

considered as sound by the Department at the time of issuance of the enrolment certificate:—*Bone spavin, cataract, curb, navicular disease, periodic ophthalmia, sidebones, ringbone, roaring, thickwind or whistling, bog spavin or thoroughpin.*

"As the law required owners of purebred stallions to submit the certificates of registry of their horses for inspection before license certificates could be granted, it has led to more care being taken in all matters pertaining to the recording of pedigrees, the character of pedigree registry stud book societies, associations and companies, the correctness of pedigree certificates and the proof of identity in the case of aged horses that have changed hands many times. Then, too, it has caused discussion in every blacksmith shop, livery stable, farm barn and country assembling place relative to the importance of pedigree, the power and prepotency of pure blood, the foolishness of breeding to horses of mixed breeding or of no known breeding, the fallacy of using horses of poor individual quality and character, and the importance of knowing exactly what is the true breeding of each stallion standing for public service throughout the State.

"In time it is to be hoped and expected that the place of the ever unsuitable grade and 'scrub' stallion will be taken by a pure bred stallion of the proper kind, type, quality, soundness and excellence of conformation to best improve the stock of his district. Meanwhile *there not only is need for the retirement of the unsuitable horses of indifferent breeding, but great room for improvement in the character of many of the pure-bred horses now being used.* Many of these are getting up in years; others have failed to give a good account of themselves in the stud, or their progeny have been defective, weak or lacking in quality, and such horses thus have given the scrub and mongrel stallions a chance to obtain the patronage of dissatisfied breeders."

The advantages of the stallion enrolment acts are obvious. Manitoba's law is the most perfect, as was to be expected, seeing that the experience of the other provinces was at hand, it being the latest enacted. The strong features of the results of such acts are: The quality of the stallions used is improved, fraud is rendered difficult of accomplishment, the farmer is protected from the unscrupulous stallion owner or groom, and the breeder and owner of high class sound stallions is aided in the accomplishment of a laudable work.

[We regret to be unable to present the figures for Manitoba at this time, but the Deputy Minister informs us that it is the custom to first present such figures to the public through the medium of the legislature. The non-observance of such red tape by the other two provinces must therefore be put down to their newness. We do not believe it to be the desire or intention of the Minister that any hindrance should be put in the way of agricultural education, yet such a strict interpretation of the rules, written or unwritten, is hardly warranted, especially when the wholesouled advocacy by this paper of all legitimate methods devised for the improvement and advancement of agriculture is considered.—Ed.]

Sable Island and its Ponies.

"They all have their peculiarities, just like people. Some are intelligent and lovable, others are stupid and slow, and never train out of it."

Thus writes a resident of Sable Island about the somewhat famous Sable Island ponies. Often on the streets of Halifax may be seen a team of these little ponies, drawing a little carriage at an easy trot, and sometimes making a very stylish appearance. They are to be seen most commonly there because Halifax is the nearest port to Sable Island, and shipments of ponies are frequently received by steamer and sold by public auction. They afterward are sometimes sent to other parts of Canada, for the Sable Island ponies are much valued, particularly for young folks' use. The fact, too, that they come from an obscure and very dangerous part of Canada, gives them a special interest.

Sable Island bears the unenviable name of "the graveyard of the Atlantic," with a dismal record of 155 shipwrecks in the past hundred years. Yet it is only a sandbar, thrown up by the junction of two ocean currents. It lies about eighty-five miles from the nearest point on the Nova Scotia coast, or 150 miles southeast of Halifax. Crescent-shaped, and bending to the north, its whole length is twenty-three miles, with a maximum width of only a little more than one mile. Sands blown by Atlantic winds, sometimes reaching a speed of sixty and eighty miles an hour, have brought the Island into being, and in some places the sand-hills are 110 feet above high water. The sand is ever drifting. In a single night the telephone posts are often buried

entirely out of sight, and the sand drifts with such a biting force that it kills all but the hardiest trees and sends all animalkind hurrying to shelter. Yet the Island is not by any means bare and desolate, as will presently be shown.

Here, on their little sandbar, live forty of our fellow Canadians, who are commissioned by the Dominion Government as a life-saving service. By their efforts, Sable Island has lost much of its dread to Atlantic sailors. There are two light-houses, fog alarms, and a series of life-saving stations, and a wireless-telegraph equipment has recently been installed. Every day, and in thick weather twice a day, a circuit of the Island is made, with a keen look-out for wrecks along the coast. It is the duty of the force to give every possible assistance in case of a wreck, and when a ship has been driven on the sands, which extend miles out to sea, to man the lifeboats and bring the crew ashore.

Twice a year a Government steamer goes to the Island from Halifax with supplies, and during the summer there are occasional visitors; except for these, the forty souls are a little world by themselves. Yet it is not so dreary a home as it might seem. The present superintendent has been stationed there for seventeen years, and his daughter, with a spirit of true loyalty to her home, writes of it thus, in a recent letter which I have already quoted:

"In summer a lovelier spot could not be found. Garden flowers and all kinds of vegetables grow most beautifully and luxuriantly. Strawberries and blueberries grow wild everywhere, and very large. Our visitors admit that they have a superior flavor, too. Last season there was a crop of seventy barrels of cranberries, and some years blackberries are quite plentiful. In the fall the Island is a poem of color, golden-rod and blue asters gleaming everywhere in the green, shiny swordgrass. I think it compensates for the rigors of the winter."

