

## THE FARMER'S ADVOCATE AND HOME MAGAZINE.

THE LEADING AGRICULTURAL JOURNAL IN  
THE DOMINION.

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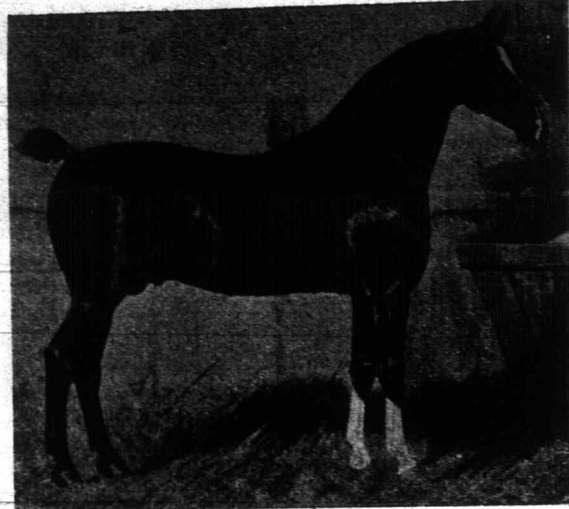
### Permanent Location of the Royal Show.

By a majority of thirty-eight to four, the Council of the Royal Agricultural Society of England, at its last meeting adopted the report of its Special Committee, appointed to consider the question of the modification or alteration of the existing show system, recommending the abandonment of the itinerant system of locating the annual show from year to year, which had been followed for sixty years, and its permanent location in some large town or city after the present rotation of districts is completed in 1902. The trend of the times is unmistakably in the direction of the permanent housing of the principal shows. The United States learned the lesson from expensive experience under the migratory system, and have settled down to a wiser plan, most of the State fairs being now permanently provided for. Ontario spent heaps of money in the forlorn hope of continuing a peripatetic Provincial fair, but found it a costly failure. The Fat Stock and Dairy Show has been "boarding around the district" and living beneath its privileges, but the prospect amounts almost to a certainty that the days of its pilgrimage are ended, and that its next exhibition will be held under cover of a permanent home. The conservative old Royal, of England, has done well to so soon get into line with the onward march of the procession, and we have not a shadow of a doubt that its future, under the proposed change of system, will be even more prosperous and glorious than the grand record it has made in its noble work of presenting high ideals to the people in magnificent specimens of improved stock and agricultural products and appliances, which have exerted such uplifting influence on the agriculture of the Empire and the world.

### Stock Sales by the Government.

The Scotch combination auction sales of cattle are often referred to by the advocates of the adoption of that class of sales in Canada. At first sight, and looking only at one side of the question, the Scotch sales would seem to constitute a good argument in favor of the system; but there are two sides to this, as to most questions, and while the best prices and the average prices for the animals sold at these sales may be fairly satisfactory, yet the reports of the three leading sales this spring, namely, at Inverness, Perth, and Aberdeen, reveal the fact that of the whole number of Shorthorn cattle entered and catalogued for these sales, no fewer than 125 were left unsold, many being withdrawn for the reason that the bidding was not satisfactory to the seller, and many more failing to find buyers owing to their inferiority. In a letter recently received at this office from a prominent Canadian breeder who was present at the sales at Perth and Aberdeen in February of this year, he writes: "I was disappointed in the offerings. Anything with merit sold high, up to 240 guineas, but there were only two or three at each place that you would consider good enough to place in good company." This is quite in accord with the statement of Mr. John Isaac, in a late issue of the ADVOCATE, that the great bulk of the offerings at these sales are culls, and that in the case of those of merit, which are brought out for competition for the numerous and substantial prizes which are offered for the best, it is not unusual to withdraw them when the bidding is not satisfactory.

As a matter of business, we see no good reason why in offering stock at a sale of this character a man should not have the privilege of withdrawing



THE NOTED HACKNEY STALLION, GARTON DUKE  
OF CONNAUGHT.

