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NOVEMBER 26, 1914

THE FARMER'S ADVOCATE

2017

a flock of quail. They really seem more like wild than domesticated fowl, and if they lived entirely on insects and weed seeds they must have a distinct value in keeping pests of various kinds in check. But when the cold weather came on they began attending the chicken feedings, not only at home but at neighboring farms. They seem to have good ears as well as wonderful appetites, for whenever they hear other fowls squabbling over their feed they take to their wings and never touch the earth until they light right in the middle of the banquet. And they never miss a feeding time at home either. They should be fat enough for the table before long.

But what I started to tell about is the persistence the guinea fowl show in adopting the stable as a home. On the first cold night I found the whole twenty of them ranged decoratively on the partitions between the stalls. I couldn't shoo them away like the hens. I had to touch each one, and as I touched it it gave a shrill squeak and flew blindly until it brought up against the wall at the far end of the stable. Usually they fall to the floor, but sometimes they would beat their wings and work their feet and apparently walk up the wall like flies until the roof checked them, and then they would sink to the floor with a final discouraged squeak. Once I caught one of them to see how heavy it was, and it squealed like a rat. I dropped it instinctively, for I felt that anything that could squeal like that would be likely to bite. And they can bite—or at least use their bills. I have noticed that at feeding time they can whip even the rooster away from the choicest bits, and I am told that when there were young chickens about, the old pair of guinea fowl thought nothing of grabbing them in their beaks and shaking them as a terrier shakes a rat. Sometimes, if they were not interrupted in committing these atrocities they even killed the chickens. I do not think the nature and habits of guinea fowl have been studied by the experts, and some time when the rush is over I may prepare a bulletin on the subject. At present, however, I am chiefly interested in making them understand that they are not wanted in the stable at night. But it seems hard to convince them. Every night I find them in exactly the same position as on the first night, and every evening I startle twenty squeals out of the flock before I get them to move elsewhere. It is getting to be a regular chore.

But it is as fabricators of new and fendish noises that the guinea fowl are in a class by themselves. They are at it all the time. The mildest noise they make reminds you of the filing of a saw with a bungling mechanic dragging the file on the back stroke. The noises they make when they set to work to show what they can do are beyond description. I have heard noises something like them in sawmills when the circular saw happened to strike a sliver. And they are ready to give an impromptu serenade at any time. I used to think that the ducks were the noisiest thing about the barn-yard, but they only squawk when I am trying to talk. The guinea fowl keep at it when I am trying to think so that I cannot hear the thoughts that are trying to whisper their way into my brain. They rasp out wild noises when they are eating and when they are fasting, when they are walking and when they are flying; and their idea of a nice, quiet

time seems to be to lie down in some spot where they are sheltered from the wind by a clump of weeds or something of the sort, and try to outdo each other in the range and volume of their cries. When we start eating these guinea fowl I am going to dissect one to find out what its vocal cords are made of. I don't think they could possibly make such noises without metal contrivances of some kind that can be rasped together and banged and thumped on. Perhaps I'll discover a new metal that would be valuable in making phonographs, and be able to organize a company to mine it out of the guinea fowl. Then I'll sell stock to the farmers. Judging by their noises there are great and unknown possibilities in these creatures. And yet I have heard people say they rather liked having them around because they keep up such a constant clatter that they keep one from getting lonesome. It surprises me that the person who would not rather be alone than having a flock of guinea fowl for company must have a bad conscience.

Will Britain Guarantee Wheat Prices?

The English Board of Agriculture has raised a young "revolt." It has been asking farmers to grow more wheat, and now they are turning round to ask if the Board will guarantee a price! An organizing committee has been sanctioned by the War Office to bring the farmer growing produce into direct touch with purchasing officers. Farmers, however, are sticking out, like the Government will, for their 40 shillings per quarter for wheat. That Great Britain can produce the whole wheat she requires each year is entirely out of the question. That would mean growing five times as much as she does today. Many members of Parliament are willing to agree to ask the Government to guarantee a certain price for wheat. That is as far as we have got with this vital matter at the moment.

Mr. Charles R. Hamilton, Fairview Lodge, Devon, Chester County, Penn., U. S. A., has been elected a member of the English Hackney Society, which I notice has now passed a resolution that will permit of the registration in the English H. S. Stud Book, under certain well defined conditions, of Hackneys foaled abroad, but sired in the United Kingdom.

