

Correspondence.

Cattle Running at Large.

(To the Editor of the CANADA FARMER.)

SIR:—I disapprove of the custom of allowing stock of any kind to stray along the road lines, and ramble in the bush. Probably no one will deny that stock thus turned at large are, in general, nothing but a public nuisance. That they do a great deal of mischief by breaking into meadows and cultivated land, no one is likely to deny; and I expect that a good many of the sufferers from the encroachments of breachy cattle, will agree with me in estimating the damage they do to growing crops, at a sum about equal to the value of their keep. I know it is a very difficult matter to estimate the amount of damage any growing crop has sustained by a casual trespass, and for that very reason it is, I believe, almost invariably greatly under-estimated. Besides the injury thus directly done to the farming community in general, the profit made by those owning the cattle, is diminished by the value of the time spent in searching for them (especially their milking cows), and in driving them home. The time thus wasted, if entered in some book every day, and added up at the end of a week, or a month, would often foot up to a total that would surprise one; and, in crop-time this is a matter of very serious consideration indeed, as delay and hindrance then, is well nigh irremediable. Then there is to be considered the damage to the milking qualities of the cows themselves, which results from irregularity in their hours of milking. Many a settler who now allows his cows to graze in the bush, would actually be better off at the year's end, if he fed but half the number abundantly in a good pasture, and always had them milked at regular hours. Of the importance of a consideration of the loss of time spent in hunting for cows, take the following instances, which happened to fall within the observation of the writer during the past summer: A hard-working, industrious man, spent almost five hours a day, three times in one week, in searching for, and getting home his cows, night and morning; and at that time, too, it was getting rather late in the season for planting potatoes, and he had at least two acres more to plant, if possible. They had to be killed in with the hoe, and he could hire no help. About the same time, too, the same man had to stay a night in the bush. It happened as follows: He did not find his cows till after nine o'clock, and it was quite dark; his home lay, in a direct line, about a mile and a half away, but as there was a rather bad bit of tamarack swamp right in his course, he felt constrained, although he was a pretty good bushman, to wait till sunrise before he attempted to drive them back to his farm. He was, of course, supperless, and after having been all the long night through badly harrassed by the mosquitoes, he was not in, by any means, good trim for doing a long, hard day's work. His cows, of course, were un milked, and three days afterwards, his wife said that their yield of milk was still diminished by it.

I have known another lot of cows that were also rambling at large in the bush, to go unmilked three different times in a fortnight; one time out of the three, they missed two meals of milking, and were away more than thirty-six hours. The actual time wasted in the search for them this one time, I do not know, but it was no small time. For a short while, two men were out in the woods after them, but they were old countrymen, and not as good hands in the bush as the man (a native Canadian), who spent a night last May in the swamp. Many a bush-roaming cow gets permanently injured in her milking qualities, and the better they were for the pail, the greater would be the injury done them. A cow that was not milked for 36 hours, would, probably, be diminished in her yield of milk for the whole of the summer.

There is another evil to be mentioned, only an occasional one, it is true, but of still greater importance, as it now and then results in loss of human life. Scarcely a year passes by without some newspaper having to record a search for children sent into the bush to bring some cows or working bullocks, and now and then, alas! to give the sad news, that the efforts of the neighbors to find them while alive, had proved futile. I also believe that the practice of allowing cattle to wander along the roads, greatly discourages, and often puts a stop to the practice of planting out trees to shade and ornament our highways. These roaming cattle greatly increase the expense of protecting the young trees, and kill out a great many of those that fail to grow.

Lastly—This practice of allowing cattle to wander at large, almost obliges every settler to keep a pack of dogs to hunt the brutes away from their cropped lands and meadows, and thus, by directly increasing the number of useless, yelping curs that are regularly trained to go in, following after any animal that will run, and beset and snap at any animal that they overtake, or that won't run. Stray cattle add largely to the number of sheep-killing dogs to be found in every neighborhood, and even in the wildest of Canadian settlements, more sheep are killed by dogs than by wolves. This dog difficulty is the the sheep farmer's bogy, the lion in his path, even in the most favored parts of Canada, and presses hardest on the owners of the most valuable breeds of sheep; for the compensation allowed for worried sheep, can only replace the most inferior kind of animal, and the compensation never very willingly paid by the municipality, sometimes costs more to get it than it is worth. This is one great hindrance (isn't it the great hindrance?) to the introduction of a regular system of sheep husbandry, a great waste of Canadian agriculture. It increases the difficulty experienced by farmers, all the country over, in providing a sufficient supply of manure to keep up the fertility of their land; and in those backward and newly settled districts, in which only stray specimens of a mongrel and unthrifty sort of sheep are now to be found; the dog difficulty checks the increase of the present small flocks, which, mongrels as they are, are better than no sheep at all, and prevents any attempt being made, or at any rate, is a standing excuse for no attempt being made to introduce a more valuable or improved breed of sheep.

