

The Farmer's Advocate AND HOME MAGAZINE

THE LEADING AGRICULTURAL JOURNAL IN THE
DOMINION.

Published weekly by
THE WILLIAM WELD COMPANY (Limited).

JOHN WELD, Manager.
Agents for "The Farmer's Advocate and Home Journal,"
Winnipeg, Man.

1. THE FARMER'S ADVOCATE AND HOME MAGAZINE is published every Thursday. It is impartial and independent of all cliques and parties, handsomely illustrated with original engravings, and furnishes the most practical, reliable and profitable information for farmers, dairymen, gardeners, stockmen and home-makers of any publication in Canada.
 2. TERMS OF SUBSCRIPTION.—In Canada, England, Ireland, Scotland, Newfoundland and New Zealand, \$1.50 per year, in advance; \$2.00 per year when not paid in advance. United States, \$2.50 per year; all other countries, 12s. in advance.
 3. ADVERTISING RATES.—30 cents per line, agate, flat. Live-stock advertising rates given on application.
 4. THE FARMER'S ADVOCATE is sent to subscribers until the explicit order is received for its discontinuance. All payment of arrears must be made as required by law.
 5. THE LAW IS, that all subscribers to newspapers are held responsible until all arrears are paid, and their paper ordered to be discontinued.
 6. REMITTANCES should be made direct to us, either by Money Order, Postal Note, Express Order or Registered Letter, which will be at our risk. When made otherwise we will not be responsible.
 7. THE DATE ON YOUR LABEL shows to what time your subscription is paid.
 8. ANONYMOUS communications will receive no attention. In every case the "Full Name and Post Office Address Must be Given."
 9. WHEN A REPLY BY MAIL IS REQUIRED to Urgent Veterinary or Legal Enquiries, \$1.00 must be enclosed.
 10. LETTERS intended for publication should be written on one side of the paper only.
 11. CHANGE OF ADDRESS.—Subscribers when ordering a change of address should give the old as well as the new P.O. address.
 12. WE INVITE FARMERS to write us on any agricultural topic. We are always pleased to receive practical articles. For such as we consider valuable we will pay ten cents per inch printed matter. Criticisms of Articles, Suggestions How to Improve "The Farmer's Advocate and Home Magazine," Descriptions of New Grains, Roots or Vegetables not generally known. Particulars of Experiments Tried, or Improved Methods of Cultivation, are each and all welcome. Contributions sent us must not be furnished other papers until after they have appeared in our columns. Rejected matter will be returned on receipt of postage.
 13. ADDRESSES OF CORRESPONDENTS ARE CONSIDERED AS CONFIDENTIAL and will not be forwarded.
 14. ALL COMMUNICATIONS in reference to any matter connected with this paper should be addressed as below, and not to any individual connected with the paper.
- ADDRESS—THE FARMER'S ADVOCATE, or
THE WILLIAM WELD COMPANY (Limited),
London, Canada

The Canadian Swine Breeders' Association is the only Dominion organization of producers that can speak for the industry, and perhaps their voice would be raised more frequently and louder if it numbered a larger percentage of the actual producers of bacon hogs in this country. However, it is their duty to see that the bacon mystery is unravelled. Pleasing generalities and official pap should not be allowed to suffice at the coming annual meeting. The book should be opened wide and the truth revealed.

The Evolution of Auction Sales.

By SANDY FRASER.

Something less than seventy-five years ago I went to my first auction sale; and something less than two weeks ago I went to my last one. Only, this one was called a "Dispersion Sale" on the bills, the name havin' a better sound, some way or ither. It sounds like higher prices, for one thing.

But the world moves along, a'right. There was an unco' difference in everything about the two events, frae the stuff that was sold tae the auctioneer that sold it.

The auctioneer at the first sale I attended was a chap we called "auld Bill McKae." He was a saddler by trade but could always be had as salesman by any farmer that was gaein' oot o' business and disposing of his live stock and machinery. And he would work as hard as he was able frae ten o'clock in the mornin' till maybe after dark, for one five-dollar bill. And I hae na doot he thought he was makin' good money, too. It made quite a hole in the price o' a cow, whatever.

He was a sharp auld fellow and he could coax the coppers oot o' the farmer's pockets in a way that surprised them when they'd be thinkin' about it afterwards. It's about as easy gettin' dollars noo-a-days as it was to get coppers at that time. A farmer used tae think then that if he made oot tae get between four and five hundred dollars for his whole outfit o' live stock and machinery he was daein' not too bad. At that first sale I attended the coos brought from eight to ten dollars apiece, and I mind one auld coo that was none too fat and had about a dozen rings on her horns, was knocked doon at four dollars. The spring calves brought from a dollar-and-a-half to two dollars apiece.

