

Live Stock.

Early Maturity.

The Importance of Pure Bred Sires.

There is scarcely any direction in which a penny-wise and pound-foolish policy is so short-sighted and so disastrous in its results, as in the breeding of cattle from an inferior male. And yet there is scarcely anything so systematically practised by many farmers. But a short time ago, in conversation with a prominent Canadian breeder, he mentioned to us an instance of this short-sightedness, which will illustrate the subject. He had a Shorthorn bull calf of irreproachable pedigree for sale—a youngster coming of a sire and dam that embodied all the excellencies of the Shorthorn, and that, if he had happened to be a Duke, would have been worth a cool five thousand, or if he had been his own sister, would have brought \$1,000 or \$1,500. But he was not a Duke, and though being a pure Bates, he was only a bull. The breeder asked \$100 for him. The farmer declined to look at any such figure. Partly from desire to convince the farmer of the profitableness of a thorough-bred bull, and more from a desire to retain the animal in his own neighborhood, the breeder came down by degrees to \$60, the farmer bid up, rising in the meantime from his original \$20 to \$50. Somewhat nettled to find his valuable stock so lightly thought of, the breeder refused to fall any more. The farmer went his way and bought a scrub bull for \$40, thus allowing the little matter of \$20 in the present to keep him out of hundreds in the future.

This is but one case of many that are happening, and it is no wonder, such being the case, that most of the stock in the Dominion is still of a low class and capable of vast improvement. With a good bull, good calves can be bred from very indifferent cows. Presuming that a bull could get, in his second year, twenty-five calves, and after that from six, to seventy calves per annum; and that each of these calves is going to cost less by twenty-five per cent. to bring to maturity, and to be worth more per pound when mature, it is easy to see that there is money in a full bred bull. Now in Ontario, in the year 1873, there were 47,941 working oxen, 638,759 milch cows, and 716,474 other horned cattle. In Quebec there were working oxen, 48,348; milch cows, 406,542; other horned cattle, 328,572. In New Brunswick, working oxen, 11,132; milch cows, 83,220; other horned cattle, 69,335. In Nova Scotia, working oxen, 32,214; milch cows, 122,688; other horned cattle, 119,065. The total of the horned stock of the four Provinces reached these magnificent figures: Working oxen, 139,635; milch cows, 1,251,209; other horned cattle, 1,233,446. Now just imagine all this two million and a half of cattle brought to maturity at twenty-five per cent. less cost, fancy their carcasses larger; the proportion of offal less and the prime meat more on each carcass; and each pound of the carcass worth two or three cents more. It is easy to see that with respect to the improvement of our live stock, there are literally "millions in it."

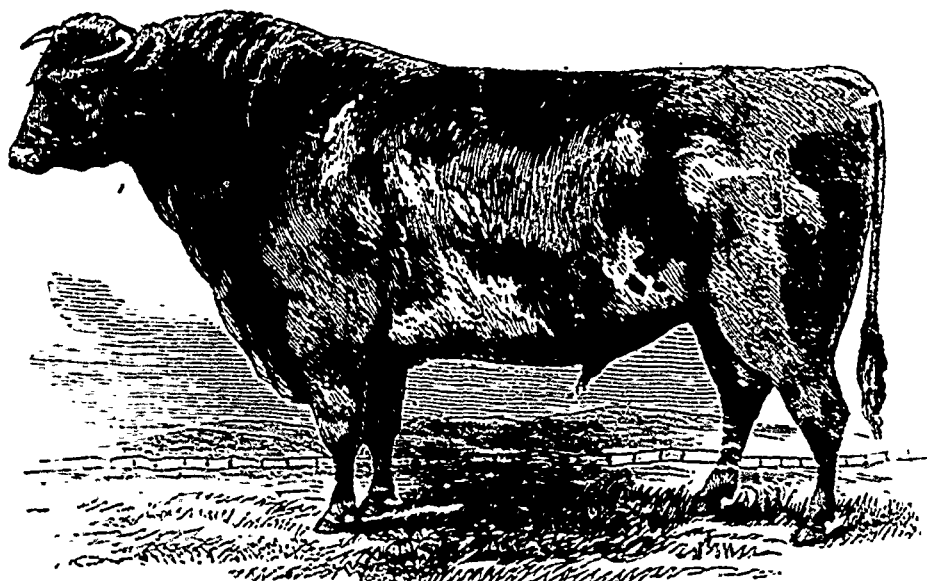
We have, as above stated, over 600,000 milch cows in Ontario alone. Allowing one bull to each 60 cows, it follows that there are about 10,000 bulls in use in the Province. And of these how many are really good bulls? One-tenth? We doubt it. The remainder are under-bred brutes of all degrees of execrableness.

Some one who has more time on hand than we have just now, may calculate exactly what would be the saving to the country if each of the animals that is annually marketed could be brought to market a year younger than they are now and in quite as mature a condition. To say nothing about the more food consumed and the interest on

the locked-up money, it would lessen by twenty-five per cent. the risk of losing an animal by sickness or accident. And the difference between good grades and common stock is even greater than one year in four. We have seen Shorthorn steers as mature at thirty months old as some natives could be got at four years. Herefords, too, are early ripeners, and will bring two or three cents per pound more than rough-bred stock. Devons are as paying a breed as any, especially in view of their value as workers. And it would take a long row of figures to demonstrate the rise that would take place in the value of the dairy cattle if dairymen would be enterprising enough to invest money in a pure Ayrshire bull, or in a Shorthorn bull of one of the families in which the original extraordinary milking qualities of the breed have been preserved.

