

Management of the Dominion Shorthorn Breeders' Association.

[From our Manitoba and Western Edition.]

On more than one occasion attention has been called to the provincialism or localism apparent in the above Association, which, unless corrected, bids fair to alienate Western breeders and their sympathetic co-operation. The suggestion has, indeed, been made by a leading Manitoba breeder that a new set of records for Shorthorns be started at Winnipeg. We believe that Shorthorn interests will be better served by one strong association, thoroughly national in its character and aims. In the best interests of this great breed, very careful consideration should be given to the Western situation, so that unanimity and solidity will prevail. The Association, in the opinion of the West, needs new blood and more up-to-date methods.

First, we would suggest that the annual report and financial statement should be fuller and more explicit, and should be bound with or printed in the herdbooks each year. Then the question might be asked, is it businesslike to allow officials in a concern of the financial standing of the D. S. H. B. A. to collect an elastic (or commission) salary, instead of a stated amount? Salaried officials who have to handle the Association's moneys should be under bonds. The question also arises, why did the Association take \$500 worth of shares in an alien exhibition (Chicago) association? That exhibition having since adopted a rule that all exhibitors there must become members at \$10 each, \$500 is a pretty expensive price for the D. S. H. B. A. to pay to placate the Chicago people, and it only affects about thirty Ontario breeders at the outside.

The advertising by the Association in the Northwest is a sore point with Western men who bought their stock from eastern men, and have been subjected to competition as a result of the use of funds partly contributed by themselves, but allotted for such purposes by eastern men. This was done in this way: \$100 was contributed to the Dominion Cattle Breeders' Association towards the wages of a man for the Government car, and \$300 to advertising in the Northwest. Is this fair? The Western members have been unable hitherto to effectually represent the West, through being insufficiently represented on the directorate. In 1903, out of fifteen directors, all but one (a Manitoba man) were from Ontario, and in 1904, all but two (Manitoba men) are from Ontario, and the executive and finance committee, numbering five, in each year, is composed entirely of Ontario men. Two Territorial men and one Manitoba man figure among the vice-presidents.

The expenditure for binding and printing herdbooks in 1903 was \$5,054.20—a very large sum, and if \$1,883.25 of this was for binding extra copies of back volumes, printed, but held in stock unbound, it should be clearly stated. By the adoption of a system similar to the American Aberdeen-Angus and Hereford Associations, a less bulky herdbook could be got out for less money annually, and the money saved could well be used to push the breed at the shows, and the breeders' shelves would not be filled up so quickly.

The penalty for non-recording previous to twenty-four months old is not severe enough. It is only twenty-five cents a head to members. It might well be total exclusion from the herdbook. The rules say, "duplicate certificates may be issued, etc." If any such are, they should be stamped duplicate, and only issued on a declaration by the owners that the real certificate had been destroyed. All transfers of ownership should be marked on the back of the original certificate by the secretary of the Association.

The herdbook could be improved by abbreviating the pedigrees a very great deal, by giving only the sire and dam names and numbers. Females might all be numbered when recorded. This is done in the Aberdeen-Angus Record and the American Hereford Record, in the latter of which is recorded in their last volume about double the number of animals recorded in the last volume of the D. S. H. B. A., and the Whitefaces book is far less bulky than the D. S. H. volume.

The literature of the Association (D. S. H. B. A.) states that if the females were numbered when sent in, confusion would result—a statement hard to credit in view of what is done by the Associations quoted above. Nowadays, numbering is largely used as simplifying and systemizing business records. The Association might well indicate that all moneys should be sent by registered mail, postal money orders, or express orders. Losses of money gone astray could then be traced.

We are sure that the Association would receive heartier support if at least one-third of the directorate was distributed so that all the provinces would have equitable representation on some mutually satisfactory basis, and out of the five members of the finance and executive committee there should be one or two from the West and one from the extreme east. In this way the Association will keep in touch with the needs of the breed throughout Canada and avoid the appearance of localism.

Grading Up.

