

# THE FARMER'S ADVOCATE & HOME MAGAZINE

THE LEADING AGRICULTURAL JOURNAL IN THE DOMINION.

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## Takes First Place.

The FARMER'S ADVOCATE:

SIR,—Please find enclosed my subscription up to December, 1896. Please excuse me for having neglected this matter before. Your paper is far ahead of any American paper which I have ever seen, and I wish you every success in the coming year.

Yours truly, H. O. FITZGERALD.

Lincoln, Dec. 28th, 1895.

## Live Stock Husbandry and the Dominion Experimental Farm Staff.

We understand that some proposals have been made for extending the work of the Dominion Experimental Farm staff, among the number being the establishment of a Bee Department. Now, we offer no objection to anything that may legitimately further the interests of so commendable a farm industry as bee-keeping. Let that be understood at the outset. Reviewing, in the FARMER'S ADVOCATE for Sept. 16th, the annual report of the Dominion Experimental Farms for the past year, we were struck with the conspicuous absence of attention of sheep husbandry, an industry for which, we believe, there is a great future in Canada, with its wide range of climate, foods, and soils, suggesting variety in breeds, management, etc. We took occasion also to express the view that live stock husbandry might deservedly receive increased attention in view of its pre-eminent importance as an industry lying at the very foundation of, and inseparably connected with, the whole structure of successful Canadian farming. If bee-keeping is entitled to a specialist at the Central Experimental Farm, surely there should be ample scope for one (the best available would be none too good) possessing adequate knowledge and practical capabilities in the many-sided domain of animal husbandry. It will hardly be assumed that all the problems of breeding, economic feeding, general management, etc., have been disposed of beyond the need of further attention. These observations imply no reflection upon the eminent specialists occupying various departments there now, but simply call attention to a need which, we believe, is pretty generally recognized by the foremost agriculturists and breeders of the Dominion. Prof. Robertson, for instance, has been nominally Agriculturist, but his growing duties as Dairy Commissioner, to which will soon be added a dressed meat trade, have largely absorbed his time and thought, so that but little attention, comparatively, could be given to live stock experimental work. In fact, we believe he has recognized this himself.

It is also proposed, we notice, by the new Minister of Agriculture that the Central Farm staff should render more service in the way of attending meetings of farmers, which would naturally afford many opportunities for the head of a live stock department thoroughly posted in regard to pure breeds, general management, etc.

No one would suggest running the Central or branch farms as breeding establishments pure and simple, to come in competition with private enterprise; but stock is a necessary part of the equipment of the Experimental Farm system, and should be of the best from an educational standpoint. Additional animals, if required, can at any time be purchased for experimental purposes.

The commanding and useful position attained by the Wisconsin Agricultural Experiment Station stands in evidence as to the importance of specially recognizing this department in manning such an institution.

If any addition to or rearrangement of the staff and its duties is to be made, we submit that the considerations outlined above are entitled to weight, nor should the opportunity thus presented be allowed to slip.

## Action a Necessary Quality.

At the present more than at any time in the past, action in a horse, is most eagerly sought. While this is more particularly true in the case of light harness stock, there is no doubt that the question of action plays an important part in estimating the worth of all other sorts. However handsome a horse may be, if he is a bad mover he may expect no favor from a judge or a buyer who knows his business.

The action of a horse is either natural or artificial, or a little of both, the last, perhaps, being most commonly the case. This is so for the simple reason that however fine a mover a young horse may be, his method of moving his limbs can usually be considerably improved by schooling; whilst, on the other hand, even the most handsome of horses, if he has no action to commence with, is scarcely worth taking a great deal of trouble over, for seldom, if ever, does such an animal imbibe a faculty for properly using his legs. Says the English Live Stock Journal on this point: "What action is there is capable of being improved upon; but what does not exist is extremely hard to create." Regarding the question of action from another point of view, it is notorious that contributory negligence on the part of an owner, or groom, may speedily and effectually reduce this virtue to a minimum. A long journey or two, followed by a period of idleness, and succeeded again by a spell of hard work, will soon effect a degeneration in the action of the finest goer, and, consequently, it is incumbent upon those who have the charge of high-movers to see that their charges are not neglected in the matter of necessary and constant schooling.

