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WHAT OUR LIVE STOCK INTERESTS NEED

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The farmer obtains a price for his live stock products which in the end barely yields him a comfortable living. He suffers in competition with his stronger rivals. A remedy suggested.

THERE is one phase of our Live Stock interests which may be studied more particularly from the point of view of production on the farm. It concerns itself chiefly with individual methods of feeding, of breeding and of management. Much has been written and

the sellers and retailers of live stock products and with the manufacturers of agricultural necessities, particularly of implements. At the outset, let me say that we have no quarrel with our competitors, since what they have accomplished has simply been the outcome of the fortunes of war, trade war, and it may be added that the enterprise of some of these has been of very great advantage to our agricultural progress.

WHICH PAYS THE LARGER DIVIDEND?

I wish to call attention, however, to differences that may be noted generally as the results of this competition. We are told that farmers are now receiving exceptionally good prices for their products but let us consider a moment. Milk shippers to Montreal are receiving at the rate of 20 cents a gallon for their milk delivered in the City. Deducting freight at the average rate, say of two cents a gallon, the shipper receives then a net price of 18 cents on the farm. The retailer in Montreal obtains just twice this price, viz., 36 cents a gallon. Estimating in our minds the capital involved in milk plants in Montreal together with necessary labor, etc., in a comparison with the capital invested in dairy herds, farms, stables and this again with cost of labor including reasonable wage for the owner, I would suggest the question—which capital pays the larger dividends?

Another illustration: There are large produce firms, buyers of butter and cheese, operating in Ontario and Quebec and correspondingly large firms in Glasgow, Liverpool, London and other ports in Great Britain handling millions of pounds of import goods. It is a rare thing that produce firms fail; it is a rare thing indeed that they do not build up big fortunes in the business, and yet the farmer, the real producer, does little more

than make ends meet. Again I ask the question—which capital pays the greater dividend?

BUTCHERING BUSINESS MOST PROFITABLE

Another illustration: There are large packing houses and wholesale and retail butcher firms in Toronto and Montreal. There are larger ones in Chicago, Kansas City, Buffalo and New York. The butcher business in all its branches is one of the most profitable industrial enterprises in the commercial world. Witness the immense fortunes and the number of them which have been built up in very recent years in the trade. Here in our own little village of Ste. Anne, with a population of about 1,500, we have four flourishing butcher shops, all doing well. And yet the farmer is able only to obtain a price for his live stock products which in the end barely yields him a comfortable living. It is true that his business is conducted upon by no means so large a scale, nor upon perhaps such careful lines but nevertheless the fact remains that, unless there be a change of policy, his business must suffer in competition with his stronger rivals.

WHERE WE STAND

The point I wish to make is this—that the farmer is able to determine neither the price at which he will buy nor the price at which he will sell, since prices are determined for him on the one hand by the manufacturer and on the other by the produce merchant. It may be argued, of course, that prices are regulated by supply and demand but the operation of organized business interests in their influence upon markets is now very well known and the general import of my statement remains in substance true. It is further true that, consciously or unconsciously, it is the policy of these interests to allow the farmer just so much of return as will enable him to live and produce a sufficiently good article in sufficient quantity while the cream of the proceeds they gather to themselves. This is an economic principle holding in other branches of industry as well. It is a fact that the aggregate demand of the agricultural communities in a general sense



Prof. H. S. Arkell

ducer, that the ordinary methods of horse breeding could be improved, that steer-feeding is a paying proposition under certain circumstances and that under others it is not. Information has been and always will be available concerning this whole matter and it would appear to me idle to attempt to discuss the question before us from the point of view of the individual farm.

There is another side to the question, however, which has to do with the problem of production in its relation to organized industrial interests with which it is in competition. It is not too frequently considered that the nature of this competition and of this relationship is a feature of more than ordinary importance in determining the status of our live stock trade. The competition of immediate interest is with



An Ayrshire Class of Senior Yearling Bulls in the Order of Placing at the Alaska-Yukon-Pacific Exposition, Seattle, Wash.

"Netherhall Douglas Swell," owned by Mr. R. R. Nees, heads the class with 1st place, and was also winner of the Junior and of the Grand Championship. Robert Hunter & Sons' "Bargenoch Victor Hugo," stands a close second and Reserve Junior Champion. This placing was reversed by Judge Dallantyne at the New Westminster, B. C., exhibition the following week. "Willersmoor Farm" stock stands 3rd, 4th and 6th, Barclay Farm's bull being 5th.