Brands on Imported Percherons

EDITOR FARMER'S ADVOCATE:

Is the French government stamp placed upon the hoof or neck of the Percheron stallions retained by the government of France? Kindly give system of government retention of stallions with marks. Are stallions with government stamp frequently brought to Canada or the United States?

Sask. A. J. Q.

Under the French law, a stallion is examined by government veterinarians and when pronounced free from unsoundness is branded on the neck under the mane with a five pointed star. If, for reasons of unsoundness, official certification is withheld, he is branded under the mane with the letter R, which means refused. These are the only marks placed on horses by the French government, and certification for freedom from the diseases specified in the law are granted for one year only, so that stallions are examined annually and in case a horse that has been previously pronounced sound fails to pass he is branded with the letter R over the five pointed star. Horses registered in the French Percheron Society are branded on the neck, beneath the mane, with the letters S. P. standing for Societé Percheronne. The five pointed star, the letter R, and the combined letters S.P., which look something like the American dollar mark, are the only official marks placed upon Percheron horses in France. The first two of these are government brands.

Breeders and importers sometimes mark their horses upon the hoof, with a private mark, to identify the animal. A good proportion of the stallions brought to America are government approved and marked with the five pointed star. We do not know what proportion of Canadian imports bear the official stamp. Thick wind and periodic ophthalmia are the only two maladies for which certificates of soundness are refused. Certificates of soundness are necessary under French law only for stallions standing for public service. There is nothing to prevent breeders from using unsound stallions on their own mares.

STOCK

Cost of Exporting Cattle

What does it cost per head to ship cattle from Calgary to Liverpool? Would it pay a farmer to ship less than 100 head?

Alta. J. G. H.

The cost varies a little on account of the method of selling ocean space. Sometimes all the boats will have all the freight they want for a certain week and raise their prices, at other times they are anxious to get freight and cut prices. In the cattle and grain exporting business, most of the work consists in arranging ocean freights and in getting shipments at ports when rates are most reasonable. For this reason, professional exporters can generally land cattle cheaper than amateurs. During the inquiry of the meat commission which reported to the Manitoba legislature last winter the following items of costs of shipping from Winnipeg to Liverpool were given in evidence:

Hay in Winnipeg yards, 4 bales to car, 30 cars—120 bales at approximate cost of 50c per bale, based on hay costing $11.00 a ton.	$60.00
Railway freight, 30 cars, 20,000 pounds each, 600,000 pounds at 60c a hundred.	3600.00
Hay in car, 4 bales in racks, 4 bales on floor, 8 bales one car, 240 bales at 50c per bale.	120.00
Hay in yards and cars at White River, 6 bales one car, 180 bales, at 80c per bale.	144.00
Hay in yards at Montreal, a hundred equals $2.00 per car.	60.00
Ocean feed, 300 pounds, hay per bullock at $14.00 a ton.	1071.00
Straw at 20 pounds per bullock at $10.00 per ton.	51.00
Insurance at $\frac{3}{4}$% on $60.00 valuation .	229.50
Men as attendants on cattle, allowing 30 cents on 510 head.	153.00
Loading charges in Montreal 10c per head.	51.00
Ocean freight based on 30 shillings per head, which is extreme top price of year £765.	
Exchange at $4.86 for each pound	3719.90
Estimated total expenses in Liverpool, $4.00 per head.	$2040.00

This would make an average cost of $22.30 on a train load from the time they arrive at Winnipeg until they reach Liverpool. To get at the cost between Calgary and Liverpool we would have to add the cost from Calgary to Winnipeg which is 45 cents per cwt. which on a 1,350 lb. steer would be $6.07 making a total of $28.37 plus feed and attendance. As we said before, the professional shippers handle their cattle cheaper and it is also a fact that the trade usually make things inconvenient for an amateur.

We have cattle feeders, however, who sometimes take their cattle across and sell them on the Liverpool market, sometimes making and sometimes losing. It is by no means certain. Naturally the proportionate cost per steer is less in a shipment of 100 or more than it is on a smaller lot, but as small a shipment as 50 head is sometimes taken over.

The Essential Elements in Trade

EDITOR FARMER'S ADVOCATE:

The three propositions you make in a recent editorial are very fair for the purpose of a discussion which you support, with reference to improving the market for cattle and their products. The weakness in your conclusion that private ownership is the better plan of the three is that it has been tried and found wanting. With reference to your argument in favor of improved government inspection, I would say that I believe that a member of the executive of the Grain Grower's Association is about right in his conclusion that the English language is not capable of wording laws strong enough to control the large corporations while they own the whole thing.

