say that he does not understand his business, and, indeed, the article itself reveals the practical knowledge of the writer. Mr. Nicholson's ideas re selection coincide entirely with my own, and his course of feeding cannot but be good, because, when it is looked into, it comes so near a balanced ration, while it is extremely palatable, that the very best results should follow. I would, however, recommend a slight variation by adding a few handfuls of ground flax or old-process oil meal to the chop ration, for the reason that the oil it contains keeps the animals laxative, while, at the same time, it gives the skin a more velvety feel. Another change I would advise is to give one meal a day of peas, boiled into a soft mush. This, seasoned with salt, and among it sprinkled a little bran, is very much relished, and perfectly harmless no matter how much is eaten, and hearty calves will eat a lot after they are four months old. This food is half-digested when fed, if boiled in plenty of water while it is closely covered.

I was much surprised that Mr. Nicholson said nothing about keeping the animals' skins clean and in good order. According to my judgment they should be well-washed, at least once a month, with warm soft water and castile soap, to which has been added a little of McDougal's or Little's "dip." This keeps them from getting scurfy and itchy. I would always blanket with a woolen blanket while they are drying. I have found it good to lay a layer of clean, long oat straw between the animal and the blanket; this allows the steam to escape more readily. The card and brush should be used at least once a day. I like a whalebone or corn brush, followed by a softer one, followed by a flannel or chamois rubber, which has the effect of giving the hair a soft and oily feel, and also keeps it from fading. The care of the skin I regard as very important, as I have no doubt does Mr. Nicholson, but we take it for granted that it slipped his memory while preparing his article. Not only does it render the animals comfortable and contented, which is very important to best results in growth and flesh production, but it also gives them a larger, more even, and beautiful appearance, which often makes up for slight weakness that would look badly if the coat were patchy and starey. I have found a light application of sweet oil to add to the appearance and feel of a skin that is at all inclined to be harsh or dry, but plenty of rubbing with the cloth, sponge, or chamois rubber will almost always produce the desired effect.

Nothing has yet been said about polishing the horns. As every little addition to a fine finish helps, I would not neglect the horns, especially of the bulls, before going to the show. An old knife does very well to remove the roughest coating; this, followed by sandpaper, followed by chamois slightly oiled, will put on a nice bright and dressy finish. Others may have different methods of bringing out their animals in good form, but what Mr. Nicholson has written, together with the above suggestions, would seem to me to about fill the bill. STOCKMAN.

Whole vs. Crushed Oats and Cut Hay for Horses.

To test the relative merits of crushed vs. whole oats in feeding horses, one of the great London omnibus companies some years ago conducted an interesting experiment. Of the 6,000 horses in the company's employment one-half were fed on crushed oats and cut hay and straw and the other half on whole oats and hay. The ration allowed per day to each horse, according to the one system, was: crushed oats, 16 lbs., cut hay, 7½ lbs.; cut straw, 2½ lbs. The quantity allowed according to the old system was: whole oats, 19 lbs.; uncut hay, 13 lbs. A daily saving of 6 lbs. of food was thus effected, and this saving was not merely in the quantity, but in the value of the materials employed, for straw in the former case was substituted for hay in the latter. The advantage of one kind of feeding over the other was far more apparent when reduced to money value. The saving by using the crushed oats and cut hay was nearly 2½d per day for each horse, which was equal to £62 10s per day for the 6,000 horses. And this saving was accomplished without any sacrifice whatever; for all the drivers and those having charge of the horses agreed that the difference in the condition of the horses was decidedly in favor of those fed on crushed oats and cut hay and straw.

The editor of Hoard's Dairyman says that in his experience there is no more dangerous season for milk fever than June, when cows are left to calve on the pasture, and in condition to bring on the chill which precedes the fever. Quoting the article by "D. A.," published some time ago in these columns, he says: "A writer in the FARMER'S ADVOCATE talks very sensibly, we think, on this subject."

English Sheep and Wool Notes.

(BY T. B. HOLLINGS.)

TECHNICAL WOOL TERMS.

