

## THE EDUCATION OF FARMERS.

By far the greater majority of Canadian farmers are the most ignorant class in the community. They have labored hard to make themselves comfortable homes in the woods. Improvements, such as railroads, schools, papers, machinery, factories, churches, &c., &c., have been put into operation about them, by men of more intelligence and perception, and have enabled them to realize double the price for their produce, than they would have done had these improvements not been carried out by the Legislature of our Province, or by the enterprising. The farmers of this country could never have been persuaded to allow themselves to be taxed for a railway, a canal, a line of steamers, a telegraph or a printing press, still these are the means that have enabled them to make comfortable homes, by bringing a market to them for all their produce, at double the prices they could otherwise have realized.

We know of no farmer in the whole of this county that has imported any breeding stock from Europe for breeding purposes, for the past fifteen years. There has been one pair of ewes imported for shorn sheep, and two or three rams were accidentally sold in this County, but none have recently made a business of improving their stock by European importations, still in some classes there has been an improvement, by purchasing from other parts of the country. Some classes have retrograded. There are as many different classes of stock as of grain. Some are better adapted for one purpose some for other purposes; some are better suited for one farm, while others would be more advantageously raised on others. The peculiarities and advantages of the different breed of cattle are not so well known as they should be. We are called to make a few remarks on stock by a slight incident. A certain reeve of a township, a large well-to-do farmer purchased a pair of Cheviot sheep from us. His farm is a level one of fertile clay soil. He never had a pure bred sheep on his farm previously, and informed us that his Cheviots now were the worst looking sheep on his farm. It is true he did not purchase the best nor pay much for them, buying them at an auction. Now it is a well known fact that a Cheviot ram brought a higher figure in England last year than any other, still we do not commend them above other breeds, but they have their distinctiveness, and these are the points on which they excel. They are a very hardy sheep, none more so that we know of. They are short in the leg, lower & smaller sheep than some other breeds. The wool is lighter, and of more uneven quality than any other breed, being fine and extremely strong and durable on the sides, and coarse and hairy on the hind quarters,

requiring each fleece to be divided into qualities by the manufacturer, the sides for the most durable cloth, the hind quarters for blanketing. They are superior milkers to either the Leicester, Cotswold, or other breeds, will mature a lamb early. The best lambs we ever raised were from Cheviots. They are rather wilder in their nature than some other breeds, and no sheep that we know will defend themselves so well against the attack of dogs. They will thrive on lighter and more hilly lands than the Leicester or Cotswold, and they are good mutton sheep, such as the Merino can never be. In some places the Cheviots would and do pay better than other sheep, but as a general sheep for the country we do not recommend them, although for rough hardship, they will run the Leicesters and Cotswolds off the track.

The best and most useful sheep for Canadian farmers is the Leicester. Its wool and mutton, and size will always command a market. But what is a Leicester? There is a total difference in what was called a pure bred Leicester in England, when we used to be acquainted with the herds and flocks there, than what now take our Provincial prizes as Leicesters. We know from facts that the present Leicester, or what is called a Leicester in Canada, is nothing but a cross bred Cotswold. The breeders take the Cotswolds to give their sheep weight of wool and size of carcass, but for a pure bred Leicester we know not where to procure one, although we purchased our stock raised from imported stock direct, still they are not what Leicester sheep formerly were.

The pure bred Cotswold is a sheep that makes a large carcass, sheers the heaviest fleece of coarse wool, are gentle, but require more shelter and better food than other breeds. They are not good milkers. The lambs never look much at weaning time. They will mature well but not early.

Merinos, South Downs, Hampshire, Sounds, Shropshire, Welsh, Chinese and even Goats, each have their distinctive merits, but we have not time at present to treat on each class, but for a community to obtain perfection in stock, it is necessary to have the pure breeds of each class, and to cross to bring out any qualities of superiority in one that might be advantageous to the other. By so doing a person may establish a class distinct and superior. The sheep of Canada we consider, as a general thing, to be nearest the requirements of the country than any other class of stock in it, and with moderate care and very little expense, the farmers may maintain their flocks in a remunerating condition, despite the fall in the price of wool.

In Cattle—Durham Cattle having good milking qualities, which they do not all possess, will gradually increase in demand.

Ayrshires will be required to add additional milking strain to some, especially those used in the dairy districts. The Galloways and Angus Cattle may have a few admirers, so will the Devons, Herefords, Alderneys, and Jerseys. The Welsh nor Sussex Cattle we have never seen in America. They are both useful breeds, and for some purposes would be advantageous. The Sussex Cattle we consider stand next to the Durhams in point of excellence, and for some reasons surpass them.

It is not necessary, nor would it be most profitable, for every farmer to keep nothing but pure bred animals. They are required in the country to keep up the different qualities that are required in different ways. For instance, were there none but pure blooded race-horses, Clydes, Cleveland, Panches, Parchersons or Shetlander's, we should not have as useful a stock as we now have by judicious crossing, still the pure breeds have to be resorted to, to prevent a degeneracy, and keep up or bring out any qualities required for the advancement of the agricultural prosperity of the Dominion, and the position of the farmers themselves. These principal points require to be more carefully investigated by the farmers. More agricultural information should be disseminated through the press, and it should be in as plain, simple, interesting and instructive a form as possible.

Such information has, from the commencement been found in this journal, and there are none but the most ignorant, most bigoted and most unprincipled men, but are convinced of these facts. This paper is not nor has it been devoted to sect or party, but for the agricultural prosperity of the whole Dominion. It has been established at a great expense, and the introduction and trying of different kinds of seed, and the dissemination of the best kinds of stock has caused the expenditure of the price of several farms. Are you wishing for its prosperity? Do you wish to know about or procure the best kinds of seeds, stock or implements? If you wish to be guarded against various humbugs to tempt your money from you, without benefit to you. If you do subscribe for the "Farmer's Advocate."

KILLING CANADA THISTLES.—J. Pierce Bell, Blair Co., Pa., writes the *Cultivator and Country Gentleman* concerning his treatment of the Canada thistle. When well up he cut them off, stopping their seeding, but they still lived on. Last fall after they were cut off and sprouted again, they were treated to a dose of salt, and where well treated they blackened and died. The application is not a costly one, and has been pronounced effective in other cases besides the one here mentioned.