Improving pure-bred stock by breeding is an exceedingly intricate and difficult problem, as you well know, but grading is comparatively simple, as with common cows a pure-bred sire is sure to be prepotent, and good results are therefore certain to follow. The old saying, "The sire is half the herd," does not always express the whole truth. In a sire whose ancestors have been bred for dairy purposes only, these characteristics have become firmly fixed, and when crossed on cows of no special breeding will produce calves more like the sire than the dam. In this case the sire counts for more than half. A dairyman may start with nothing but the most ordinary cows, and by simply breeding to dairy sires of excellent reputation and pure breeding, he will in a few years have a fine working herd. Do not misunderstand me. I am advocating grading, but not crossing breeds. Great harm has been done, and is still being done, to the dairy cattle of the country by crossing.

Our American farmers, as a class, are too fickle. It seems to be difficult for them to decide on a policy and settle down to that as a permanent thing. Frequently a dairyman will make a start by purchasing a Holstein-Friesian sire, and about the time he gets some half-blood calves a brilliant idea strikes him, and he thinks he will show the dairy world something about producing dairy cattle that will give a large flow of milk and also test high in butter-fat, and he purchases a Jersey sire. After another two or three years, beef brings a good price, and he decides he will try a little beef blood, so that he can get more for his old, worn-out cows. The result is his herd, after all these years of breeding, is no better, if, indeed, as good as when he started.

I do believe there is untold benefit to be derived from grading, and that this is the way to improve the average dairy stock, and also to make a market for pure-bred bulls. No matter how poor a herd a dairyman may have, the first crop of calves from a pure-bred sire will be half bloods or better, and the next generation three-fourths or better. I cannot imagine how a dairyman can improve his herd more surely or more economically than by this method.—[Prof. W. J. Fraser, University of Ill.]

Canadian Wools.

Does the average farmer properly and fully appreciate the value of his sheep? From the view of one who has "taken in wool," "sold wool" and "manufactured" it in all the processes of both the woollen and worsted industries, the answer is in the negative; that is, looking at it from the view of keeping sheep for the sake of the wool. The writer does not pretend to set up as an authority on the breed or breeds of sheep best adapted for mutton. If the farmer would candidly ask any woollen or worsted manufacturer of experience in Canada, he would quickly be told that such wools as Cotswold and Lincoln are of little value, practically of no value to the average manufacturer, but useful to make worsted warp for carpets, or heavy mackinaws, competing against low-priced foreign wools, neither of these wools being fit for knitting yarns; while blankets made from them are heavy and sodden; a six-pound pair of blankets made from a cross-bred Leicester being equal in bulk to a nine-pound pair made from either of these wools.

The wools most desired by Canadian manufacturers are the "Down" wools, "Downs" crossed with "Leicester," and bright, soft "Leicester." The latter wool is in active demand for the United States market. On account of its brightness, lustre and splendid spinning properties, it displaces mohair for many purposes. These soft wools are always in demand. The representative of a very large factory in Canada finds it impossible to secure the necessary quantity of these latter wools in Ontario. Just this week he had to go back practically empty handed, while the coarser wools could be had in quantity. The indifference of the farmer is not to be wondered at when the merchants of the town or village to whom his wool is sold buy it frequently on the wagon tied in a sheet—buys a "pig in a poke"—docking, say one-third for unwashed, sometimes more; one-third for "cotts," suitable for doormats, and there is often a wrangle over the "soft" cotts, some of which the "unsophisticated" farmer had spent hours over in breaking, pulling and stretching; docking so much for burs—burdock burs—a bur which should be forbidden the country. A single bur will spoil a pair of blankets, as it breaks up into so many little clinging spikes, which can only be removed by a process of carbonizing. When the wool is bought this way there is little encouragement for a farmer to bring in a light, soft wool, well washed, neatly rolled, free from burs and cotts. It would be better if some means could be devised whereby the farmers of a section or township would bring their clip to some central warehouse or building, where it would all be classified by a "grader" whose knowledge and integrity would be satisfactory alike to both farmer and buyer. After the grading was completed, notify the wool buyers, whether brokers or manufacturers, advising the amount on sale, with a brief description of the grades. In this way the farmer would come in direct contact with the consumer and manufacturer. The wools would be sold on their merits, and the farmer who raises and properly cares for the right class of sheep would be well repaid; in fact, he would be equally surprised at the result.