PROPERTY OF MR. THOS. HALL, NEAR MALTON, ENGLAND.

his animals, or of placing an upset price or reserve bid on them, if he considers he is not bid fair value for them, provided this right is claimed in the announcement of the sale, and this course is certainly infinitely more honorable than the practice sometimes followed of putting up bogus bidders to protect them; yet, from observation, we feel sure that the former practice, if adopted to any considerable extent in this country, would effectually take the life out of any sale. We are assured that in the proposed government sales all these contingencies are to be provided for in a code of rules and regulations which will make everything lovely. But those who have had experience in working under the rules of exhibition and sale associations know, many of them to their cost, that too often under these rules the honest man suffers, while those untroubled by conscience or unburdened by a sense of honor get the advantage, and go off with the honors and the dollars which fairly belong to the man who is straight and who may well pray to be delivered from a list of rules and regulations which hamper him but not the other fellow.

The point we wish to make in this article is, that if in a country of limited area, where breeders are comparatively close together and within easy distance of the place of sale, where the system has been long established, and where, as the result of experience, it is reasonable to suppose the best practicable rules have been adopted, over 20 per cent. of the animals entered for the sales are left unsold at a time when the business is booming, what success can be expected with this system in a country of such magnificent distances as Canada presents, where the cash system of payment at public sales has had little trial, and where combination sales under organizations conducted by prac-

tical breeders in the past have proved miserable failures at such centers as Toronto and Guelph, even when held during the weeks in which stock shows were being held at the same place, and the advantages of reduced railway fares and the presence of stockmen attending the shows were added?

There being no present nor prospective need for the proposed sales, our farmers not having asked for them, nor the breeders either, so far as we know, till it was suggested that aid could be got for the purpose, and, as has been pointed out, with so many dubious contingencies surrounding them, the Government would be ill-advised in making such an experiment in paternalism.

### Sheep-Killing Dogs.

The sheep-killing dogs continue their murderous work. Scarcely a week passes that does not bring intelligence of serious damage done to farmers' flocks by the prowling curs which infest the country. Farmers by the hundred have abandoned the keeping of sheep for the sole reason that they are exposed to this most vexatious evil. There is no more profitable branch of stock-raising than sheep husbandry, and not for many years have the market prices for mutton sheep and lambs been as high as at present. There is probably no country under the sun where sheep are liable to fewer diseases or disabilities of any sort, or where sheep thrive better, than in this Dominion. Under these circumstances, the dog nuisance is an intolerable one, and we fully sympathize with the farmers and breeders who are agitating for its abatement by a more stringent legal enactment.

We are confident that this sentiment is entertained by more than nine-tenths of those interested in the sheep-raising industry, but unless they combine in some way to give expression to their views and wishes in this regard, we fear that there is little hope for relief in the near future. The present session of the Legislature will soon draw to a close, and if anything is to be done to impress upon our law-makers the urgent necessity for action in regard to this important matter it should be done quickly. In the absence of any general organization, we beg to suggest that sheep breeders all over the Province write directly to their representatives or to the Minister of Agriculture at the Parliament Buildings, Toronto, vigorously setting forth their views on the subject. Let the legislative chamber be flooded with letters containing hot shot for the dog nuisance.

### The Proper Function of Agricultural Experiment Stations.

The presidential address of Dr. H. P. Armsby, of the Pennsylvania State Agricultural College, before the last meeting of the Association of Agricultural Colleges and Experiment Stations, deals with the object and purpose of the latter, and the best means of attaining them. Judging from recent tendencies and efforts on the part of some of these institutions, those in charge have run away with the idea that they must popularize them as a means of direct instruction to the farmer. To our mind, this is a misconception that will make such inroads upon the time and attention of the staff that the great fundamental purpose for which the station exists will be completely sidetracked. That purpose is investigation, which must be thorough or scientific in the true sense of the term. The American is so impatient for immediate "results" as to grow restive under the essentially patient and deliberate procedure under which results of any permanent value are to be obtained from experimental work. The thorough-going investigator finds it difficult to resist the clamor for a "show on paper" that the institution is "doing something" that will put dollars directly in the pocket of the farmer. And when the hustling politician takes a hand in, matters are not improved, as witness the development of the wasteful Washington free-seed scandal. As Dr. Armsby points out: "The function of the experiment station is not the impossible task of giving him (the farmer) recipes suited to every possible emergency. Its business is to enlarge (through its researches) his knowledge of the natural forces which drive his farm, and how to control instead of being controlled by them." He points out that the experiment station is not designed to do the work of the agricultural college, the farmers' institute, the reading circle or the agricultural press, but rather to be a fountain from which may flow knowledge and inspiration that shall fructify and