

EDITORIAL.

The members of the Agricultural Conference, in their meeting in New Zealand a short time ago, expressed themselves as being favorable to the use of Shropshire sheep and Devon cattle for the frozen meat trade. In the South Island it is said that Merino ewes must continue to be the basis of the flock. These, crossed with the Leicester and their progeny with the Shropshire, will give a superior class of shipping sheep.

The vigorous efforts of the English Board of Agriculture to stamp out swine fever have not, so far, been attended with any apparent success. The number of outbreaks in some districts in which the disease was, when the present system was first adopted, very prevalent has been reduced, but, on the other hand, many cases are now occurring in localities which were supposed to be free from the disease, and on the whole the result of the action of the authorities cannot be regarded as encouraging.

New York State has passed a law to the effect that no barb wire shall be used in the construction of any division fence, constructed or built after September 1st, 1894, unless the person, association or corporation desiring to use such material shall first obtain the written consent of the owner of the property adjoining that it may be used. The law also provides that should injury to a neighbor's stock be caused by such a fence, the owner of the fence shall be liable to the owner of the injured stock for treble damages for all injuries occasioned.

The British Board of Agriculture has passed final judgment, in reference to Canadian cattle, to the effect that the embargo must stand, as indicated in the *ADVOCATE* of August 1st. As has been frequently pointed out, only the best of finished beeves need now go forward. Feeders and others must plan accordingly. At various times in the past year or so attention has been drawn in our columns to the possibilities for Canada of the dressed meat trade with England, and the recent decision will, doubtless, stimulate action in that direction.

Harvest should not be considered finished until the fence corners, stone piles, and all out-of-the-way places are cleared of weeds. This time of year is especially suitable for exterminating that abominable weed, the burdock, as the seeds will not be ripe enough to shake out when cut and carried to a brush heap to be burned. Three years of care in destroying all the mature plants before the seed has fallen, will pretty thoroughly clean the farm of burdocks. Docks are on the increase in this Province, but if subjected to the treatment given for burdocks, they too will disappear.

Since the publication of the last number of the *FARMER'S ADVOCATE*, reports have come from many quarters, fully confirming our forecast of the apple crop and market prospects. The *Montreal Star* now says: "There is every likelihood of a boom in the Canadian apple export trade this year. Crops in the Old Country are not first-class, and in consequence a number of buyers have already arrived out and are now going through the apple districts, making extensive purchases. Shipments will commence in about three weeks. Considerable steamship space has already been engaged."

The lists, extending over many columns of the daily newspapers, of successful candidates at the recent Ontario examinations for teachers, indicate what a continuous rush there is for professional life. It is hard to say to what extent the "professions," as they are called, would degenerate were it not for the constant infusions of country blood. That the "professions" are becoming greatly overcrowded is no secret. Teachers, book-keepers and clerks of all kinds are finding it more and more difficult to obtain employment even at "living" wages. A local paper in one of our Western Ontario towns mentions the fact that a university graduate applied to that paper the other day for the position of junior reporter. When a man whose training represents the cost of a good, small-sized farm, is begging for a situation carrying with it a salary of \$7 or \$8 per week, and our land is not supporting one-half or one-quarter the persons of which it is capable, it is very clear that we have got into a condition detrimental to the highest interests of the State.

Our Illustration.

We are from time to time giving our readers portraits, with a short history, of valuable breeds of cattle not generally known on this continent. Our frontispiece is a continuation of this series, and represents a group of Dutch-Belted cattle, the property of H. B. Richards, "Avona Farm," Easton, Pennsylvania. The animals in this group are Mikado, No. 22; Huldah, No. 141; Fanny Fern, No. 129; Grateful, No. 123, and Keator, No. 132.

The Dutch-Belted cattle are natives of Holland, and are quite distinct from the Holstein-Friesians of that country. Their breeding dates back to before the 17th century, when the cattle interests in Holland were in the most thrifty condition. This type and color were established by scientific breeding—decidedly among the highest attainments ever reached in that direction. These cattle are solely controlled by the nobility of Holland, and they are to the present time keeping them pure, but are not inclined to sell or part with them. Their form is usually very fine and they are wonderfully productive as milkers.

In color they are black, with a continuous white belt around their body, the white being pure white and the black, jet, making a beautiful and striking contrast. They are at once unique, novel and attractive. This belt is always reproduced, and is so perfectly fixed that it will crop out in their grades for many generations. The prepotency of this feature is the most striking when we consider that we can, by crossing with other blood, produce brown-belted, red-belted, gray-belted, or any foundation color, and still retaining the belt. It proves them to be one of the most prepotent breeds in existence.

Their form is a strongly characterized type of the bodily conformation known as the milk shape. Thin necks, small horns, wide breast and hips, switch long and thin, udder square and well placed, eyes prominent and calm, skin thin, soft and mellow, with silky hair. In size, the mature cows range from eight to twelve hundred, bulls reaching sixteen to twenty hundred.

For beef purposes, cows are said to fatten readily when past the milking age; and a very strong constitution is claimed for them.

They are particularly noted for docility and intelligence, displaying a wonderful knowingness of their surroundings, yielding very readily to kind treatment, but are ungrateful to harsh or rough usage. The bulls, of whatever age, rarely become ill-tempered.