By early maturity, rich, juicy meat is obtained that will always command the highest prices going. Food and capital are thus saved, quick returns are gained, and capital can be reinvested with its accrued interest in half the time than is taken now by many farmers to turn their money.

Of course a farmer with three or four cows cannot afford to keep a pure bull for his own use. But in those days of associated effort, there should be no difficulty in getting a neighborhood to combine for the improvement of their live stock. In this direction the Subordinate Granges can be extremely valuable. The farmers of a township or district can by means of this organization improve their stock at very little cost or risk.



Ayrshire Bull, "PRIDE OF GENEVA," the property of A. P. Ball, Esq.

Feeding Light and Smutty Oats.

EDITOR CANADA FARMER:—My Oat crop this year had a great deal of smut in it, when we cleaned the oats we turned the fanning mill fast enough to blow all the smut grains out, but in doing so we blow out a great quantity of light oats. The stock of all kinds eat this stuff readily enough, but I am afraid to let them have it as I don't know whether it might injure them.

Waterdown, Ont.

W. S.

Probably the light oats will not hurt the animals, but it stands to reason that the more oats and the less smut they get, the better it will be for them. Apparently, our correspondent has been growing oats too long on the same farm without a change of seed. It will be profitable to get seed from a distance, and from a different kind of soil. Be careful also to sow only plump, healthy, grains. There will then be very little trouble from smut.

Sheep Raising.

At a late meeting of the Puslinch, Ont., Farmers' Club, Mr. Robert Beattie read a practical paper on the breeding of sheep. He commenced by giving a few details of the purposes for which sheep are raised in various sections, and continued:—In our locality we find that there are three distinct breeds or their crosses kept by the farmers, that is the Leicesters, Southdowns and Cotswolds, and the

question with us now is, which of these three breeds is the most profitable?—a question that I do not feel able to answer, and I doubt if any one member of the Club is able to answer it, for the simple reason that it would require a person to have had experience in all the different breeds, and have made a careful calculation as regards the profits of each breed, which would require years to accomplish.

But although we may not be able to do so individually, we may do it collectively, for I am confident there are members of this Club who have had experience with all the three varieties named. Our Vice-President, Mr. Anderson, is a well-known breeder of Southdowns, and I have seen some very good specimens of that breed on the farm of our Secretary, Mr. Grant. We have Messrs. Carter, Hles and others who have had experience with Cotswolds, and we have Messrs. Cockburn, Rae, Murray, Laing and Gilchrist as prize-takers with the Leicesters at our Agricultural Shows; so that by getting the opinion and experience of these gentlemen, we may arrive at something like an answer to our question. I think we can see here the benefits derived from meetings of this kind. Our meetings are not merely to promote the social intercourse of the farmers of the neighborhood, but to give us an opportunity of comparing our extending experience with each other, whether it be in grain growing or stock raising, and by so doing we can add something to our stock of knowledge in agricultural matters.

Now, as regards the three kinds of sheep kept amongst us, I have given my preference so far to the Leicesters.

True, I have not a pure bred flock; I have been merely using pure bred rams of that breed. We have in the Leicester a very valuable sheep. It grows to a fair size, and with ordinary care, will clip a large fleece of the very best quality of wool. They are easily kept, are good breeders, and more prolific in my opinion than any of the other breeds. Some are of the opinion, however, that they are not so hardy as either the Southdowns or Cotswolds, but I can say with safety that in over twenty-five years' experience, I have not lost over three or four sheep by disease of any kind.

I might here give the opinion of a well known English agriculturist and writer on stock raising with regard to this breed of sheep. He says that the Leicesters for size, early maturity, aptitude to fatten, length and quality of wool, maintain the highest rank (taking among sheep a position somewhat similar to that taken by

Durhams among cattle). The Southdowns, as a mutton sheep, is said to be the best of any; and for crossing with common ewes, so as to have early lambs for the butcher, another English writer says it is the best of all the English sheep for that purpose. I believe this system is followed to a great extent in the old country and in the United States. Mr. Sheldon, of Geneva, N. Y., who keeps a flock of pure bred Southdowns, as well as Durham and Alderney cattle, stated at one of their agricultural meetings, that he was in the habit of buying common ewes in the fall and crossing them with pure bred Southdown rams, and that he found it very profitable, as the lambs grew and fattened wonderfully. I should think that for farmers, living near large cities and towns, it would be a profitable system to follow. We are very apt to think the Southdown a very small sheep, but I noticed in an account of the Royal Agricultural Society, of England, that in measuring the first prize rams in the three classes of sheep we have under discussion, that the girth of the Cotswold was five feet, the Leicester four feet nine inches, the Southdown four feet six inches, showing us that the Southdown is not much smaller than the others. But until we have more competition in our markets for that description of wool, I doubt if they would pay as well as the long woolled.

I might also give the opinion of Mr. Reynolds, a practical man, and secretary of the State of Illinois Agricultural Society. He attended the Paris exhibition, where there