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FARM AND DAIRY

Letters to the Editor

Is There a Profit in Sheep ?

- DITOR, Farm and Dairy .--- What is the true situation in regard to the true situation and sheep raising? Can they besheep raising? Can they be-raised profitably, or can't they? We farmers are being asked by the On-tario Department of Agriculture to raise more sheep. We read from time to time articles painting glowing pic-tures of the profits which can be made from sheep, but when we come to look at the results secured by our experi-mental stations, where presumably accurate records are kept, we are as much at sea as ever for the results are not consistent.

Maine Loses Money.

In Bulletin 260, the Maine Agricultural Experiment Station gives the results of an experiment carried out with a flock of 100 sheep in connec-tion with which accounts were kept. In tion with which accounts were kept. In 1915 the flock showed a loss of \$375, after being given full credit for every. thing they produced, including man-ure to the value of \$36. In 1916th the loss was a triffe over \$200, when the manure was not counted. But by the aid of a manure pit they were able to preserve this manure so well that its value cancelled the loss.

But here's the point-no profit worth speaking of in either year, and yet the station admits that in these experimertis the sheep were not charged with the cost of fencing the pastures, eracting shelters in the pastures, fitting up the barns for winter quarters, expenses for piping water, water troughs, sheep dipping tanks, shearing machines, gas engines, root cut-ters, rent of land for pastures and crops for the sheep, interest on in-vestment or other overhead expenses. If a profit cannot be shown on sheep in Maine, after giving them such a start, how will the ordinary farmer make a profit, who has to pay out hard cash for these things "not counted."

Fifteen Hundred Dollars Profit.

But perhaps Maine has a grouch. They are only "down-Easters" after all. Let us look at what has been done with sheep on our own Dominion Experimental s'arm at Lacombe, Alta. From a flock of 100 ewes, purchased a year ago, our Experimental Farm has figured out a profit of \$1,587, on a total investment of \$1,227, or a profit of 130 per cent. By comparison, Fla-velle's 80 per cent, profit looks sick. Here is the way the statistician has figured out the year's returns:

\$ 517.74 40.00 40.00 918.00

\$2,855.76 \$2,855.76

I had read statements of profits secured in experiments carried out by our Dominion officials before. I, there-fore, restrained myself from at once rushing out and purchasing all the sheep in sight, until I had looked a little deeper into the statement. This is what I found.

No labor was charged against the No indor was charged against the flock. The reason for this, I presume, is that the officials on the farm have their salaries paid anyway, and they might as well be looking after the sheep as loafing.

No charge was made for pasturage No charge was made for pasturage. Twentydre acres were utilized for this purpose, but presumably no taxes are charged against government farms. The land is, therefore, worth, noth-ing (?). What a pity the ordinary farmer is unable to pasture his sheep so cheaply. It might be easier for him

to make a profit had his land cost him nothing

Did They Eat Only Grain?

The entire flock of sheep was win-tered on \$75 worth of grain. This is The entire booth of grain. This is fired on thing charged against the here. It is smally considered that here. It is smally considered that here. It is smally considered that work, \$617 was received for the clip of wool, while the keep of the sheep cost but \$75. Were they fed no hay? Oh, yes, a few odds and ends, but nothing swork boouting. And then if the sheep badd't got it, something clip might. Roots? Well, yes, the sheep vero fed allocd turnips daily for most of the winter, but these turnips were of the winter, but these turnips were grown on the farm, and, therefore, cost nothing.

cost mothing. The sheep market advanced during the year. If advanced so much that the 92 ewes left after the dogs and doyotes had taken their toll, were worth \$200 more than the original 106 ewes, although they were older and would ordinarily have depreciated. This \$300 surely should not be counted in as profit in sheep raising. It is, purely speculative. Next year the market might drop their value \$400. But such reckoning characterized the optimistic mathematicians who "work out" profits in the experiments carried on by the Dominion Experimental Farms

The two reports I have cited are probably the extremes. One is char-acterized by the pessimism of the East and the other by the optimism of the West. What we need to back up the West, What we need to back up the Government's appeal for more sheep are actual facts, showing whether or not abeap will make a profit after they have been charged with jabor, feed and overhead expenses. If sheep will pay a profit we want to know. If they will not, why dazzle our eyes with they will not, why dazzle our eyes with reports of 130 per cent. profits. It is time Ananias resigned as Government statistician. His reports are certainly interesting, but they partake too much of the character of fiction. We would like a few facts for a change.-"Ox-ford."

A Letter of Thanks

E birtoR, Farm and Dairy,-I am glad to thank you for placing pic-tures and notices of "Homes Wanted" by wards of our Society, in your paper, as requested directly by us and through Mr. Kelso.

The circulation of your paper seems to be wide spread as we have had applications from several Provinces besides our own. Moreover, the results have been most satisfactory as the last placeable child has been sent to an approved foster home.

Furthermore, we had better results from your kindness than from our advertisements in the various local papers of our district.

Again thanking you for your kind-ness, I am, Yours sincerely, C. A. Win-ters, Agent, Brockville, Children's Aid Shelter

Need Guarantee of Stability

PEAKENG at the Guelph Winter S Fair, recently, Prof. G. E. Day, stated that an average high price for hogs is no satisfaction to the man who, when his hogs are ready, and when they must be sold, finds the price low. In the United States the Government has guarded against this by arranging to buy mest when the packers' cellars are full, and when hog prices usually go down. That will tend to prevent extremely high prices at one time and unduly low prices at another

prices at another. "Here farmers have no guarantee of stability," said Prof. Day, "but still they are responding to the demand for increased production in hogs. They are doing this on patriotic grounds alone, and helieve they are the only class who would do that."