

The Farming World

For Farmers and Stockmen

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Commuted Statute Labor

IT will pay everyone interested in road reform to read the description given by Mr. D. R. Beaton, in our Correspondence column this week, of the working of the commuted Statute Labor system in Pickering township. While during the first year or two there was some dissatisfaction with the system, this disappeared as the people became familiar with the working of the system, and the commissioners became more familiar with their duties. This has been practically the experience of every municipality that has commuted the Statute Labor system. The new plan, after being in operation a few years, has the effect of doing away with opposition. People see how foolishly and at how great a cost they have wasted time and material in performing statute labor, which contrasted with the more economical and permanent way in which the roads are maintained by the commuted system, cannot but convince the most sceptical as to which is the more profitable one to adopt. The commuted system makes for permanency and efficiency in road-making and should be given a trial in every municipality.

Guaranteeing Breeding Stock

In these days of increased demand and higher values for improved breeding stock, the question as to what extent guarantees of an animal's usefulness for breeding purposes should be given, assumes added importance. This is a matter, however, that must be left largely to the individual buyer and seller to adjust as may seem fit. It would be difficult to formulate a set of hard and fast rules concerning the question of a guarantee, simply because there are so many different conditions entering into the business transaction between the buyer and seller. It is generally understood that where there is no definite contract or agreement between buyer and seller, that the latter is liable to the buyer for the amount paid for the animal above its value for ordinary commercial purposes at the time of the transfer is made, providing it turns out to be a non-breeder.

However, there is very little friction between breeders and their customers on this point as most breeders conduct their business in the spirit of justice, and are ever-ready to make good to a reason-

able extent any losses through animals not fulfilling the purpose for which they were sold. This is especially true where private sales are made, and to a greater or less extent where stock is sold by public sale. Men interested in live stock breeding as a business, are too jealous of their reputation and good name to permit any just cause for complaint of loss from a customer to pass by unsatisfied. Where the seller has so much at stake the buyer need have little fear of being misused or defrauded.

And yet there are two sides to every question, and this is no exception to the rule. Very often the seller of an animal is as much imposed upon as the buyer. We heard of one case recently, where a breeder sold a valuable young cow for a pretty high price. After the buyer had kept her a year, he reported that after repeated trials he had failed to get the cow in calf. The breeder promptly took the cow back and refunded the money he had received for her. But strange to say, on receiving the cow he bred her to his own bull, and we understand that she settled to the first service. This was evidently a case where the trouble was not with the cow, but with the bull, or bulls, to which she had been bred. And so it is not well to condemn the seller of the animal until there is positive proof that it is a non-breeder.

As we have already stated, there is little difficulty in adjusting matters of this kind, when the transaction is of a private nature, though it is well that the buyer should have a definite understanding in writing or otherwise with the seller as to the extent of the guarantee he will give. This will remove all future doubt and make after transactions more pleasant. It is generally considered that when a female is sold that proves to be pregnant at time of sale, that she is a breeder, and that the seller should not be liable even though she should be unfortunate, unless she had been what is termed a chronic aborter. A female sold as being bred, which proves not to be pregnant after six months trial, should be regarded as shy, if not a non-breeder. A bull of serviceable age that is given proper treatment should be able to get at least 60 per cent. of sound healthy, regular breeding cows in calf, if given service at their regular periods. The proper treatment of a bull means a great deal in this regard.

With regard to public sales, it will remove a lot of difficulty and

dissatisfaction if it is stated definitely in the catalogue announcement, whether a guarantee of future usefulness will be given or not. If a guarantee is to be given it should be stated plainly what is meant by such a guarantee. This then becomes a law by which all questions arising thereafter may be settled. We know there is a difference of opinion on this point, but we believe breeders, as many of them now do, will gain more by taking the public into their confidence and stating plainly what they propose to give in the way of a guarantee. We should be glad to have the views of breeders and others on the points discussed.

Would Not Fewer Fences Do?

The fence problem is one that every farmer has to face. One way of solving it is to have fewer fences on the farm. Outside of the line or boundary fence there is no need for more than four cross fences on the average hundred-acre farm. At the Ontario Agricultural College a four years' rotation is followed and consequently the College farm of several hundred acres is divided into four fields. This saves much labor and worry in keeping up the fences and in addition there is less waste of land and fewer fence corners to keep clean.

In the old days when fence timber was plentiful and land was cheaper the number of fences on a farm did not cut much of a figure though they were often the harbingers of weeds that have left their imprints on many a farm till this day. But in these days of keen competition, when it is incumbent upon the farmer to make the very most of every foot of land he possesses, fewer and better fences have become a necessity. We venture to say that on the average Ontario farm to-day fully one-half of the inside fences could be dispensed with without any inconvenience whatsoever. If farmers would decide upon the kind of rotation of crops best suited to their soil and conditions and fence their farms accordingly, they will find the fence problem very much simplified and fewer fences to maintain.

There are many who have the impression that it is necessary to have a field fenced for each kind of grain sown. Not so. One field for the grain crop, one for the hay crop and one for pasture are all that are necessary on the average farm. Of course, the orchard and garden should be fenced off separately