P. S.—I do not think I have even now attended to all the mischiefs that are caused by wandering cattle. Sometimes a whole neighborhood is set by the ears, and quarrels, and a law suit or two, as well as permanent ill blood is the result. Occasionally they are stolen, with but little chance of the thief ever being proved; but even if half of the disadvantages that seem to be inseparable from this system are real, I don't think I have exaggerated any one of them. The actual benefits of the system to those who practice it are very small indeed, and do not anything like make amends for the loss and damage done to the agricultural community in general. P.

The Duchess and Oxford Short-horns.

(To the Editor of the CANADA FARMER.)

SIR:—There has been a good deal said lately in the agricultural papers, concerning the enormous prices paid for the Duchess cattle at the great sale at New York Mills, some approving, others disapproving of them. Some argue that they are little, or no better for breeding than cattle with mixed pedigrees. In my opinion it is quite necessary to keep up the standard of our stock, and give them character, so that we may have some pure strains of blood. There are very few breeders but will admit that no strains combine so much excellence as the Duchess and Oxford strains. Two or three crosses will, as a rule, bring animals nearly equal to the pure bred

ones, but if these cross-bred bulls were again used, there would be a gradual falling off, hence the necessity of having thoroughly pure-bred males. But I cannot see the wisdom of giving so much more for the Duchesses than the Oxfords. It will be seen by referring to the pedigree of the 12th Lady of Oxford, that the six latest crosses were pure Dukes, leaving her 95 7-6 per cent. Duchess blood, and she was sold for \$7,000, being the highest priced Oxford at the sale, with one exception. If we examine the pedigree of the 8th Duchess of Geneva, it will be seen she was sired by 3rd Lord Oxford, a pure Oxford, leaving her virtually only 50 per cent. of Duchess blood, and she was sold for \$40,000. For generations back, they have been almost indiscriminately bred together, making them now identical in blood. Now, if you, or any of our numerous readers, will give a valid reason for so much difference in the prices of the respective tribes, I shall be thankful.

STEPHEN NICHOLSON

Sylvan, Ontario.

Sample of Wheat from British Columbia.

(To the Editor of the CANADA FARMER.)

SIR:—I have this day forwarded you a sample of wheat, grown by Henry Cogan, M.P.P., at his farm at Craigflower, near Victoria, which took the first prize at the Provincial Agricultural Exhibition, held lately in this city. I forward the sample to you, as I have been a constant reader of your valuable paper, and know the interest you take in anything in the farming line. I hope you will compare it with any samples you may have belonging to other Provinces, and let British Columbians know through the medium of your paper how it compares with Eastern wheat.

BRITISH COLUMBIAN.

Victoria, B. C., Nov. 3, 1873.

NOTE BY ED. C. F.—We have duly received the package of wheat referred to by our correspondent in the above communication. It is a very pretty sample of white wheat, of beautiful color, and well-rounded, plump looking berry, but averages rather small, as compared with our best samples here. It is also uneven as to size of grain. An excellent quality of flour will no doubt be yielded by it. It looks very like the Duhal wheat, but our correspondent does not mention the variety, or the number of pounds to the bushel. On the whole, the sample gives a very encouraging idea of the wheat-growing capabilities of our sister colony at the far north-west.

Large Mangolds.

(To the Editor of the CANADA FARMER.)

SIR:—Mr John Drew, of this place, has raised on his farm, this season, six Mangold Wurtzels, weighing together one hundred and fifty pounds and a half (150½), one of them weighing alone over thirty four pounds. These beat the gentleman who exhibited at Exeter Fall Show. If you can spare space in the FARMER, please insert this, and oblige.

Yours truly,

GEORGE DUNCAN.

Clifton, Ontario.

Hen Manure.

(To the Editor of the CANADA FARMER.)

SIR:—In your last issue, there is an article on "How to utilize hen manure." A friend of mine in England has, what many, with myself, might think a simpler and more efficacious plan, which is simply to gather some peaty soil in the summer, dry it thoroughly in the sun, and store it away in a dry place. With this, dust the hen house floor well two or three times a week, and once a week sweep it out clean and store in a dry place. You can thus prevent the manure from emitting any offensive smell, keep the hen house perfectly sweet, and have a very valuable manure. He does his stable in a similar manner, except that it is cleaned out daily, and sufficient is put down to absorb the urine, a very important item, usually not only lost, but allowed to become a nuisance to man and beast.

LE SPRING.

Brantford, Ont., Dec. 11, 1873.