The Dutch-Belted cows are large and superior milkers. Mr. Richards' herd is kept strictly in a business way; the milk of the whole herd is wholesaled to a retail dealer, who has built up an extensive trade in the City of Easton, upon the merits of the milk. No continued milk records are kept, but for the past two seasons the average animal individual record has been slightly over 10,000 pounds. This includes cows and two and three-year-old heifers.

It is proper to assume here that the Dutch-Belted cow fills the requirements of the ideal dairy cow—the cow that will give a maximum amount of yield for amount consumed, the cow whose symmetry, constitution, powers of digestion and secretion, backed by high development of reproduction, fits her for pre-eminence in the dairy.

Mr. Richards is Secretary of the Dutch-Belted Cattle Association of America.

As an indication of the increasing attention paid to poultry in England, Mr. Edward Brown, who has been an agricultural writer under the *nom de plume* of "Stephen Beale," has been appointed Professor of Poultry-Keeping at the University Extension College, Reading.

The *Empire*, of Toronto, in discussing the special features of the new United States tariff, concludes that "the tendency will, undoubtedly, be toward stimulating commerce and a larger sale of Canadian products to the States, etc.," inasmuch as the duties have been lowered on many articles exported from the Dominion. This is the natural consequence of removing restrictions from trade, and a much cheaper way of helping the farmer than taxing him in support of a lot of such alarming proceedings as the vote of an annual subsidy, or bonus, of \$750,000 for a long term of years to the owners of fast Atlantic steamships. As the *Empire* remarks, Canada is entitled to decent treatment from the States, seeing that during the past five years Canada has bought some \$267,000,000 worth of goods "across the lines," and Canada has exported there considerably less, viz., \$208,000,000.

Judges and Judging.

Much of the success of an agricultural show depends upon the procuring of thoroughly competent men to act as judges. There are many men who consider themselves such in the different classes of stock which they favor; but in reality the number of really competent judges is quite meagre. There are plenty of men, if given a class of animals to judge in their own barn-yards, with lots of time to devote to inspection, and with few onlookers, who could place the awards so nearly right that there would be very little room for complaint on the part of exhibitors; but when brought before a long class of worthy animals, surrounded by hundreds of intelligent onlookers and keen partisans, would become so bewildered and nervous that such a thing as giving correct awards is more a matter of chance than cool, honest decision. It is comparatively easy to award positions to animals of outstanding merit, but when animals are of nearly equal merit, and yet each possessing different excellencies, it requires greater thought and judgment to arrive at a just decision. When we come down to the final analysis of this question, we find that, as between pretty evenly matched animals, the judging faculty embraces a judicial nicety of discrimination as to which (all points considered) possesses the excellency that must turn the scale in its favor, or the weak point that will cost it the victory. We repeat that experienced men of sufficiently broad minds, level heads and technical knowledge to be quite trustworthy under such a crucial test, are not plentiful.

We realize, to some extent, what it means to be called upon to assume the duties of deciding as to the relative qualities of the individuals in one of the large shows. This is why we draw attention to this subject, and bespeak a little more kindly and patient treatment, on the part of exhibitors and their friends, for the gentlemen who consent to act on such occasions. While all agree that exhibitors are very anxious men before decision is given, we venture to assert that the judges are equally, if not more anxious than any of them, and if occasionally they do seem to err a little in their awards, it is well to think as charitably as possible, and attribute the decision to their taste rather than a willful perversion and abuse of power. It is well to bear in mind that the standard of excellence for any class of animals is not yet fixed, nor, perhaps, will it ever be permanently, because we find different countries and different localities of the same countries differing widely in their types of the same breed. Bearing in mind the great care our Live Stock Associations exercise in recommending the most competent men from which judges are to be chosen, and, again, the selections from these by Fair Associations, it is but rarely that an incompetent gentleman is called to act, and more rarely still do such give a palpably dishonest decision from sinister motives. Honest, candid criticism is quite in order, and even desirable, but it is not uncommon to hear very bitter remarks and uncharitable charges made against judges at the close of a contest.

In addition to the havoc wrought by the swine plague in England of late, we notice that in one week, in the latter part of July, 283 fresh outbreaks were reported in Ireland, cases occurring in 30 counties. Some 123 died and 694 were slaughtered by the authorities. In the Western States it is reported that, owing to the wheat and corn failures, hogs are likely to starve by the thousand. Many have been rushed on to the market, but a host of them are not fit to sell. All this augurs well for the swine industry in Canada. Breeders and feeders are alike pleased with the past season's operations. The outlook is still good.

At the annual meeting of the Central Council of the British National Agricultural Union, a resolution was passed in favor of the formation of an agricultural party in the House of Commons, the members to be drawn from both political parties, but pledged to vote independently on agricultural questions. It was stated that 156 candidates for the next Parliament had accepted the programme of the Union, while 56 others partially supported it. The idea of an agricultural party in England is not a new one. The Farmers' Alliance tried to form one, and had a large number of supporters in the House of Commons; but when the strain of party allegiance came to be tested, the number of men strong enough to assert their independence was found to be small. It was stated at the meeting that the Union had 325 branches in full working order.