

The Farming World

For Farmers and Stockmen

VOL. XXI.

JULY 1st, 1902.

No. 1

Keep up the Hog Supply

CANADIAN bacon trade continues to maintain its prominent position as one of Canada's leading industries. And yet it has not made the progress one would expect, considering the high prices that have prevailed during the past two or three years for select bacon hogs. For the year ending June 30th, 1901, there was a falling off of about one and one-half million dollars in the value of our bacon exports as compared with the year previous. The official figures are not out yet for the year ending on Monday last, but from what we can learn from the packers and others, the increase over a year ago will be very little.

This condition of affairs is somewhat disappointing. With high prices and a greatly increased demand for hogs, owing to the larger number of pork packing establishments that have been in operation during the past two years, one would have expected a very rapid increase in the number of hogs in the country. But such has not been the case. There has, no doubt, been a considerable increase in the number kept by farmers in many parts of the country, but not enough to swell the total number of hogs produced to any very great extent. There are, however, some indications that the turning point has come, but these are not very marked as yet, and it may be some time before their effect on the total supply will be noted.

The question may well be asked, why our farmers do not engage in the raising of bacon hogs to a greater extent than they are now doing. The high prices for coarse grains last fall and during the winter, have, no doubt, had something to do with it. But even at these high prices there has been good money in raising the bacon hog. The better prices for beef cattle and other kinds of live stock, have also had some effect in that they helped to divide the farmer's interests. But these do not fully account for the comparatively small increase in our hog products, and we shall have to look further afield for a season than it is our purpose to do just now. Perhaps the Canadian farmer has an inherent dislike for his hogship and prefers to go only so far, and no further, in rearing this money-making animal, which our packers love so well, and which is doing so much to develop Canada's trade with the Old Land. Nevertheless, it will pay the farmer to get rid of any

preconceived notions he may have had on these points and raise more hogs.

One very satisfactory condition of the trade is that the quality keeps up. At the present time there is only a mere nominal difference of about 25 cents per cwt. between the prices for select bacon hogs and lights and fats, due to the fact that packers, in order to get sufficient supplies to keep their establishments running, have been compelled to take, so to speak, "everything in sight," that looked like a hog. The very fact that the percentage of high-class hogs received at the factories has been maintained in the face of this indiscriminate buying, is proof that our farmers are putting into practice the teachings of our Farmers' Institutes, our Agricultural Journals, etc., and are endeavoring to produce the style of hog which the market demands. Once started in the good way, there should be no falling back into old methods, even though the packer does not pay as large a premium as he should for select bacon hogs. At the present time there are too many light bacon hogs coming forward, and it would seem as if our farmers in their desire to save feed were marketing their hogs too soon.

As far as we are able to size up the situation, the farmer will run no risk in increasing his supply of hogs by one-third or one-half. Present indications are that good prices will be maintained during the balance of the year, with the exception of the usual drop in the fall, previous to the Xmas trade. But this is not likely to be any greater than usual, and with prices at from \$6 to \$7 per cwt., there is good money in raising the bacon hog. The demand for Canadian bacon in England keeps up and farmers should enable our packers to greatly increase that demand by supplying them with more and a better quality of hogs.

Sheep Worrying by Dogs

Although little has been said lately in regard to sheep worrying by dogs, the evil is still with us. Every little while the news arrives of some farmer's sheep being worried by dogs. The subject is then always one of interest, and it may be of advantage to know what is being done in other lands to stem this evil. In Great Britain, the worrying of sheep by dogs is a constant source of annoyance and loss to many farmers. The mat-

ter has been before Parliament a number of times, and while the laws regulating dogs have been made more stringent, they have not been made sufficiently so to prevent serious loss to many farmers, because of sheep worrying. In 1865 an act was passed providing that the owner of every dog shall be liable in damages for injury done to any cattle or sheep by his dog. Previous to this it was necessary to show a previous propensity in such dog, or the owner's knowledge of such propensity, or that the injury was attributable to neglect on the part of the owner of the dog. The above Act also makes it risky to harbour a sheep-worrying dog. It does not extend to Scotland for the reason that its enactments are common law there.

Such is the existing law in the old land. But a movement is under way to have it strengthened. A meeting of the Central and Associated Chambers of Agriculture was held recently to discuss the question. Since the passage of the Act, now in force, several dogs bills have been before the House of Commons, one providing for the wearing of collars by dogs with means of identification, inscribed, and for the protection of cattle and sheep from injury by stray dogs. But a proposal recently made to enact by-laws for preventing all classes of dogs from straying during all or any of the hours between sunset and sunrise, is strongly favored. This would be a regulation, keeping dogs out of temptation, and strictly enforced, should do much to prevent the losses now occurring from the ravages of sheep by dogs.

How would some regulation of this kind work in Canada? If every person who owns a dog were compelled to keep that dog tied up or shut up during the night, there would be less sheep worrying and we think, fewer mongrel curs kept in the country and in the towns or villages. No one should object to securing a valuable dog for the night, while many people, rather than go to this trouble, would prefer to destroy their good-for-nothing canines. We should be glad to hear from any of our readers as to how such a regulation would work in this country.

Mr. J. Murray, B.S.A., a recent graduate of the Ontario Agricultural College has been appointed as assistant to Mr. C. H. Clark, chief of the seed division, Department of Agriculture, Ottawa. Mr. Murray is a native of Simcoe County and took a distinguished stand at the college.