But what of the ponies? Quite as much as the sandhills themselves, they are one of the features of the Island. The lineal descendants of animals left there over three hundred years ago—probably by Sebastian Cabot or the early Portuguese explorers—they number to-day about two hundred. They roam the Island, wild, in droves of from five to fifteen, each drove having its own special feeding and drinking places. Says my informant again:

"The ponies are very hardy, and live out all winter without any shelter but the banks. They get thin by spring, but fatten quickly when the grass comes. Those used by the stations are stabled every night in winter, and are fed a little feed besides the hay, and are so kept in good condition for work. The snow rarely lies long, and when the ground is bare the wild ones have plenty of hay, as the wild grass is thick and long, and in fall dries and lies over in bunches. The Island is nearly all covered with grass, and has many fresh-water ponds. The wild ponies are not afraid of a person on foot, as they are never harmed, but when chased to get them into the pound to ship, they are like deer, and never give up until forced right into the wings of the pound. In color they are brown and black, with occasionally a yellow one, black and white, or brown and white, patched."

They are only shipped from the Island when the superintendent considers the supply large enough to spare some, and then he selects a lot of twenty or thirty and sends to Halifax. The difficulties encountered in catching them are frequently repeated when the time comes for landing and selling them. Some of them are particularly unmanageable, as was one high-tempered animal that refused to be handled until very heroic measures were taken with him; at the end of half an hour he walked away as quietly as a well-trained farm horse—conquered. Usually, however, they are tractable, and soon learn to know what is expected of them. An untrained pony sells at the auction rooms for about twenty dollars, but a pair of well-matched animals, after training, have been valued at \$600. They average about 700 pounds in weight, and are both larger and harder than the Shetland ponies.

Plucky little creatures, toughened by the winds that they have felt all their lives, and well in keeping with the peculiar character of their Island home, are these ponies of the Atlantic sandbar, and they are withal historic. An unbroken line of descent for three centuries or more—no one knows just when they came there or just where they came from—in the face of adverse Nature, is a good Canadian record, even if it be to the credit of a ragged, shaggy pony.

ALBERTA STOCK SCHOOLS.

STOCK

Alberta Stock Schools.

A letter from the Deputy Minister of Agriculture for Alberta, Mr. Geo. Harcourt, after the holding of the live stock judging school at Medicine Hat, indicates that this latest innovation of the Alberta Department of Agriculture is meeting with deserved success.

Fifty-eight students enrolled at an itinerant school must be considered satisfactory, especially as the weather was very cold and the ranchers busy keeping their cattle from drifting from the shelter of hills and coulees.

If Canadian ranchers follow the lead of those to the south and the dictates of the cattle trade, they will make more earnest efforts to shorten the legs and broaden the bodies of their cattle, and the attendance at judging schools is one of the best incentives to effort in this direction. These schools will continue for a month at different points, winding up with an opening for a grand challenge prize at Calgary in the spring.

Boosting the Farmer's Cow.

We had the privilege of listening to an interesting address while at the winter fair in Ontario, on the subject of the dual-purpose cow. The speaker was a young farmer, Mr. Drury, who lives in the mixed stock and grain county, Simcoe. Mr. Drury spoke as a firm believer in the dual-purpose cow, claiming that the great average body of farmers are not and do not wish to be specialists in beef production or dairy enterprises. His position may be stated thus:

1. While it is difficult for the dual-purpose cow to rival the special-purpose dairy matron in milk production, there are large sections, where land is comparatively cheap and labor relatively dear, where the farmers desire to keep and are warranted in keeping some cattle stock other than milking cows. For such farmers the special dairy breeds cannot fill the bill, since there is seldom any profit in raising their calves for beef.

2. The special-purpose cow has little place, for, under average circumstances, it is a practical impossibility for a steer to pay his mother's board for a year and show a proper balance for himself on the ledger.

3. The only cow which meets the needs of the class of farmers aforementioned is one which will give a good account of herself at the pail and throw a calf that will develop into a fair beef steer. That such a cow is a practical possibility, he reasoned from his own experience and from the experience of the general farmer with the old-time grade Shorthorn stock, but that she is becoming increasingly rare, he unhesitatingly averred, claiming that the breeders of Shorthorns, the accustomed source of dual-purpose cows, were letting their stock run to beef, and making little effort to combine with beef conformation a profitable degree of milking propensity. As a consequence, farmers have been reluctantly forsaking this breed and taking up with the special dairy breeds, in order to get profitable cows.

By syllogistic argument Mr. Drury drove home the conclusion that the breeders of the beef breeds of cattle, especially the Shorthorns, must pay increased attention to milking quality, so as to make the animals truly dual-purpose, if they are to hold their own in the estimation of farmers.

He took pains to explain that he had no quarrel with the special-purpose dairy cow. It is difficult for the dual-purpose cow to equal her in milk production, but he believed that, for her own special circumstances, the two-purpose cow might rival the others in total profit.

There are three conditions under which cattle are kept:

1. Small farms of high-priced land.
2. Ranching conditions.
3. Midway between these extremes are conditions prevailing where land is fairly plentiful and labor "mighty scarce." He might also have added, where many people are disinclined to the milking of very many cows.

What the average farmer wants is a cow which will give a good yield of milk, and at the same time produce a beef calf that will, during the three years of his life, attain a weight that will make an average annual return of about \$25 for feed consumed and labor expended. The Canadian farmer has been trying to raise such a cow

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