

and a glance at these figures shows that as far as converting animal food into human food they have no equals, the pig following the cow and thriving on the skim milk. Of course the price at which the finished products sell has an important influence upon the producer, and the suitability of different feeds and conditions makes it profitable to produce all classes of stock.

### Farmers, Keep More Sheep.

Editor "The Farmer's Advocate":

Travelling up and down our country this summer, I heartily deplored to comprehend that so little attention is given to sheep farming, which is one of the most profitable branches of a farmer's business. No capital employed on the farm brings better returns than that invested in sheep. Some farmers, with whom I have held converse and advised to run a flock of sheep, said it would be utterly futile to try the experiment, because our winter is too long and too severe. This statement affords me positive proof that they are not conversant with the true nature and habits of sheep. Sheep are generally more healthy, and ewes will produce more healthy lambs in the spring following a very severe winter than a mild one. Sheep suffer very little from cold and snow. Much land in Canada is doing comparatively nothing—land that should and could be growing and fattening lambs and sheep, producing meat and wool for the market. Sheep-breeding is an industry which the Government is doing well to promote and encourage, simply because it is an imperative and urgent necessity.

Why import what the country is able to and should produce? Many small farmers, I gather, employ every dollar at their command in purchasing cows to bring them, they say, a quick return in shape of monies received for their produce of cream and butter. I strenuously endeavored to prevail upon them to dispose of some cows at the proper season and invest the proceeds in sheep, for I do know it will be to their benefit. I am surprised to learn that many farmers have not the faintest idea what it costs to keep a cow in an ordinary way the year through, yet boast of the quick return in dollars for milk. Thousands of acres in Nova Scotia and Ontario that have been cleared of bush, apparently cultivated for a time, and now growing wild, could be utilized remuneratively in the production of lamb and mutton for our markets, and thereby be a boon to the people and a benefit to the nation.

Few people are more conversant with the habits, nature and productive value of sheep than the writer, having had a lifelong experience. There is a breed of sheep called the Welsh Mountain Sheep, which may be bought for a very small price at the October and November Fairs held in North Wales. These animals live and thrive where a hare or rabbit can subsist. If given hay or clover only when snow is covering the herbage, they will do well. They are good mothers, very prolific, and their lambs develop and fatten quickly. If mated with an Oxford ram their lambs will grow to a good size. A friend of mine bred and produced one of the best all-round flocks of sheep I ever saw, from fifteen hundred Welsh ewes which he mated and their descendants with Oxford ram lambs. He had in them size, wool, and splendid quality of meat, also exceedingly robust animals.

How many Canadian farmers could soon become owners of a nice flock of sheep, if only the facility of procuring a few Welsh ewes came their way? The expenditure in purchasing twenty ewes, and a ram lamb would be very, very meagre indeed, and would enable the farmer to make a lucrative return off land which is now of practically no value to him. Surely something can be done to help our farmers to become sheep-owners, and flock-masters. Why not the Government import a few thousand of the sheep alluded to? Or, failing this, could not a combine of farmers prevail upon one of their number to go to Wales and fetch a shipload. Another good hardy sheep is the Clun, larger breed than the above, mentioned, and more costly to purchase.

York Co., Ont.

JAMES R. DOVER.

Note.—We are heartily in accord with the sentiment of this article in so far as it sets forth the advantages to be had by the average Canadian farmer in keeping sheep. Our government is at the present time making extensive efforts and, we believe, with good results to stimulate sheep husbandry in Canada. The question of bringing in Welsh mountain sheep is one upon which there would be considerable diversity of opinion, as we have in Canada at the present time a large number of distinct breeds, each recognized as being of especial merit. We really see no immediate need for new breeds. Pure-breds, or good grades of our established breeds, are good money makers, and all that is needed is more of them in the country.—Editor.

