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EDITORIAL.

Government Record Supervision.

A correspondent calls our attention to some inaccuracies in the pedigrees issued from the office of the new National Live-stock Records, Ottawa. This is not unexpected. Probably not a single volume in "The Farmer's Advocate" library, consisting of hundreds of books of all the leading British, Canadian and United States Records, is free from mistakes. Like the poor, the "Errata" page we always have with us. The shorter it is the better, of course, but being a matter of names and numbers, passing through many hands from the filling of the breeder's application to the proof-reader's copy-holder, errors are very liable to occur.

A good many breeders of live stock have probably yet only an indefinite idea of the nature and extent of the official supervision exercised by the Dominion Department of Agriculture over what are known as the Canadian National Records. There appears to be an impression that the Department has taken over the entire management of the Records, and has assumed full responsibility for the accuracy of all certificates issued. This is very far from being correct, and, in view of the approaching annual meetings of the various breed associations, a little explanation will be appreciated by live-stock men.

The chief advantage of Governmental supervision of records and affixing the seal of the Department of Agriculture to approved certificates of registry is uniformity and to make it perfectly clear to any one that these certificates have been issued by an incorporated breed association in good standing, and have the authorization of the Government of Canada. Canadian farmers, foreign buyers or foreign governments will know at a glance that a pedigree is authentic when it bears the seal of the Dominion Department of Agriculture.

No Minister of Agriculture would permit the seal of his Department to be placed on certificates over the issuance of which he had no supervision. In the agreements which were made between the breed associations and the Hon. Mr. Fisher, the latter insisted on an examination of all certificates of registry by an officer of his Department, so that there will be no chance of the Departmental seal being affixed to false or spurious pedigrees. The following clauses from one of these agreements show clearly the extent of the supervision exercised by the Department:

"That, under the direction of the Minister, the Commissioner, or a member of his staff set apart for the purpose, shall examine and approve, as hereinafter set forth, each certificate before affixing thereto the seal supplied by the Department."

"That the examination and approval of a certificate shall consist of a careful inspection of the application form sent to the Registrar of the Association by the breeder or owner of the animal, and of the certificate issued thereon. Said application form and certificate shall state the facts and meet the conditions demanded by the rules, by-laws, etc., of the Association; otherwise the seal shall not be affixed to the certificate."

The evident intention of the Minister of Agriculture is to guard against giving official sanction to bogus pedigrees, but not necessarily to guarantee what may be called the mechanical correctness of these pedigrees. The experienced supervisor, Mr. W. A. Clemons, will doubtless detect most of the clerical errors in the pedigrees submitted to him for approval, but his duties under the Record Act do not include the tracing of every pedigree to the remotest ancestor, in order to ensure the correctness of every name and number. No one at all familiar with pedigrees would ever think of

such a thing. It would be absolutely impossible for one man to verify from 100 to 200 pedigrees a day, as anyone who has ever traced a Short-horn pedigree through Coates' (English) Herdbook will readily understand. The breed associations have in their employment experienced registrars and clerks, on whom the chief responsibility must necessarily rest. It is neither necessary nor advisable for the breed associations to give up the control of their officers, the management of their records, or the responsibility for their accuracy. Neither the Department of Agriculture nor the National Record Board should be permitted to interfere with the rights of the breed societies. Government inspection of pedigrees will, however, protect the Department from endorsing and the general public from accepting spurious certificates of registry. At the same time, it will ensure much greater accuracy in the clerical work of the registrars and their clerks.

Another point that all breeders do not seem to understand is that the Department of Agriculture does not receive or handle any money belonging to the associations. On the contrary, some financial assistance is given to new and weak associations. The financial arguments between the associations and the Department are set forth in the following explicit terms in the agreement before mentioned:

"IT IS FURTHER EXPRESSLY UNDERSTOOD AND AGREED that neither the Department or any of its officers, clerks or employees shall receive or administer any moneys belonging to or intended for the Association; but such moneys shall be received directly by such person or persons as the Association may appoint for that purpose, who shall be accountable to the Association for said moneys, without any responsibility on the part of the Department for the same; nor shall any of the officers, clerks or employees of the Department act in any capacity for the Association, except as hereinafter expressly provided."

