

Willow Lodge Stock Farm.

The name and fame of the late John Snell, of Edmonton, Ontario, as a breeder and exhibitor of fine stock is familiar and widely known in Canada and the United States. His advent as a Canadian farmer dates back to the year 1837, when he emigrated from England and commenced to hew out a home in the woods in the County of Peel, on the farm upon which he achieved the success which crowned his labors as a farmer and stock-breeder. In the year 1855 Mr. Snell made his first purchases of pure-bred Shorthorns and imported Cotswolds. In 1856, at Mr Stone's great sale at Guelph, he had the courage to pay \$1,300 for a cow and her yearling heifer, and though the cow only lived to produce for him one calf, and that a bull, yet her daughter lived to wipe out the account and pay good interest on the investment. In the same year he paid \$240 for a ram, which died after being only six weeks in service in the flock; yet in his produce from 112 ewes, which were bred to him in that short time, Mr. Snell always said he was amply repaid for the expenditure, for he left an impression on the flock which could be traced for many years. The first imported cow, brought into the herd at a cost of \$400, in giving birth to twin calves, which were both dead, received such injuries that she never bred again, and had to go to the butcher. These are a few of the discouragements which the subject of our sketch had to meet and overcome at the outset, and the man who, with but limited means, had the energy and determination to go on in the way he had marked out for himself, had the material in him which wins in the long run, and that he grandly succeeded the records of the Provincial Exhibitions for nearly twenty years give ample evidence. This in his day was the only great exhibition in Canada, and there were few men of his day, if any, who succeeded in carrying off more of the highest honors awarded at these exhibitions.

That he was a success as a breeder and feeder his steady advance in competition with older breeders and exhibitors proved beyond a doubt. His success met its crowning glory when, at the Provincial at London in 1872, a few months before his death, which took place near the end of that year, he, with the co-operation of his three sons, who were then recognized as his partners under the firm of John Snell & Sons, succeeded in winning both the herd prizes offered for Shorthorns, viz., for the best herd bred by the exhibitor, and also for the best herd open to all, a contest in which a large number of superior imported animals took part. At the same show the firm won the flock prize on Cotswolds, and the herd prize for Berkshires. Such a result was a fitting consummation for the brave spirit manifested in grappling with the difficulties met at the outset.

From 1873 till 1881 the three sons continued the same line of business under the name of John Snell's Sons, making a very fine record at leading shows in Canada and the United States, where, in 1875 and 1879, they won the leading prizes on Cotswolds at the St. Louis Fair, and in the latter year, at the first of the great series of fat stock shows held at Chicago, their exhibit of Cotswolds was one of the grandest features of the show, where ewes of their feeding were shown weighing from 300 to 346 lbs., yearlings from 250 to 270 lbs., and lambs from 140 to 165 lbs. each.

In the same year at the first Dominion Exhi-

bition held at Ottawa, in the great distribution of prize medals by the Princess Louise, the Senate Chamber echoed and re-echoed with the cheers that greeted the senior member of the firm as he bore off in his hat eleven medals, two gold, six silver and three bronze, including the grand medal given by the Marquis of Lorne to the exhibitor winning the largest number of first prizes on sheep and pigs.

In 1881 came a dissolution of this successful partnership, the two younger members striking out for themselves under the name of

J. G. SNELL & BRO.,

and the senior member holding to the old name, which had been so extensively advertised and at such cost as to make it worth while to perpetuate and continue it. Since that time the exhibition work has been left to the younger firm, who have shown the characteristic pluck and enterprise in importing and competing, with the old-time success, for the highest honors at the leading shows in Canada and also at Chicago and St. Louis, where they have twice made very successful shows.

The elder brother, Mr. J. C. Snell, while retired from the show ring, has continued to exercise the rich experience and ripe judgment which his position at the head of the firm for so many years brought to him, and quietly goes on breeding and keeping a select stock of his favorites, the Shorthorns, of which he has always a few good ones, for he knows a good one when he sees it, and the marked success of his public sales in the last few years is a fitting tribute from the public to his taste and judgment in the selection and breeding of high-classed cattle, while his flock of Cotswolds and herd of Berkshires are always up to the standard of the best of the good ones.

