

THE FARMER'S ADVOCATE AND HOME MAGAZINE.

THE LEADING AGRICULTURAL JOURNAL IN
THE DOMINION.

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The Outlook for Feeding Cattle.

"What are the prospects for stockers?" is a live question at this season, both with the farmer who has them to sell and the farmer or feeder who must buy. Last year the demand was phenomenal, with light supplies and good prices. Our present advices from country points do not and could not show more cattle fit to feed on hand, while from Montreal, Toronto, Buffalo, Chicago and other western points enquiry is strong. One Eastern Ontario dealer has already shipped eighteen carloads to the Canadian Northwest Territories for range feeding. Eirick Bros., live stock commissioners, of Buffalo, write us that the prospects are that feeding cattle will bring good prices there all fall; in fact, they never had so many buyers for them as one day recently.

Turning to the Western States, we find that a year ago more than half the Montana, Wyoming, Dakota and Colorado cattle were sent to Chicago in thin condition, and were re-sold to farmers and feeders in the corn belt. There is more grass and feed of all kinds now than a year ago, and a much smaller number of thin young cattle. Illinois, Iowa and Nebraska feeders have been all over the north-western (U. S.) range country trying to get their young cattle, but prices are held at \$1 on the range, and nobody wants to sell at that, as there is no way of replacing them at the same money. Money, which was hard to get a year ago, is more easily obtained now by all fairly responsible farmers and feeders. Canadian cattle are therefore in big demand, as they are usually pretty well bred and thin enough to leave good room for gain. But prices are regarded too stiff at present to allow much movement in trade. A good many 400-lb. steers sold lately in Chicago at from \$18 to \$20 per head. Some of our Canadian correspondents report stockers scarce and high. Fortunately for our feeders, Canada has a fairly good supply of coarse grains for feeding, and access to American corn, so that with prudent methods of feeding there may be left a fair margin for the finished beeves next spring, providing the British market shows any reasonable degree of strength. From all points comes the cry that the "good ones are the ones that are wanted most." There is still too large a proportion of the common kinds that do not sell very high and hurt the prices of the better sorts. The quality of Canadian steers must be raised by better breeding and better feeding from calfhood onward, and there is encouragement to do this in the present situation. Meantime, those who have fairly good young cattle to part with for the coming winter's feeding are, so to speak, "in clover."

The Winnipeg Abattoir.

Another important step in the development of the cattle trade of Western Canada is marked by the opening, on Sept. 1st, of the big abattoir and cold storage warehouse by the well-known firm of cattle exporters, Messrs. Gordon, Ironsides and Fares. The building and yards occupy about twelve acres, a short distance west of the main-line track, Winnipeg. A spur track runs through the yards for the delivery of stock; a large portion of the yards are floored and roofed, and being connected with the city sewage system, can be perfectly drained and kept clean and comfortable. Water from a flowing well of excellent quality is supplied to all parts of the yards. The abattoir and cold storage cover about 370 feet in length by 60 in width and about 50 in height. From the yards, shoots lead to narrow gangways, up which the animals are driven to the slaughtering room. At the end of the gangway, which is just wide enough for the passage of an animal, doorways drop down, holding the steer against a sliding door on an inclined floor. Here the poleax is applied, and as the animal drops, the door raises up and he rolls down the inclined floor into the killing room, where, by a chain round one hind leg, he is wind-lashed up and bled, then lowered and dressed, and elevated by the hooks as the process proceeds. The floors are constantly flushed with water and drained to the sewers. The carcass, on being halved, is swung onto the iron tracks which are hung from overhead timbers; along these the beef is rolled to the scales, weighed, and passed into the first chill room, and afterwards into the big chill room, which is 140 by 40 feet. This room has capacity for hanging 1,500 beef carcasses, 500 sheep and 500 hogs. The walls are two feet thick and contain several air spaces; the temperature is kept well down to about 34 degrees by ice refrigeration, and the atmosphere dry and well ventilated by a system known as the cold wave refrigerator system. After the beef has hung 24 hours, or until thoroughly chilled, it is ready for shipment, and is again rolled along the overhead tracks on which it entered and on which it hangs all the time, is switched off and rolled right to the door of the refrigerator, car on the side track in front of the abattoir; it never having been lifted or handled since it was first swung on the hooks. At present there is ample capacity for killing 400 head of cattle, 500 sheep and 500 hogs per day, and it could easily be increased to 1,000 head of cattle per day. Throughout the equipment is most complete and up-to-date, and too much credit cannot be accorded to the firm for their energy and enterprise. It is not only Winnipeg that will benefit from the establishment of this enterprise, but the live stock interests throughout the Province and Territories right to the foothills of the Rockies. For, as is well known, much of the stock sent forward to market is not fit to stand the long rail journey to Montreal without severe shrinkage, greatly reducing its value. Such animals can now be slaughtered in Winnipeg, the beef chilled and shipped to Montreal or other eastern cities, thus saving shrinkage, saving feed and care in transit, and saving in freight charges, which should enable higher prices being paid for the stock in the first instance. It is interesting to note that this enterprise, involving the expenditure of nearly \$100,000, including refrigerator plants at Rat Portage and Fort William, has been undertaken by this firm without bonus of any kind from either city or government. The institution was auspiciously opened on Sept. 1st by a sumptuous banquet spread in the main abattoir, at which some 200 invited guests partook of the firm's hospitality. Speeches were made by prominent citizens, politicians, business men, and others, and after several hours being pleasantly spent in this way, three range steers were sent up the gang-planks and dispatched to illustrate how expeditiously the thing could be done by experts with modern appliances. Mr. Crisner, a professional who has won many medals in Chicago, St. Paul, Kansas City, New Brighton, and other places, for his dexterity with the knife and cleaver, dressed the first steer after he had been poleaxed by Mr. H. A. Mullins, the well-known cattle exporter. The first steer was a Galloway grade, three years old, shipped in from Moosomin by Colon McLean, and a right good three-year-old he was, dressing 378 pounds of choice beef. Mr. Crisner then gave the audience an exhibition of fast work, dressing a Shorthorn grade three-year-old heifer in seven minutes—pretty fast work when it is considered that all the tools and appliances were brand-new. All the speakers were loud in praise of the enterprise of the firm of Messrs. Gordon, Ironsides and Fares in establishing one of the best equipped abattoirs in America, referring to the substantial benefits that would accrue to the City of Winnipeg, to the ever-increasing cattle interests of Western Canada, and to the proprietors.