Butter was cheap in those days and cheese was cheaper and nobody looked on the dairy coo as anything great in the way o' a mortgage-lifter. It paid better then to be spendin' the winters in the woods than in the coostable. What little live stock there was was generally left tae the care o' the women. A man was ashamed tae be caught milking a coo, juist, as noo-a-days, he wad hate tae be seen washin' the dinner dishes.

And, whether the coos felt neglectit, or not, by this lack o' interest on the part o' their owner, they generally

looked the part. It was little they knew o' curry-combs and brushes or blankets. Gin they were tae be sold by auction it was all the same. They were brought out intae the ring in all the glory o' their lang hair an wi' the dirt stickin' tae their sides an inch thick. Gin it wasna' for the horns ye could hardly tell whether it was a coo or a bear ye were buying. The maist o' farmers left the job o' fitting up their cows to Nature and the June grass. For a show o' wild animals their stables, in the winter-time, could beat ony Barnum and Bailey circus.

But things hae changed, as I said, and for the better, wi'oot a doot. For proof o' that I cannae dae better than tak' the dispersion sale I was at the ither day as an example and gie ye a few o' the particulars in connection wi' it. It may no' be typical o' quite all the sales that are held on farms in this Twentieth Century, but there's gettin' tae be mair o' them every year and, na doot, it will be the regular thing in the course o' time.

This chap, that was making the sale that I want tae tell ye about, must hae had the notion o' something o' the kind in the back o' his heid for a couple o' years, or mair. His stock were all pure-breds and he began feedin' them up, and workin' for records and a reputation. He fed his coos all he could raise on the farm and he bought mill-feeds for them by the car-load. Puttin' money intae coos looked better to him than puttin' it in the bank. Three per cent. and naething at all looked juist about the same tae him. And when he saw onything in the shape o' cow, calf, bull or heifer that suited his fancy, he bought it, until, at the time o' his sale he had mair than seventy head on hand.

Noo, maybe ye think it's no' much o' a job tae fit up a herd o' this size and pit them in shape tae bring guid money at the auction-block? Weel, gin ye dae ye're a wee bit mistaken. Ilka one o' these coos was washed frae heid tae heels wi' soap and water. Then they were brushed and rubbed wi' a cloth till it wad kind o' dazzle yer eyes tae look at them. After that they were blanketed and aboot a foot o' straw piled under them, tae prevent ony danger o' them gettin' bed-sores, I suppose.

The night before the great day o' the sale a man stayed in the stable frae dark till daylight, keepin' the floors cleaned doon and seeing that every coo had her blanket on.

A big machine-shed on the farm had been fitted up as a salesring. Stoves were there tae heat it and electric wires tae light it, in case the day wad be dark. There were seats all around, one above the ither, sae that everybody might be able tae see all that was gaein' on. And there was a platform in the middle that was supposed tae be reserved for the auctioneer and the cow whose points and pedigree he was makin' clear tae his audience.

Another thing that took my eye was the flags that were here and there and all over the building, everything and onything tae pit the crowd in good humor an tae keep them that way. It's attention tae these wee details that mak' the difference between success and failure, sometimes.

Weel, the first coo was brought in and the auctioneer called for bids. "This will be the cheapest cow sold here to-day," says he. The same thing I'd heard at every sale I ever attended since I went tae my first one. However, there was mair or less truth in it this time. She went at two hundred and it wasna lang till that looked cheap enough. The next brought twa-thirty and sae it kept on till the pick o' the bunch was sold for seven hundred dollars.

And the mair he got the mair that auctioneer seemed tae want. He almost cried when he couldnae get them tae put anither ten dollars on that seven hundred. He even tauld one o' his worst stories. But he couldnae move them. It was high-water mark for the day. Just as twelve dollars was the limit at that first sale I went to when I was a wee gaffer.

I dinna ken exactly what those seventy head o' cattle cam' tae in guid money, but it must hae been close tae fifteen thousand dollars. Not a bad day's income, onyway, and something in the way o' what ye might call a striking example o' the results o' modern farm practice.

I suppose there will be plenty that will be standin' up for the auld style o' breeding and feeding and sellin' our farm live-stock, and, for those that like it and dinna want to be makin' their money too fast, the auld way is maybe the best.

But, for the young man starting life on the farm, I dinna think there's ony better plan than tae get intae the game right where it's being played the hardest and where brains and energy are paid for in proportion tae their real value.

The habits and achievements o' a generation that is dead and gone may have been a'right in its day. But we might as weel be deid right noo if we're not gaein' tae be a step or twa ahead o' them in oor ideas and methods and the rewards that will satisfy us.

