

### Outlook for Beef Cattle.

To the Editor "Farmer's Advocate":

Sir,—In view of present conditions in the beef cattle world, it would appear to be somewhat like assuming the role of a prophet, to predict cattle values even for the next few months. This opinion recalls to mind, that in the spring of 1902, at the commencement of the boom prices of that year, the "Farmer's Advocate" requested my opinion of the prices likely to range in the beefing trade, and my reticence at that time disclosed itself in failing to respond at all. It is, however, a vivid recollection, that had I then done so, my observations would have been decidedly optimistic, and, were I to express my opinion now, for the next ninety days at least, it would no doubt be the same.

The whole Province is a large section of country, but in so far as the beefing portion of this section is concerned, there are not so many cattle feeding as during the winter of 1904, and they are now practically all bought up, and very many have been secured by graziers to be finished on the grass. I am rather inclined to think that the number of cattle to be finished on grass in this section will certainly not be greater than, probably not so large as a year ago. This opinion is reached from a knowledge of the fact that a number of graziers are this year stocking their pastures with yearlings and two-year-olds, who previously handled cattle which would finish. As for the number of available young cattle to be obtained, there never was a greater demand than during this present season. The number of farmers who have decided to have their lands in grass have so increased that it will be hard to fill the demand for grass cattle. This factor is greatly increasing the number of beefing animals required for this season of the year, and there is thus a constantly growing demand for the presence of the stock-growing farmer. This being so, we cannot impress too strongly upon such farmers the fact that the best returns can always be secured by handling only the best class of beefing animals; therefore, their aim should be to get hold of a number of good cows of the beefing type, and determine to breed only to the best available sires. Wherever the help is sufficient, the calves can be well raised by having them dropped in early winter, and the cheese factory or creamery patronized with a decidedly profitable return. In fact, in scanning the history of the past number of years, in so far as the values of dairy products go, and as well the prices of beef, there is no reason at all to take a pessimistic view of the future, and the ever-recurring high prices of these articles should cheer us in the assurance that, having chosen our own congenial line of business, success will crown our continuously well-applied efforts therein.

On the other hand, if it is felt that the available help is such that to milk and handle the product as above indicated will entail altogether too much labor there is every prospect in believing that successful financial results will follow the business by turning two calves onto one cow, and endeavoring to grow beefing animals in this way, thus paying much less attention to the dairy end of the returns.

The grower of young beefing animals, however, must be cautioned never to be so overstocked in the fall of the year that he requires to dispose of his animals at the close of the pasturing season, as farmers, to too great an extent, have determined to confine their operations solely to pasturing, and just to such a degree are we going to witness a great craze, and unduly high prices for grass animals in the spring, and a correspondingly heavy slump in values as the housing period draws nigh. Again, these conditions should cheer the grain-growing stock farmer, in enabling him to secure a profitable return from the employment of labor the year round.

THOS. McMILLAN.

Huron Co., Ont.

### Fat Cattle One-third Short.

To the Editor "Farmer's Advocate":

Sir,—First, as to the number of stall-finished cattle comparing with last year, we are fully one-third short to what there were last year; and the number to be finished on grass compared with last year will be one-third short, on account of cattle for feeding purposes being very high, and the farmers will not invest their money.

Thirdly, we feel as though there will be a heavy supply of store cattle, such as two-year-olds in the country, on account of none being shipped to the American markets, and this will leave the cattle with our farmers for feeding, and prospects look very favorable.

McDONALD & MAYBEE,

Toronto, Ont.

Live-stock Commission Dealers.

### Must Feed Better.

From my observations, I think there are fewer stall-fed fat cattle this year than last, and there will be about the same number of cattle to be finished on grass. I don't think there are any more young feeding cattle in the country, but they are easier bought, and cheaper. We are losing our reputation for good cattle, by not feeding well enough. In the Western parts of Ontario farmers are nearly all using Shorthorn bulls, but they do not feed the young stock as well as they should, and they are not getting the prices for three-year-olds that they might realize for two-year-olds if they would feed them better.