STOCK.

The Toronto Industrial Exhibition.

As an exhibition, the Toronto show is thoroughly representative of and by common consent takes first place among the many large exhibitions regularly held on this continent. The success of the fair, held from August 29th to September 10th, in nearly every respect outdid its predecessors, and is tribute to the genius and executive ability of Manager Hill, and the co-operation of a progressive board of directors. Carping critics to the contrary, it is still a great agricultural show, as even a cursory outlook, taking in the vast exhibits of live stock, agricultural, dairy and apiary products, and farm machinery, amply demonstrates. In the last issue of the FARMER'S ADVOCATE, one of the foremost breeders of Canada, by comparison with the English Royal, faulted the leading shows of Ontario on account of the tendency towards "special attractions," which are presumed to be a great money-making card; and if these are developed at the expense of the prize list for substantial exhibits, then a mistake is being made. Canadian shows, however, have not behind them the wealth and prestige that backs the English Royal, and if there were no entertainment, say at the Toronto Industrial, it were hardly typical of this continent, for both Canadians and Americans like some entertainment—they have been educated to it—and our fair managers evidently believe that these features are essential to financial success. If this be so, then let them be of a high order always and kept in their proper place. We cannot say on the grounds of the Toronto Industrial that they are obtruded upon visitors who may not relish them. Taken all around we believe the live stock exhibits of '98 were fully equal numerically to those of '97, and in quality surpassed them, but the arena for horse judging—we do not mean the speeding ring—needs some seating accommodation for those who visit to study the showing and the placing of awards. Again, a seating arena where the cattle judging takes place is an absolute necessity. Hour after hour, judges, attendants, and reviewers tramped on the hot sand under the blazing sun without even a bench to sit upon during the intervals. The spectator who wished to gain information from this most important feature of the show could only hang upon the pickets, or the railing, and, for the most part, guess at what was being done, for the official cataloguing was a bungle, to which elsewhere we have referred. To some directors these things may not seem serious, but they are, and to the Toronto board we say they ought not so to be. Gentlemen, you make every provision for the comfort of those who would be entertained, you must provide better for those who would learn. At this particular point the fair is behind the times. In the next place, considering the magnitude of our dairy interests, more adequate accommodation must be provided for exhibits of butter and cheese, and for displaying dairy apparatus and the giving of actual demonstrations in their use, and for buttermaking demonstrations, or competitions, such as we find at the English shows. This is another neglected educational feature. When we consider that our dairy exports in value amount to more than double any other single item, except lumber, surely we may reasonably ask for better facilities for the dairy exhibits. What is wanted is a new, more conspicuous, and up-to-date dairy building, with provision for regulating the temperature. The agricultural implement display was magnificent—a credit to our manufacturers, and demonstrating the value of a liberal policy on the part of the Fair Association. A conspicuous feature of this show was the presence of thousands of American visitors, and exhibits of implements, etc., from half a dozen different States, including (in the dairy building) dairy apparatus from one of the largest establishments in the Union.

The new exhibits from France and England indicate that the Toronto show is a magnet attracting the attention of foreign traders, a feature likely to grow and which the management would do well to encourage. The excellence of the grain, agricultural products such as roots, etc., honey and fruit shown was most gratifying. In the department for carriages and other vehicles the display was superb, and we do not wonder at the admiration which we heard expressed by Americans as to the excellence of quality and wonder at the reasonable prices quoted. The increasing extent to which iron is being utilized as the farm wood