A strange sight is to be seen at Epsom, where the Derby is run for, and where Lord Rosebery lives at Durdans, a historic house beloved by the diarist Pepys. To-day, in the fields there, Lord Rosebery has a flock of black sheep. The natives of Epsom call them "Jerusalem sheep."

The Royal Show at Shrewsbury this year lost £3,500 to the promoting society. The right spirit has been shown over the matter, i. e., the finance committee tell us that although the show was a loss to the society it was a gain to agriculture, and procured one of the finest exhibitions ever held by the R. A. S. E.

The Highland Show at Hawick entailed a loss of £304.

Entries are rolling in for London's Smithfield (fat stock) show, which will be held early in December. Business shows are to proceed say our premier breed societies—and a good thing, too.

London, England, is full of Canadian soldiers. They are an especial attraction for the Cockney

urchins, who climb up them and all over them, and clear them out of superfluous coppers.

A vital pronouncement upon the point of the Government of Britain paying a fixed price for wheat is one I give below. It has been made by Sir Sidney Oliver (Permanent Secretary to the English Board of Agriculture) and is as follows:

"Nothing has been said by the Government to warrant the idea that they think of stepping in and buying wheat at their own price. They have taken power to commandeer wheat in the public interest, and to pay for it, not whatever price the Government shall determine, but a fair and reasonable price, having regard to all the circumstances of the case. You may be quite sure that the Government will not be entitled to regard anything less than 40s. a quarter as a fair and reasonable price, and that they will only exercise the powers they possess if they have reason to believe that an excessive price is being asked. If the wheat supply were cornered, the Government would be entitled to fix a lower price below the artificial price created by the cornering. If a corner is created the middleman, not the farmer, gets the increased profit. The Government will certainly pay such a price as will pay farmers to grow wheat, and the agricultural committee have expressed the opinion that it is well worth the farmer's while to grow wheat, having regard to the position of the world's harvest."

£14,936 FRIESLAND CATTLE SALE IN ENGLAND.

Surrey was the venue of a remarkable sale of cattle on November 9th. It was run by the British Holstein Cattle Society, who made a profit of £10,000 on the day's deal, and realized for 59 head a sum of £14,936 5s. It arose this way. There is a bar up in Britain, a bar made by the Government against imported cattle, but to oblige a few zealous lovers of Friesland cattle, called Holsteins in Britain, the Government allowed 59 head to come into the country from Holland, spend a three months' quarantine at the docks, and then be dispersed. Only 300 people visited the sale, held by John Thornton & Co., Frank Matthews the Shorthorn salesman being in command. The 59 head were composed of bull calves, chiefly, and very young heifers. Two bull calves sold for 560 guineas; two for 520 guineas; one for 500 guineas, and so on down the sale. The least figure paid was 110 guineas. In heifers best price was 520 guineas, and least 105 guineas. Not a lot realized less than 100 guineas—a wonderful accomplishment. The 59 head averaged £253 3s. 1d., or an aggregate of £14,936. The 39 bulls averaged £257 13s., and the 20 heifers £244 7s. 9d.

A novelty was to state in the catalogue what the animal cost. I have figured out that the British Holstein Cattle Society have cleared £10,000 in one day. Never has an obscure Society leaped to fame in one short 24 hours. One will have to take his hat off to the Secretary nowadays when he talks to him—fancy £10,000 in one afternoon!

Surrey, Eng.

G. T. BURROWS.

United States Embargo Removed.

The quarantine placed on cattle from Canada by the United States Government was removed last Saturday, and our cattle can now go in there without restriction.

Toronto, Montreal, Buffalo, and Other Leading Markets.

Toronto.

Receipts at the Union Stock-yards, West Toronto, on Monday, November 23rd, numbered 186 carloads, comprising 3,860 cattle, 1,293 hogs, 2,658 sheep and lambs, and 185 calves. Trade in fat cattle was active, and prices 25c. to 40c. higher. Fat steers sold from \$7 to \$8; heifers, \$7 to \$7.50; cows, \$3.50 to \$6.75; bulls, \$5 to \$7; feeders, \$6 to \$6.50; stockers, \$4.75 to \$5.75; milkers, \$6.50 to \$9.50; veal calves, \$5 to \$10. Hogs, \$8 weighed off cars; \$7.75 fed and watered, and \$7.40 f. o. b. cars.