Progress, I heard a chap say once, is the best word there is. And he was right. The possibility o' makin' progress is the only guid reason for our being here on this earth at all. Sae that's why I'm thinkin' it's up tae us tae keep moving wi' the times, that is, if we cannae keep a step or twa ahead o' them.

I ken ye've heard a thousand times, mair or less, that the man wha serves his country best is he wha makes twa blades o' grass grow where only one grew before. Weel, since that sale, the ither day, I've been thinkin' o' revisin' the auld proverb. It must hae whiskers on it by this time an' will be the better o' a shave. What's the matter wi' cuttin' it doon tae this: The man wha serves his country best is he wha makes a seven-hundred-dollar pure-bred grow on the vera

spot that a twelve-dollar scrub grew, in "the guid auld days that are gone."

There is naething like keepin' oor proverbs up-to-date, along wi' everything else.

Nature's Diary.

By A. BROOKER KLUGH, M. A.
BOOKWORMS.

The word "bookworm" is one which is frequently used, in its primary sense for some kind of "worm" which bores into books, and in its secondary sense for a person who is devoted to reading, yet very few who use the term know exactly what a "bookworm" is.

As a matter of fact bookworms are not worms at all in the biological sense, they are really insects of various species, in either the larval or adult stage. They haunt books because, no matter how barren of intellectual wealth a book may be, and how unattractive to the human "bookworm," it is a rich storehouse of food for such creatures as are capable of assimilating the cellulose of its paper, the leather of its binding or the gluten or starch-paste that binds its pages together.

The chief bookworms which feed on the paper are the larvae of two species of beetles, *Sitotroga panicea* the Drug-store Beetle, and *Pinus fur*, the White-marked Spider Beetle. The adult of the former is about a tenth of an inch in length, uniform light brown, and covered with fine silky hairs. The larva is white with a darker mouth, and a cylindrical curved form. This species invades stores of all kinds, mills, granaries, and tobacco warehouses. Of household supplies its preference is for flour, meal, and breakfast foods, it is extremely partial to red pepper, and is often found in ginger, coffee, chocolate, almonds and seeds of every description. In drug-stores it eats nearly everything kept in stock, from insipid gluten wafers, to such acrid substances as wormwood, and such poisons as cantharides aconite and belladonna. In libraries it is one of the most destructive bookworms, and a case is recorded in which a whole shelf of books two hundred years old was tunnelled through transversely by a single larva.

The larva of the White-marked Spider Beetle likewise consumes a great variety of substances, in fact is practically omnivorous. These larvae have been known to destroy more than a hundred bags of cotton seed which had been stored in a barn, and a single larva bored through twenty-seven folio volumes in such a straight line that a string could be passed through the whole length of the tunnel and the entire set of books lifted up at once.

An insect which not infrequently attacks the paste of books is *Lepisma saccharina*, the Silver-fish, a spindle-shaped insect of a glistening gray color which runs with great rapidity, and which, like most of these book-devouring insects, is partial to dark locations.

One of the most destructive of the insects which attack the leather bindings of books is the Larder Beetle, *Dermestes lardarius*. Both adults and larvae of this species feed on almost any dried animal substance, such as bacon, fur, mounted birds, and dried insects, and is one of the worst of museum pests. The adults sometimes enter libraries during the warm months of the year and deposit their eggs in the inside of book-bindings, generally on the ridges or edges which are in contact with walls or shelves. As soon as the larvae hatch they slip inside the volumes and begin their destructive feast. The larvae are much bigger than the adults, and are covered with long red hair, bristling like the quills of a porcupine. During their period of growth, which is very rapid, they molt four or five times the discarded integument remaining stretched like a blown-up balloon, so that it resembles the larva itself except that it is transparent.

The Carpet Beetle, which is closely allied to the above species, is a pest which attacks organic material of various kinds including carpets, upholstery, and clothes, and sometimes damages the bindings of books.

Various remedies and preventives against these insects have been tried but there is only one method which has been found to be entirely satisfactory—the constant use of the books.

We wish to thank the many subscribers and others for their kind and complimentary remarks about the Christmas Number of "The Farmer's Advocate." We esteem it and find it a pleasure to produce a creditable Number, and we are glad to know it is appreciated. Next year we shall endeavor to produce even a better number than any of its predecessors.

There was a great deal of money changed hands this season in the fruit business, but the profits were meagre. Labor, containers, transportation charges, etc., are out of all proportion to the selling price of the fruit. There is need of organization in the fruit business; there must be co-operation on a big scale and a readjustment of transportation charges along with improved facilities.