W. H. O'DELL.

Middlesex Co., Ont.

### The Beef Cattle Supply.

To the Editor "Farmer's Advocate":

In reply to your enquiry re the supply and quality of finished beef cattle on land in Ontario at present, and the prospect for grass-fed cattle later on, I may say that they are roughly estimated 6,000 or 7,000 distillery-fed cattle, and 50,000 to 55,000 farm-fed cattle to go out, making a total of about 60,000 to 61,000. The quality should be good, as feed has been fairly plentiful, and the cattle are not being moved over early. The number likely to be finished on grass, I would judge to be about the same as last year, possibly a few less, as feeders find it very difficult to secure decent cattle without paying for them nearly as much as the best butchers' cattle bring on the market. The prospect as to the number of young cattle for feeding at home or for shipment to the Northwest or elsewhere, is none too good, as there are too few well-bred feeders to supply the feeders of Ontario. Let the grade dairy steers supply the Northwest or go where they will, as they are useless for Ontario feeders. There is certainly urgent need for increasing the supply of good cattle for beef purposes in Ontario and throughout the Dominion, and the best means of accomplishing that end is by using good Shorthorn sires in dairy herds, thereby producing a profitable dairy cow, and at the same time securing good feeding steers that will make profitable returns for the feed they consume. My opinion is that were this method adopted on all the fertile grazing farms of the Dominion, it would increase the resources of these two industries—beef and dairy products—by a million dollars or more each year. Just think of the supply of beef cattle seen every week in the markets of Kingston, Montreal and Quebec, where dairy cattle predominate, mongrel three-year-olds bringing an average of \$30 a head the year round, and thousands selling for from \$15 to \$25 per head, cattle that have cost just as much to raise and feed as well-bred animals that sell quickly at 2½ years old for \$70 to \$80 a head. When I think of the number of good beef cattle seen on the market in some Ontario cities twenty, thirty and forty years ago, averaging 1,300 to 1,400 pounds, and selling at the very lowest for 4 cents, but generally 4½ cents to 5 cents per pound in the spring, and in July for 5½ cents to 6 cents, live weight, I am constrained to counsel our farmers to consider "whether are we drifting." With all our boasted improvements in many lines, and with all the talk we have heard at Farmers' Institute meetings and elsewhere about improved methods, the percentage of good beef cattle has been steadily growing less. Talk on these lines is cheap and does little good as long as farmers fail to avail themselves of the means of improving their cattle.

Middlesex Co., Ont.

C. M. SIMMONS.

### Get Them Off.

From a contemporary's note from the market we call the following, which is quite apropos: "Even on the present booming market, with its scarcity of good cattle, discrimination is shown against steers wearing horns. A feeder with a load of these on the market, a few days ago, declared that a discount of 25 cents per cwt., insisted on by the buyer, was 'daylight robbery.' 'Why didn't you take off the horns?' asked the buyer. 'They were too old when I bought them,' was the response. 'Well, I'm going to undertake to teach you fellows not to buy horned feeders that are too old to dehorn. It will be money in your pockets,' said the buyer. 'I wouldn't dare ship those cattle, and when they are on the hooks as it is their meat will be punched full of holes. A horned steer is worth 15c. to 20c. a hundred less than one dehorned, according to the distance they have been shipped, and we intend to take it off.'"

The "Farmer's Advocate" has referred to dehorning often, but, at the risk of being tiresome, we state three ways of removing the bovine implements of defence and offence—the horns. The use of a chemical (caustic potash—potassium hydrate) on the immature horns of young calves; the dehorning clippers or saw on yearlings and two-year-olds, and the use of polled bulls (the latter course confined to those favoring the polled breeds—Aberdeen-Angus, Galloway and Red Polls). The surgical method can be followed at any time, except between May 15th and October 15th, when trouble from flies is to be feared.

### Bad Policy.

Please find enclosed \$3.00, for the renewal of my subscription for one year and for one new subscriber. We think the "Farmer's Advocate" the best agricultural paper published, and farmers who do not take it are standing in their own light.