REVIEW OF LAST WEEK'S MARKETS

The total receipts of live stock at the City and Union Stock-yards for the past week were:

	City.	Union.	Total.
Cattle	63	638	701
Hogs	880	9,425	10,305
Sheep	850	11,509	12,359
Calves	2,542	11,274	13,816
Horses	80	656	736
		32	32

The total receipts of live stock at the two markets for the corresponding week of 1913 were:

	City.	Union.	Total.
Cattle	43	688	731
Hogs	955	12,536	13,491
Sheep	41	6,974	7,015
Calves	1,143	8,087	9,230
Horses	14	1,179	1,193
		83	83

The combined receipts of live stock at the two yards for the week show a decrease of 30 carloads, 3,186 cattle, 457 calves, and 51 horses, but an increase of 5,344 hogs and 4,586 sheep and lambs, compared with the same week of 1913.

Hogs sold last Friday at \$7.75 fed and watered; \$8 off cars, and \$7.35 f. o. b. cars at country points.

The Toronto live-stock market during the past week had a plethora of cattle, principally of the common and medium light steers and heifers of inferior breeding qualities. Many of these were bought for canning purposes, as many of the farmers refused to purchase them for feeding purposes. Good to choice steers and heifers were very scarce, and the highest price recorded was \$7.75 for a couple of loads of what were called choice steers, out of a run of over 5,000 cattle on Monday. A large number of these medium, rough cattle, were held from Monday until Tuesday and Wednesday, drovers refusing to accept the prices

offered. Fresh supplies, which were liberal, coming on the market each succeeding day, caused a dull, draggy trade all week, prices being lower as a rule. As for some time past, the best sellers were the canners and cutters, for which there was an excellent demand, but they also sold at lower values. We do not remember, during the eighteen years we have attended the Toronto live-stock market, of ever seeing so many of the canner class of cows as was brought on the market during the past week. A few good to choice butchers' heifers and steers would sell readily, as there have been few offered lately. The market for stockers and feeders, as well as milkers and springers, remained about steady. There were light receipts of calves, but plenty to supply the demand, since heavy supplies of poultry came on the market. Prices for calves were lower, as a rule, and we only heard of one fancy calf bringing \$10.50. Sheep and lambs were plentiful, with values lower, excepting for a few choice, light, black-faced lambs, which sold at \$7.90 to \$8.10. Heavy, coarse lambs, were cheaper. Hogs firm, selling at a slight advance.

Butchers' Cattle.—Choice butchers' steers sold at \$7.50 to \$7.75; good, \$7 to \$7.40, but \$7 to \$7.25 were the ruling prices for good cattle; medium, \$6.25 to \$6.60; common, \$6 to \$6.25; common, light heifers, \$5.50 to \$5.75; choice cows,

\$6.25 to \$6.50; good cows, \$5.75 to \$6.25; medium cows, \$5.25 to \$5.75; canners and cutters, \$3 to \$4.50; bulls, \$4.50 to \$6.50. A good to choice heavy bull sometimes brought \$6.75.

Stockers and Feeders.—Choice steers, 800 to 900 lbs., sold at \$6.25 to \$6.50; good steers, \$6 to \$6.25; medium, \$5.25 to \$5.75; stockers, \$4 to \$5.

Milkers and Springers.—There was a steady demand all week for good to choice milkers and forward springers, but backward springers are not wanted. Prices ranged from \$65 to \$100, and a few went at \$105 to \$110, and one at \$115 during the week.

Veal Calves.—Choice calves, \$9 to \$10; good calves, \$8 to \$9; medium, \$7 to \$8; common, \$6 to \$7; inferior, Eastern, heavy, grass calves, sold at \$4 to \$5.50.

Sheep and Lambs.—Light ewes sold at \$5 to \$5.75; heavy ewes, \$3.50 to \$4; culls, \$2 to \$3; choice lambs, \$7.50 to \$7.75; heavy lambs, \$6.75 to \$7.25; cull lambs, \$5.50 to \$6.50.

Hogs.—Receipts were moderate all week, and prices were firm, at \$7.75 fed and watered, on Monday.

TORONTO HORSE MARKET.

There were three different auction sales the past week of horses that were rejected by those who were buying for the British army. Many buyers were pres-