Perhaps a brief explanation of some of the terms employed by the wool buyers and valuers may be of interest and use to the less experienced and novices in the handling of wool. The word "staple" signifies the quality of the wool, according as it is long or short. Wool that is long in staple is called "combing," and is used by manufacturers and topmakers for combing purposes. Good combing wool must not only be long, but sound and firm in growth, and a long-stapled clip is not accounted a combing wool if it be "tender,"—that is, has a break in its growth, which causes a weakness in some parts, and causes it to be easily broken. In Merino wool, a combing staple is between two and three inches long, and there are often in Australian clips two classes—viz., first and second combing—when classed by an expert. "Clothing" means wool of shorter growth still. This class of wool is not put through the combing process, but is carded instead, and manufacturers often call it carding wool instead of clothing. This wool is used in making woollen cloths, and not worsted coatings. In Merino and other fine wools there are also first and second clothing, according to the degree of length and fineness of staple. "Quality."—Everybody with the smallest knowledge of sheep and wool knows the meaning of this term; quality signifying whether it be a fine-haired wool or a long, coarse fibre, commonly styled "cross-bred." "Dingy" is applied to wool that is dull and unsteady in color or stained with dry yolk. Nothing like a wool being bright and attractive in appearance for selling well; it is at once a temptation to a buyer. "Wasting" is used to express the condition of wool from very old sheep, or from sheep that have not grown a healthy fleece, which is sometimes matted, tender, and poorly-grown. "Condition" signifies the state in which the clip is sent to market. This is a most important element in determining the value a buyer will place upon the wool. A fleece impregnated with sheep dirt, filth of any kind, earth, and dust, will always mean a little price for the farmer, and then he says wool growing won't pay. The wonder to me would be if such-like clips would pay. "Skirty" wool show that there has been carelessness in skirting the shorn fleece, and locks and pieces and britch ends have been all rolled up together with the fleece. This is the wrong way to lead to the town of Independence, but the high road to the city of Nothing. "Stumpy" means a short staple with broad, thin top, generally seen in wool of old sheep; while on the other hand, "hogget" wool has pointed tips, and means the first fleece of a sheep that has not been shorn as a lamb. This is generally a fourteen-months clip, and Australian pastoralists always bale up these fleeces by themselves, and they are always offered in London and elsewhere as the first lot in the whole clip, and described as super-combing hoggets. These usually realize a cent more per pound than the remainder of the clip.

BUYING SHEEP.

One of the best men among sheep breeders offers to me ten hints on the above subject, and the following of them out in any flock will assuredly make itself advantageously felt upon any flock. Says he:—"It is easy to muddle the novice with a variety of advice; and to get away from the possibility of doing that, I wish to offer the following hints as the most valuable and concise that occur to me. First—Study your farm conditions and learn exactly what kind of sheep will thrive best upon it. Second—If you are not able to purchase even a small flock of pure-bred or high grade sheep, then put all you can advantageously in a pure-bred ram, and after that do the best you can in buying good ewes. Start right, even if upon a small scale. The sheep will rapidly increase. Third—In purchasing a ram, get one fully developed, strong in bone, straight shaped, and thoroughly typical of his breed and sex. I have always an intuitive liking for the lamb that will leave a group of his fellows in the field and boldly front you. Fourth—Do not purchase sheep that you have to take "on trust" for proper development. It is only the experienced breeder who can forecast development. Fifth—Never take an unthrifty sheep, even if it is cheap, with the expectation that it will become all right. Sixth—In selecting sheep, if possible, handle them so that you may know how much of their form is due to themselves, and how much to the shears. Seventh—Select as critically as you can to a chosen type. Uniformity is a cheap feature for you to buy, and yet a valuable one in the flock. Eighth—There is no sheep that embodies perfection in sheep qualities; judging between different sheep is a checking of weakness and a balancing of qualities. Be inclined towards that sheep that appears to be better every time it catches your eye. Ninth—The purchaser will find it to his interests to select from the field sheep and thereby shun those that have been fitted for show. Tenth—The best time to buy is usually in the autumn or fall. Provision may be made with the seller to have the ewes served by a ram of different breeding from the one you bought, and thereby you add another season's use to the ram of your own flock. Bear in mind that quality is the most important factor in determining quality."