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EDITORIAL.

Canadian Stores and the British Feeder.

The well-known appetite of the Britisher for good beef and mutton causes a steady demand and remunerative prices for the product of the skill of the feeder. The question of obtaining raw material is one that is specially agitating the denizens of North Britain, noted as it is for "neeps," oats and good straw. The Scotch feeder is at the present time said to be paying through the nose for his stockers, mainly Irish cattle, and many North Countrymen are very anxious that the embargo on Canadian cattle be removed. The more zealous have interviewed the Minister of Agriculture, Mr. Hanbury, with but little effect, which is not altogether to be wondered at by the rash statements made, in which direction even the Minister transgressed. The agitation has, however, little interest for Canadians beyond getting an acknowledgment from Mr. Hanbury of the freedom from disease of Canadian stock, which was made by that gentleman, who, however, went out of his way to include the U. S. in the clean bill of health, which shows he is ignorant regarding such things as Texas fever or hog cholera. The new direction taken by the Canadian stockman in the way of finishing his stock for the block, instead of leaving the cream of the profit to be made by his Scotch confrere, is due in measure to the embargo, which was not, therefore, an unmixed evil. One can readily see that there is fair profit in buying Canadian stockers in October for £15 (\$75) apiece and turning them off fat the following February at £23 12s. 6d. (\$116.50) apiece, the main diet being neeps, straw and a little cake. If the Canadian has any fault to find in the production of beef, mutton and pork, it will be in the comparative lack of competition for his finished product, and in that respect he envies the American feeder his markets at Chicago, Kansas City, and Omaha. The tenor of the bluebook is that unless the Scotch feeder gets Canadian stores he will become bankrupt. The live-stock business in the "tight little isle" has, however, a profit-sharer, or profit-taker, in the auctioneer, who sells the farmer his feeders and sells them for him again when finished, thus getting a profit at both ends; in fact, cases are known where the auctioneer finances the business and the farmer does the work, with the inevitable result! The bluebook, as a whole, is an excellent collection of arguments why Canadian stockmen should feed and finish their own store cattle, and is rendered somewhat amusing when it says, "Men of skill and judgment bought Irish stores among which fifty per cent. were pitters!" "If this restrictive policy is to be carried out, the Canadians should be prevented coming over here and taking away our best cattle," which, while probably meant for irony, suggests, possibly unconsciously, a remedy for the rapid depletion of the Scotch herds, which is only a short remove from degeneration! Occasionally a prospective Canadian buyer is heard to say, "The herds have been picked over!"

Mr. Hanbury's reply was unmistakable, and from it the only inference is that the North Countrymen will sigh for Canadian store cattle in vain. Mr. Hanbury uttered a truism when he said that "Canada was finding out that it paid them a great deal better to feed their cattle and send them over as fat stock," and quoting Mr.

Crombie, said "the cattle were being fed in Canada, and the profits of the feeder going there and to other countries." It had been stated that a large number of Canadian store cattle were fed annually in the U. S. One of the gratifying things was the unanimous opinion that the Canadian cattle were the healthiest and soundest cattle that have passed through the Scotch feeder's hands. The moral for our Canadian stockmen is therefore: "Use only the best bulls, with heavy fleshing, easy-keeping characteristics, that the resulting stocker may be one that it is possible to finish at a profit!"

The Canadian Cattle Trade.

The letters re-published on another page, from Messrs. Joseph Gould, of Boston, and Dennis O'Leary, of Toronto, relate to a subject frequently discussed in the "Farmer's Advocate," viz., the improvement needed in the Canadian beef cattle industry. Chicago top prices being \$2 to \$3 over the best Toronto quotations naturally causes the World newspaper, of that city, to stop and think, Why is it so, and what is the remedy?

