

producing large quantities of the kind of product wanted in the British market. Also, if we obtain a reputation for producing certain kinds of pure-bred stock of a high quality it will certainly widen our market and make it possible for more to engage in the business. There is a tendency to-day, among many new breeders especially, to breed something that no one else is breeding with the hope, no doubt, that there will be a better market for this particular kind on that account. But a serious mistake is made in doing so, and such breeders soon find themselves out of the "swim," so to speak, and engaged in producing a kind of stock which no one wants and for which there is no regular demand. About the only place where they "shine" is in the show ring where there is no competition in their class and where they can carry home all the prize money. But honors won in this way do not help to build up one's business or to increase his sales. To succeed, the breeder must produce the kinds that are largely wanted in connection with the trade of the country and which are known to meet the requirements of the beef, mutton or bacon trade.

## The Decline of the Statute Labor System

At the meeting of county councillors to discuss good roads, a report of which appeared in last week's *FARMING*, several of the leading speakers condemned in very strong terms the statute labor plan of keeping up the roadways. The general consensus of opinion was that it had outlived its usefulness. One speaker referred to it as "a relic of barbarism" that should be abolished.

These are strong statements, and coming as they do from men thoroughly conversant with the working of the statute labor system in this country for many years, mean a great deal. They show how public opinion is changing in regard to this whole question of roads, and mark a step in advance in which those interested, and upon whom the maintenance of the roadways of the country depends, are willing to adopt more improved and up-to-date methods in securing good roads. It is not so very long ago when, if a speaker at a similar gathering to the one held last week had made the statement that the statute labor system should be abolished, he would not have been listened to for a moment. In fact, we remember being at several gatherings of farmers, in the initial stages of the good roads agitation, when the leaders of the movement spoke strongly, not of doing away with statute labor, but of utilizing it in a better way than had been the case previously.

But how things have changed! Statute labor has been weighed in the balance and found wanting. During the seven or eight years that have elapsed since the beginning of the movement some potent influence has been at work for good, and to-day statute labor is beginning to be looked upon as a back number, and no longer the system to be adopted for bringing about good roads. And so it should be a back number. It no doubt was a convenient method in the early history of this country, and served a useful purpose in helping to build and maintain roads, though in a somewhat primitive fashion. But we have reached a stage now when more systematic and permanent methods are needed, and we may well rejoice that such a body of men as were represented in the delegates at the county councillors meeting have come to the sensible conclusion that the statute labor system must be replaced by some more modern plan of improving the roadways of this country.

But if statute labor is done away with, what will take its place? This is the question many are asking. The deliberations of the convention referred to throws some light on the subject. Two resolutions were carried with but few dissenting voices; one endorsed the principle of provincial aid to highways assumed by the counties, and the other favored the assumption by the counties of the main roadways within their borders. Some years ago the County of Hastings took over nearly all the main roadways

in its borders with very satisfactory results. The people there have had better roads to travel on, and have secured them at comparatively little cost. Here we have a plan that has been successfully tried, and is one that should give permanency and system to road improvement, a thing that it is impossible to obtain through statute labor. The assumption of the leading roadways by the counties should be a lively topic the coming year, and those interested should see that candidates for municipal honors are prepared to take some action in regard to it.

## Important Shorthorn Sale

### Fine Stock — Tall Prices — Numerous Buyers

The public sale of pure-bred Shorthorn cattle held at Hamilton, Ont., December 20, by W. D. Flatt, was without doubt one of the best sales of its kind that has taken place in Canada for the past 25 years. It reminds one of the days when John Miller, Birrell & Johnston, Thompson Bros., and Bow Park held sales of pure-bred stock, or of the time 30 years ago or more when F. W. Stone, of Guelph held his annual sales of stock. As a Shorthorn sale Mr. Flatt's is perhaps one of the best, if not the best, that has ever been held in Canada and certainly marks a new era in Ontario Shorthorn development. Prices compared very favorably with the early sales and as regards young stock were perhaps better. The sale throughout was very satisfactory, both financially and otherwise, and must have been very gratifying to Mr. Flatt, who is deserving of special commendation for his energy and enterprise in undertaking so important an event, and one that means so much to the live stock interests of this country. Sales of this character help to advertise Canada abroad and it would be beneficial to our pure-bred live stock interests if more of them were held. We understand that it is Mr. Flatt's intention to make this sale an annual affair, and the success of the one just held certainly justifies him in doing so.

The attendance at the sale was large and representative, there being breeders present from half the States in the Union, extending from Virginia to Missouri. Ontario breeders turned out in full force, and we are glad to say, purchased a goodly share of the best animals sold. The sale was held in a large tent on the grounds of the old street car stables, Hamilton, and the arrangements were complete in every way. The auctioneer was Col. F. M. Woods, Lincoln, Neb., the leading live stock auctioneer of the Western States, who was ably assisted by Captain T. E. Robson, Ilderton, Ont. The total receipts from the sale amounted to \$22,935. Forty-two females brought \$16,740, an average of \$400 each. Fourteen bulls sold at \$5,065 or an average of \$362 each. Leaving out four calves sold on the side and which are included in the grand total, we have the splendid record of 56 animals averaging \$390 each. The highest priced animal was Sir Wilfred Laurier, an imported 4 months old bull calf son of Marengo which sold for \$900, to go to West Virginia. The highest price paid for a female was \$630 for Linda (Imp.) to go to Buffalo, N.Y. H. Cargill & Sons, Cargill, Ont., were the largest Canadian buyers and secured several fine animals at good round prices. While the imported stock brought good prices, Canadian bred stock considering everything sold equally as well, if not better. This must have been very gratifying to Mr. Flatt and was an acknowledgment of his skill as a breeder. Below will be found a complete list of the animals sold, the purchaser and the prices paid:

#### Cows.

Maud 11th (Imp.), Geo. Harding and Sons, Waukesha, Wis., \$400.  
 Blossom (Imp.), Robins and Son, Horace, Ind., \$360.  
 Northern Empress (Imp.), A. P. Alton, Appleby, Ont., \$435.  
 Celia 8th (Imp.), T. J. Wornall, Mosby, Mo., \$500.  
 Flora 7th (Imp.), R. J. Thompson, Iowa City, Iowa, \$510.  
 Vinella 13th (Imp.), " " " \$445.  
 Primrose 4th (Imp.), Geo. Mitchell, Port Hope, Ont., \$420.