Whatever method of schooling is resorted to, whether it be a judicious alteration in the weight of the shoes, or exercising in deep-straw yards, or over bales, must, of course, be left to the discretion of the responsible person. It will have often been noticed that front action is more easily developed than back action, as quite a large proportion omit to tuck their hocks under them. This is a serious fault in any breed, for it must be obvious that propelling power of the hocks must materially affect the fire and dash of a horse, to say nothing of the smoothness and regularity of his action. All horses should be good movers behind, from the draught animal, that has to shift heavy loads, to the Hackney, who presents but a sorry appearance when he proceeds around a ring, all go in front, but trailing his hind legs as though he were ashamed of moving them so badly.

For a business road horse it should not be forgotten that a high, flashy action not only tires the horse, but wastes time, and, except for park or show purposes, is not so popular as the lower-going trotting-bred animal. In the case of roadsters, however, when speed is not always so important a factor in the selection of an animal as is style, it is, of course, most necessary that a winner should know the way to bend his knees; but there is a right and wrong way of carrying out this movement. A horse that picks up his feet until his knees are almost to his bridle, and then smashes them down again about a foot in front of the spot from which he took them, may be all very well in his way, but he is not a likely animal for good judges to fall in love with. This is the sort of horse that disgusts the trotting fraternity with the modern Hackney. The long, sloping-shouldered animal that gets away and straightens his knees, to say nothing of his pasterns, in the momentary poise that takes place when the fore leg is perfectly extended, and then puts his foot squarely on the ground, possesses the sort of foreaction that should be inculcated, if possible, upon the minds of the colt or filly; and it is this class of horse that is generally the biggest goer behind. Consequently, it may be suggested that all owners of horses would be acting wisely if they insist upon a proper amount of attention being paid to the schooling of all young horses, especially when they are being fitted for the market or show ring.

## The Fat Stock Show at Guelph, Ont.

### CATTLE.

The Provincial Fat Stock and Dairy Show for 1895, held at Guelph, Dec. 10 to 12, was a decided success, and was generally admitted to have been the greatest show of the kind ever held in Canada. This is certainly true of the show of sheep especially, and probably of swine as well. Of the exhibit of fat cattle it may safely be said that it was of a high order of merit generally. There may have been in former years better single specimens shown than the best of this year, but taking it all round, in all the classes, we believe this was the best of the series. What strikes the careful observer in comparing these shows with those of some ten years ago is the absence of the old and overgrown steers and cows which used to be seen, and the presence of young, fresh, smooth animals, showing uniformity of type and early maturity. The managers of the show have wisely discouraged the feeding of steers over three years old by giving prizes only for such as are under that age, and breeders have learned well the lesson that greater profit comes from feeding young animals, and from breeding a class of cattle that will respond to generous treatment by reaching a state of finish at two to two and a-half years old, which best suits the demands of the markets.

There were in all the classes about 65 entries, a substantial increase in numbers as compared with former years. The principal exhibitors were James Rennie, Wick; Jas. Oke & Sons, Alvinston; H. D. Smith, Compton, Que.; T. Russell, Exeter; A. A. Armstrong, Fergus; John Bolton, Armstrong's Mills; Wm. Dredge & Son, Nassagaweya; Executors of late Mr. Stone, D. McCrae, Jas. Bowman, Guelph; W. J. Rudd, Eden Mills; J. R. Caldwell, Fergus; Duncan Stewart, Everton; Peter Bathgate, Eramosa; Jas. Riddoch, Everton.

Shorthorns and their grades were, as usual, largely in the majority, but it was gratifying to find the other beef breeds out in increased numbers, and the Herefords shown by Mr. Smith, of Compton, the Galloways exhibited by Mr. McRae, the Polled Angus by Mr. Bowman, and the Devons by Mr. Rudd, were excellent specimens of the breeds they represent, and added very much to the interest of the show. We welcome Mr. Smith to the West, and hope to see him again here with representatives of his choice herd.

Mr. Oke's eleven head of Shorthorns and grades were one of the strongest exhibits, and were a credit to breeder and feeder. This gentleman has been one of the mainstays of our fat stock shows for several years past and has now as large a share as any other. His string is always a good one, and would be very much missed if he should fail to respond to the annual call of this show.

Mr. Rennie has been another constant friend of the show, and has done his part well in maintaining the high character of the exhibits. His contribution, both last year and this, was such as any man might well be proud to own. He got so near the top last year in the grand sweepstakes contest that many good judges thought he ought to have been placed there, and this year his beautiful grade heifer, "Susie," not only won first prize