We desire to say, in the first place, that the tremendous advance in Canadian dairying and the popularity of dairy cattle in Canada has a great deal to do with it. Several other reasons are given by Messrs. Gould and O'Leary, both of whom have handled a lot of Canadian beef cattle for many years past. Three things are clearly needed to put the beef industry of Ontario and Eastern Canada generally upon a better basis:

1st. More and better beef cattle. How are they to be got? By breeding, first of all. Mr. Gould does not sufficiently emphasize that point. The Chicago market toppers are well-bred cattle. You may put good feed—cheap Western States corn, if you like—into a triangular-shaped scrub till the crack of doom, and you will be producing scrub beef and find it a losing speculation. The "Farmer's Advocate" sent one of its editors into the Toronto Stock-yards the other day, and he photographed two types of steers which he found there. Read his article, and compare the portraits (elsewhere in this issue), and you will see the difference between the bad and the good type of feeder. Breeding made them what they are. To build up the beef industry there must be more and better breeding females of the beef type used on Canadian farms, and a general use of good pure-bred sires from the best breeds. That is the foundation—make no error about it! And we believe that if plenty of good fat cattle are produced the buyers will be forthcoming.

2nd. Better feeding. This is where the value of American corn comes in, which Mr. Gould emphasizes. It is not enough to breed the cattle—they must be fed well from start to finish, as calves (as Mr. O'Leary truthfully states), and as stockers and in the finishing stage.

3rd. Better markets. Not merely market and transportation facilities, with fair rates and freedom from monopoly, but such a consumptive and competitive demand that the feeder can realize a profit out of his operations. A host of Canadian farmers went into dairying and dairy cattle because they felt that there was more money in it than in raising and fattening steers. The dressed-meat business in Canada is already beginning to develop in a local way. As a large industry it will likely come when the necessities of the demand for meat and the supply of cattle will warrant it, and no sooner.

About Free Corn.

A number of city newspapers are again urging the Canadian Government to restore the duty upon American corn. If the Government are well advised they will do nothing of the kind. About the best move the Government ever made in relation to agriculture was when the duty was taken off. Selling grain and fodder means selling fertility, but in feeding them a portion of this fertility is restored and soil impoverishment is stayed. Hence, feeding animals and selling their products, such as beef, bacon, cheese, butter, etc., not only enables the farmer to sell his superior skill in producing these more refined food products to good advantage, but he sustains the productivity of his soil. It is a better and safer system of farming. Corn and other coarse grains are the farmer's raw material which, through the animal economy, he manufactures into more finished products. A few misguided politicians, thinking to make cheap capital, once raised the objection that free corn would depress the price of Canadian coarse grains, but it did not have that effect, and there has been little heard on that score lately. Coarse grains last year reached a figure that made the purchaser groan. Given well-bred animals, the greatest ally the Canadian farmer has is cheap feed of good quality. The pea crop cannot be relied upon to fill the feed bins, and the country would be vastly advantaged if more barley were fed on the farm, instead of being diverted into other channels. Canada is making a decided increase in corn-growing, but largely for the purpose of ensilage as a succulent food, rather than for the grain itself. In a very limited area, such as Essex and Kent counties, Ontario, do specially favorable climatic corn-producing conditions prevail as in the great U. S. corn belt, so it is in that direction that the Canadian farmer looks for his supply of this rich feeding staple. Canadian cattle, like the States cattle, need the corn-crib cross. Last year, when the Western corn crop failed, U. S. beef production at once fell off. Newspapers are now crying out that the Canadian beef industry is too slow, that it needs a boom, but some of them want to give it a stab under the fifth rib by taxing one of the chief elements that can contribute to its successful prosecution.

For Government Control of Elevators.

At an Institute meeting, held some few weeks ago by the Moose Jaw Agricultural Society, a memorial was submitted and approved by the meeting endorsing the principle of Government ownership of grain elevators. Mr. Wm. Watson, of Marlborough, who prepared the memorial, suggests a scheme of Government ownership of all grain elevators and Government control of the whole grain trade, including shipping and selling in the British markets, on much the same plan as is now in vogue in the creamery business of the Territories, which are operated and controlled under the supervision of Prof. Robertson's department. The proposition made by Mr. Watson, which would also have to include government expert grain inspectors, weighers, etc., at shipping points, is a big one.