Messrs. J. G. Snell & Bro. have at present a large and useful herd of Shorthorns, headed by the imported Cruickshank bull "Eudymion," a typical specimen of the Scotch Shorthorn, blocky, beefy, full of quality and constitution, and evidently a successful sire judging from the useful lot of young things we saw in the stables. The breeding cows are a very useful lot. They are principally of English breeding, with a few good Rose of Sharons, all of which are nearly pure red, and are descended from a cow Messrs. Snell imported from Kentucky. Duchess of Gloster II. is a fine cow of Scotch breeding, and judging by her offspring now on the farm she is a good breeder. Medora is a very fine red heifer of English origin, having a Bates foundation.

Their Cotswolds are a very good lot, though not in high condition, but their quality is right. The sire of the present lot of lambs was a first prize winner at Toronto and Ottawa last year. He was bred by Robert Jacobs, Burford, England; imported in 1887.

Their present herd of swine maintain their old time excellence, which says a great deal for them.

The Messrs. Snell claim as the secret of the success of this establishment from its inception, the "invariable" rule of having only "strictly first-class sires" in use in the herds and flocks. The whole history of the place is marked by this one feature, as the long line of well known bulls used in the herd testifies, as well as the fact that in the last ten years no fewer than fourteen of the prize boars at the Royal Shows have been imported and used in the herd, and that only first class imported rams have been in service in the flock. This is the talisman of success in any line of breeding.

A Chatty Letter from the States.

From our Chicago Correspondent.

There is a sharp contrast this summer with last in respect to rainfall. Last year there was practically no rain in the great Western corn region between May and Fall, while during the present year there has been a grand distribution of moisture. The hay crop this year is excellent, while last year it was a failure. The grass, corn and trees never wore so rich and beautiful a green as during the present season—as one expressed it, "everything has about five or six extra shades of green."

Range cattle this season are in very excellent condition. Texas cattlemen have been getting pretty fair prices, and now if Western rangemen can get prices to match the condition of their cattle they will be happy and only remember their hard luck of the past three years as a bad dream. Texas cattlemen have been anxious to realize and have crowded the market pretty badly at times, but on the whole they have realized decidedly better prices than last year and are generally in much better shape.

The price which the wheat farmer gets is so small now as to make the business of wheat-raising very unprofitable. In fact, farmers who have no other sources of income than the ordinary farm are complaining, and with good cause, of the smallness of their incomes—not to say profits, for very few are making money now at legitimate farming. The big trusts, combines and pools of one kind or another have squeezed down the share for the farmer in the West until it is too small to enable him to rise above the level of hard toil and meagre compensation. Just what is wrong it is hard to determine, or rather, how to correct what is wrong is the problem, but we evidently are badly in need of some changes in social and commercial systems which shall make the farm laborer and owner worthy of his hire and enable him to get it. The greatest drawback to Western farming is excessive freight rates. It actually costs more to transport a ton of farm produce across a State 300 miles wide than it does to carry a ton of freight from Australia to London—13,000 miles.

Live stock and dead meat freights in the West are excessive and arbitrary despite the existence of the Interstate Commerce Law, which was designed to do away with pools and unjust discriminations. The modes of evasion seem to be without end, and the railroads continue to take the bulk of what should be the farmer's profits.

A lot of Texas goats sold here recently at \$1.25 to \$1.65 per head, rather a small price, as it costs nearly a dollar per head for freight and market charges.

The writer recently examined a nicely dressed grade Angora goat skin which was prepared to serve as a rug. It was of a rich, creamy color, the mohair was long, wavy and almost as soft as down, and admirably suited for a lap robe or rug. It is singular that more of them are not placed on the market.

Fine stock is selling quietly at fair prices. The improvement in the fine stock market is slow because so many more people are in the business than ever before, that the supply is very large even if individual herds are small.

The undertone of strength in the general live stock trade, noted earlier in the year, is developing quite as rapidly as could be expected, considering the large number of stockmen who have been unable, for financial reasons, to "bide a wee."

Prices for matured cattle have been pretty good the past month, and feeders have cause for