Earl Carrington and the Embargo.

A deputation, composed chiefly of Scottish importers, representing the Anti-Embargo Association, have lost no time in making an appeal to the new British Government, asking for a removal of the restriction which requires Canadian and other cattle to be slaughtered within ten days of landing at British ports. Their appeal was made to Earl Carrington, President of the Board of Agriculture, the member of the British Cabinet who has that matter directly in hand. Cable reports do not indicate whether they asked for a removal of the embargo as against Canadian cattle only, or as against cattle from all quarters. The noble Earl cautiously declined to decide the question in the hurly-burly of the election campaign, but the deputation profess to be favorably impressed by his observations during the discussion. The delegation pointed out, among other considerations, that the embargo seriously interfered with their business. He promised to carefully consider the subject from all points of view. We have little to add to what has already been set forth of late in "The Farmer's Advocate." If the British Government, in their wisdom, decide to revoke the law imposing the restriction, it will still remain the true policy of Canadian agriculture to finish the cattle in this country, rather than exporting stockers (and feedstuffs) to be finished in Great Britain. In case the repeal of the embargo in toto be not deemed best for Great Britain by the Government, the suggestion has been thrown out in some quarters that the lengthening of the period within which slaughter must take place from ten days to, say twenty or thirty days, under suitable conditions, would still guard British live-stock interests, and allow the Canadian cattle shipper greater flexibility in selling.

Practical Experience Wanted.

For some time past a large part of the editorial correspondence to "The Farmer's Advocate" has consisted of inquiries for our "Questions and Answers Department." The fact is gratifying in one sense to the staff, who are quite willing to place their knowledge and their means of acquiring information from various specialists at the disposal of our readers in this way, but we believe it would be better to have a little more reciprocity of ideas, and would like more of our subscribers to write, telling us things, as well as asking them. Nobody else is so full of practical ideas as the man daily engaged in practical work, and nobody else has so good an opportunity for mature reflection. Unfortunately, such men often lack confidence in their literary ability, and hence a mine of useful thought and knowledge lies hidden and unemployed. To such we would say we do not want rhetoric; plain, matter-of-fact ideas, stated in every-day language, are what we like to get, and, as a rule, the farmer can write such letters better than anybody else, for farmers are direct, concise and practical. When necessary, a little polishing can be given by the editor—that is what editors are for, partly—and if subscribers only knew how many readable articles are made out of crudely-composed, ill-written and badly-punctuated letters, they would have less diffidence about writing than many of them exhibit.

There are those who disparage writing because some brilliant journalists have been failures practically. Writing doesn't, in itself, make a man a good farmer, and so it happens that some supple quill-pushers lack the balance, the executive capacity or the business ability necessary to insure success on their own farms; but these are cases of coincidence, not cause and effect, and the hard-headed man may rest assured that any occasional correspondence in which he may indulge, especially in the winter months, will compensate him many fold for the time spent in its preparation.

The man who prepares an article on any subject, derives, in one sense, more benefit than those who read it. Committing one's thoughts to paper clarifies and crystallizes them into definite shape, and fixes them in his memory. Besides, as one writes he develops new ideas. You get as you give; or, give and it shall be given unto you, is a fundamental truth that finds no ampler illustration than the case of the man who gives of his experience.

In our opinion, writing to the agricultural press is one of the greatest privileges for self-improvement open to the present-day farmer, and we trust our readers will make free use of our columns whenever they have anything of practical importance to say. Do not wait till you can tell something big. There are always people who, when they happen to do something that happens to turn out extra well, rush in to print about it. The following year, maybe, the same field or flock or farm doesn't make so good a showing, but nothing is said about it. What we want is not the inflated stories, but the plain, ordinary experience, covering a number of years. Above all, tell us your difficulties, particularly those you have managed to overcome, and how. One inch of matter describing how somebody has actually done a thing, is worth more to our readers than columns of type giving somebody's theory of how certain results might be accomplished. Experience is what tells every time, and over thirty thousand subscribers, with their families, hired help and neighbors—a wide-awake, attentive audience of 150,000—will read what you have to say, and profit by it if you speak the unvarnished truth.