### Changes Are Often Unprofitable.

Last autumn with its very slim outlook for winter feed for stock caused many a farmer and stock-breeder to dispose of at least a part of his usual supply of breeding sows, and partially if not completely drop pork production for the time being. Feed was scarce and feed prices exceedingly high and no doubt those who sold their sows felt justified in doing so. At that time far-seeing breeders and feeders prophesied high prices this summer and fall, and have their forecastings not been proven correct? Live hogs at nearly \$9 per hundredweight and dressed at \$12.50 per hundredweight (prices obtaining recently on Toronto market), are surely prices to satisfy the most exacting feeder. It is the old influence, "supply and demand," which to a large extent causes upward and downward tendencies in our markets. When a commodity is over-plentiful to make sales, for sales must be made, the seller is forced to drop his price; when the market is strong, due to a keen demand and short supply, up goes the price accordingly. It always has been so and it always will be so.

But do our producers always make higher net returns when prices are unusually high? Taking it all around one year with another, and the farming community as a whole considered a good fair price is more profitable to the country's agriculturist than an exceedingly high one, for when prices are very high few producers have the goods to market. Here is a lesson for every stockman in the country. Just so sure as breeding stock of any class of animals is sold off promiscuously, just so sure is that class of stock to be in demand upon the market in a short time. Canada has a rapidly growing population, and of the increase by far the greater proportion is crowding into our large centers. The demand for food is incessant and steady. We are not supplying meat

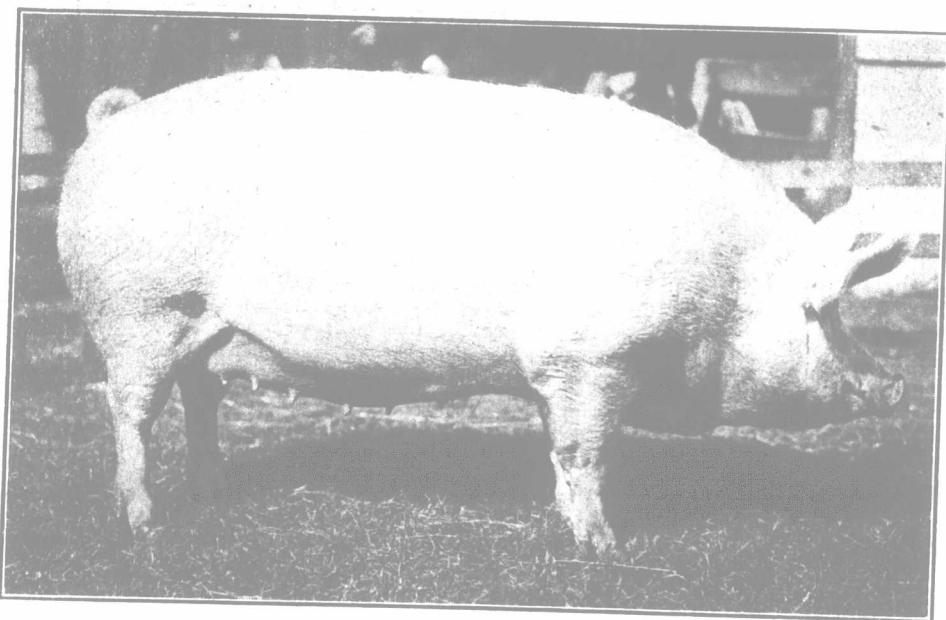
ing but would feed beef steers now if they had them? Very few indeed. It takes a very short time to make great changes, and the "sticker" is the "winner" in the end.