This year the prices of all wools are firm, with an

upward tendency. The Russia-Japan war is absorbing a tremendous quantity of medium and low-grade wools. In a letter from China, received this week, the statement is made "that the bulk of the China wools has been secured at good prices by the Japanese," while the Russian demand for Khorrasan and similar wools renders it difficult for felt-boot manufacturers to get stocks. A report from Liverpool, dated June 11th, says: "The short supplies of raw material of all classes, on spot and in view, is a prime factor in the situation to-day." The same report says of the change in the Canadian tariff: "Its effect will probably be confined to the Dewsbury district." Dewsbury is a center of manufacturing, where the science of making shoddy goods has attained perfection; hence the tariff change will not affect the price of Canadian wools to any noticeable extent. If the change had affected the worsted mills, where combing is done, the advance in price of the soft combing wools would be quite marked. At present the combed "top" is imported in considerable quantity from England. This top is not supposed to be made from such "wools as are grown in Canada," as the tariff reads; a close inspection might show otherwise. This "top" can be bought at a low figure in England; not paying duty, it comes in and displaces so much Canadian wool. Buyers from the United States are keen to get our bright Leicester combing wools, washed; the duty going into the States is 12c. per pound. Our Canadian Leicester wool, from climatic causes, has a soundness of staple and a sparkle to it which cannot be obtained further south.

Let the farmer study to keep sheep adapted for both high-grade mutton and wool. Keep the first clip, the "Hogg" wool and the "Wether" wools separate. Do not keep old sheep, the mutton is poor, and the wool gets brashy and full of "kemp." Keep the farm free of burs, and do not winter the sheep under a loft, with chaff and dust falling on them, filling the fleece full, and reducing its appearance and value.

"PITREAVIE."

British Market Demands Lighter Cattle.

The "Farmer's Advocate" has long advocated the breeding of medium-sized, smoothly-turned, early-maturing beef cattle as the most profitable feeding sort and the most popular with the dealer, the butcher and the more critical class of consumers.

Prof. W. J. Kennedy, who is now travelling in Europe in the interest of the United States Department of Agriculture, in a very interesting article to the Drovers' Journal upon the requirement of the British trade says:

The market demands have undergone a wonderful change in the last decade. The animal that was a prime seller ten years ago is a drug on the market to-day. In fact, it is not wanted. In 1894, cattle under 1,600 pounds were not sought for. The heavy animals were demanded. To-day the opposite is true. While there are a considerable number of these heavy cattle on the markets, they sell at a lower price. Each year has seen a gradual change from the heavy to the lighter animal. At the present time, the most popular weight is in the neighborhood of 1,100 pounds. In fact, under rather than over that weight is preferred. Animals of this weight cut up to much better advantage than those of heavier weight. The demand is for the smaller and lighter cuts.

These animals also contain more flesh and less fat and tallow than is found in the heavier cattle. Cattle of this weight will command about one-half cent per pound more than those weighing from 200 to 300 pounds more. In this respect, a large number of the American cattle are too heavy to meet the best demands. Our handy-weight market-toppers on the Chicago market would just suit these people. On the contrary, however, it is not our light-weight cattle that are most largely exported. It is usually the heavier cattle, ranging around 1,500 or 1,600 pounds, that are sent to the British ports. This is partially accounted for, at least, in the fact that more weight can be shipped in a given amount of space. This, no doubt, will be modified in the near future to meet the best demands of the market. Our people are not very likely to continue sending the article that is not wanted. If we expect to get the best prices in the best markets we must cater to the demands of the consumer. This being the case, it is our light-weight cattle which should be sent across the pond.

With home trade demanding light-weight animals, and the foreign markets doing likewise, we should aim in the future to finish our cattle at an earlier age. Greater gains and much more economical gains can be made on these younger animals. This will be in the interests of the man who grows his own cattle on the high-priced lands of the central west. It will also mean that the cattle from the ranges will have to be sent to the feed-lots as two-year-olds, instead of at three years, the prevailing custom. These demands are in keeping with the development of the country. It will mean large numbers of animals, but shorter feeding and growing periods. It will mean three hundred two-year-olds where it was formerly two hundred three-year-olds. This brings up another point. At the present time we are very apt, in showing the growing demands or falling off in certain lines, to refer to numbers. We quote