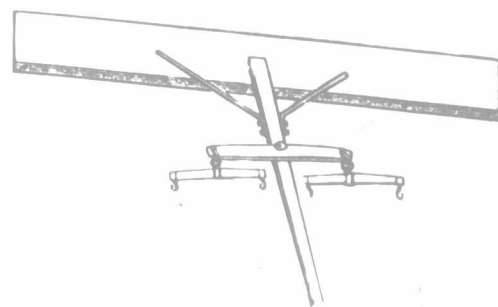
F. J. BAYNTON.

Bothwell, Ont.

### FARM.

#### The Old-fashioned Road Scraper.

It is astonishing how we run after expensive implements. In road-making we have somehow got the idea that costly graders and rollers are the only implements worth bothering with, and in many districts the use of the former has become a fad. Judiciously employed they are of great value in preparing country roads, but often they are used to draw subsoil clay from the ditches up onto driveways that would be far better if left surfaced with the original loam. It is time to call a halt on the indiscriminate use of the "road machine," and point out the benefits and economy of the old-fashioned road scraper or leveller, which is all too little known in many parts. The road leveller is simply a half log, or may be a piece of heavy timber, about 12 to 24 inches high, 3 or 4 inches thick, and 10 or 12 feet long, the lower edge of which is bevelled on the back, and shod on the front side with a strip of heavy sheet-iron. A tongue is attached with braces and mortises, slightly angling, so that when in use the scraper will tend to draw the dirt up to the center of the road, and help to preserve the crown. Either two or four horses are used, according to the hilliness of the road, the texture and condition of the soil, and the load which it is thus necessary to use on the scraper. If used frequently and at the right time, i.e., as soon as the surface is dry enough to work down nicely, two horses will be sufficient, and a few hours' work now and then will not only improve the road for immediate traffic, but help to keep it in good shape permanently, preventing gouging of ruts and formation of mud holes by rain water.



One of the Best Road Implements.

A few years ago the writer had charge of a boat of a couple miles in a township where statute labor had been recently commuted. The road was a clay loam, and consisted of a long grade, in some places quite steep. Being a main highway, it used to get badly cut up during spring and wet weather, and at times the erosion was very destructive. Under the statute-labor regime it was customary to put on four horses and give it two or three thorough scrapings every year. Our plan was different. We used one light team, sparing them by standing on the scraper down hill, and walking up. Then, instead of waiting till the ground got hard and dry, we made it a point to scrape it as soon as it dried sufficiently after having been worked up. Two rounds each time was the rule, and although the season was a rainy one, the road was kept in passable condition throughout, the contrast with neighboring roads being most marked. It was noteworthy that the council found nothing to do with the road machine on that beat, although formerly an expensive annual grading was deemed necessary; besides, the road was being washed so badly that the clay subsoil was becoming exposed, and the road getting yearly worse instead of better. The cost of scraping this two miles of much travelled road in this trying season was about seven or eight dollars, and from the universal satisfaction expressed by the travelling public and township council, it represented the best investment ever made on that road. What many clay roads need is less work with the grader and a great deal more with the old-fashioned scraper.

### Alfalfa.

(Condensed chiefly from Bulletin 121 of Wisconsin Experimental Station.)

Alfalfa belongs to the same family of plants as the clovers, beans, peas, vetches, etc. All these plants are known as "legumes," a term which denotes that their seed-pods open along both edges to discharge their seed, and one of their chief recommendations to the farmer is that, while yielding him a paying crop, they also, at the same time, enrich his land. How this is done by means of bacteria, which live in little knobs or tubercles on the rootlets, spending their time in abstracting nitrogen from the air, and placing it in such a position that it is afterwards thrown into the soil, has often been explained in the "Farmer's Advocate." The much-disputed process of inoculating soil poor in bacteria with earth from fields rich in them, has often been explained also, but may bear repeating, inasmuch as the weight of opinion in the various experiment stations favors it. It simply consists in sprinkling the seed-bed of land where the legumes have not been proven successful, with soil taken from a field where that legume has been growing. This process by no means takes the place of