### What Kind of Stock Can I Afford?

At the Dominion Exhibition held in Ottawa a few weeks ago, a farmer, in looking over the stock-judging ring, at that time filled with different classes of cattle of three different dairy breeds, Ayrshires, Holsteins and Guernseys, was heard to remark, "What fine cattle, but the farmer of small or average means could never afford to keep such good stock." True, the cattle were excellent individuals of their particular breeds, but they were not better than it is possible for many other breeders to produce, and they were no better representatives of their particular breeds than are many representatives of other breeds good individuals in their class. The statement as quoted causes one to stop and think: Is it correct? In going through the country we find that the man who keeps the best live stock is usually financially "well fixed," as the saying goes, and we are inclined sometimes to think that because he has plenty of this world's goods, he is able to keep high-class cattle, horses, sheep or swine, as the case may be. Now, is this way of looking at it not putting the cart before the horse? Is it not a fact that it is the good stock which has put the man in the coveted position he now holds rather than his money making him able to keep good stock? Few, indeed, are the practical farmers who keep stock wholly for pleasure. They take a great deal of satisfaction out of the feeding and caring for their best animals, but they are in the game for the money there is in it as well, and if it were not profitable they would desert it immediately. We fully appreciate the position

of the man with very little capital. True, the risk is greater in purchasing pure-bred stock, and often the purchaser does not feel justified in laying out the money, but good grades are by no means scrubs, and starting with them on a small scale is always advisable.

To take an exactly contrary view to that held by the man which we quoted in the beginning, the farmer of small or average means cannot afford to plod along with poor stock, and cannot afford to be without some of the good ones of the breed or breeds which he chooses to keep. It requires little or no more



Yorkshire Sow.

Champion of the breed at Toronto and London. Owned by D. C. Platt & Son, Hamilton, Ont.

fast enough to cope with the increasing demand, so prices are bound to be good. True, slumps occur and will continue to do so, but they are not of long duration. A rise in price is just as surely to follow each slump as day follows night, and it is the man who sticks to his particular line of stock-breeding who wins out in the end. While it may seem costly at the time, it is often much more advisable to hold on to the breeding stock through short periods of adverse conditions, even at a slight loss, than it is to dispose of them entirely to be replaced at a much higher price when conditions improve. The best success one year with another, comes from steady progress unaffected by temporary conditions which cause market fluctuations. Any branch of the live-stock industry is absolutely safe in this country. By a branch is meant dairying, beef-raising, pork production and the sheep trade. There is no use whiffing from one to the other at every period of low prices, for sooner or later the new undertaking must take a temporary slump. People have quit breeding and feeding beef cattle, and as a result the demand has increased until famine prices have been paid in American cities, and would-be breeders can scarcely get stockers and feeders of the right kind at any price. There is a lesson in all this which our stockmen cannot afford to overlook. It pays to stick to anything which is unquestionably a solid proposition, and there is nothing in agriculture more stable and more surely profitable than live-stock kept continuously, not intermittently, during the ups and downs of supply and demand. How many of those who sold their breeding sows last fall but would like to have them back now? How many of those who have given up beef-raising

feed to keep a good horse, a good cow, a good sheep, or a good pig one year than it does a poor individual of these respective classes of farm stock. A man can ill-afford to maintain a mare on his place and breed her to a horse the progeny of which is only worth fifty or sixty dollars at three years of age, when he can just as easily keep a mare and use a sire, progeny from which is worth \$200 or \$250 in the same length of time. What profit is there in keeping a cow which gives annually from 2,000 to 4,000 pounds of milk, when 8,000 to 12,000 is within the easy reach of the person with a really good cow? Who should keep the scrub sheep which yields three to five pounds of wool and one lamb worth about three dollars the following autumn, when a good ewe shears seven to ten pounds of wool and raises one to two lambs worth from five to seven dollars each at weaning time? With pork at present prices, or even at any price, what comparison is there between the sow which raises a litter of eight or ten healthy, thrifty pigs which under proper care would be turned off at six months of age weighing 200 pounds each, and the scrub sow raising four or five scrawny runts which a year's feeding will not turn into good market hogs? These are no overdrawn facts. Good grades of the best breeds will make these returns. Better results than any here noted are often obtained, and worse conditions than the bad ones depicted occur all too frequently. No, the rich farmer, the farmer of average means and the poor farmer cannot afford to do without good stock; neither can they afford to keep scrub stock. Good live stock is not kept by farmers as a means of spending money, but rather to increase their returns from the soil, and