What we want at this crisis is to find a system that has been tried and has succeeded. I would briefly refer to the creameries of our sister provinces to the west, although they may not have had exactly government ownership or the co-operative system, pure and simple, it has been a combination of the two, so perhaps you would allow this happy combination to enter the discussion as a fourth proposition. This year, this combination has succeeded so well that the receipts for an ordinary car load of their product has amounted to about $1500 more than the product of Manitoba creameries according to reports, and the increase has been 225 per cent.

Farmer's greatest discouragement is with the sale of butcher's cattle and dairy products, the only feasible remedy is some independent cold storage combined with a beef-chilling or packing establishment.

It would be almost as practicable to preach to fruit men to grow by hothouse methods in order to deliver their goods fresh as the preaching we have got from paper farmers on this subject for the last 25 years.

J. BOUSFIELD.

Everyone will agree with Mr. Bousfield that what we want is better facilities for marketing butcher's stock and dairy products, especially for transporting these products. But the case of the creameries in Alberta and Saskatchewan is not exactly analogous to the butcher's cattle trade in Manitoba. With the creameries, a certain amount of responsibility for successful operation and maintainence is upon the farmer by reason of the money he has invested in the plant, such would not be the case with abattoirs for the handling of meat; and also the territorial government experienced little or no commercial competition in establishing their creamery system which would not be the case with meat products.

In the attempts to secure better conditions in both the grain and meat trades the fact is borne home that more depends upon the willingness or otherwise to make a success of any particular system than upon the nature of the system itself, provided, of course, that the system is reasonably feasible. This paper does not endorse nor oppose government ownership of commercial utilities unreservedly, for the reason that it does not necessarily follow that by changing the system or by adhering to the old, improvement will be made, but it will come by the more sensible application of equitable business methods, whether directed by government or by blind self interest.—Ed.

British Live Stock and Meat Imports

Returns of imported stock and fresh meat into Great Britain in 1908 have just been published.

Compared with 1907, the decrease in cattle is over 18 per cent., while sheep are fully 25 per cent. less. As a cattle shipping country the U. S. has gone back nearly 5 per cent., and on sheep about $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent., Canada being credited with similar increases. As a fresh beef exporting country the States has dropped $16\frac{3}{4}$ per cent. of the volume of business, but in pork has increased its output by $8\frac{1}{3}$ per cent. So that on the fresh meat exports there is a net decrease from that country of about $8\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. This shrinkage from the United States is, however, nearly balanced by the increased weight of fresh beef from Argentina, 950,000 cwts. more reaching us from that country, in addition to 155,000 cwts. more mutton. Of imported fresh meat, South America sent nearly two-thirds of the beef, and nearly 37 per cent. of the mutton, Australasia being credited with only a little over 8 per cent. of the beef, but in respect of frozen mutton taking precedence with 54 per cent. of the whole, Holland making a bad third with 6 per cent., while "other countries" account for the balance of 3 per cent. Holland, however, holds the premier record for fresh pork with, say, 67 per cent. of the imports, the United States ranking second with over $23\frac{1}{2}$ per cent., the balance being distributed between "other countries" and Belgium. Here we may mention, incidentally, that the new regulations affecting meat imports, which came into operation on 1st inst., have not yet interfered to any extent appreciable with the imports of fresh pork, but it is generally assumed that a serious falling off in supplies of boxed meat from U.S. may be looked for.

The total quantity of fresh beef imported from all countries was 5,631,989 cwt. a decrease of 103,014 cwt. from the aggregate weight received in 1907. Of mutton, 4,391,259 cwt. were received a decrease of 187,264 cwt from the figures of the year before. In pork, there was a slight increase, the total for 1908, 572,222 cwt., being 4,890 cwt. greater than the import figures for this commodity in 1907. The total values of the fresh meats brought in is placed at £19,788,272, a general decrease for the year of £659,003.

In cattle, the total receipts were 383,130 head, Canada contributing 121,076 head valued at £2,066,297, the United States selling the greater proportion of the remainder. Cattle imports show a total decrease of 89,885 head for the year and a decrease in value of £1,555,824. Sheep to the number of 78,900 head were brought in, a decrease of approximately 25,000 head from 1907. The total value of the meat and live stock imports in 1908 was £26,460,082, and the total value of the year's decrease in business amounts to £2,260,833.

FARM

This Week's Competition

This week there will be a departure in the discussion competition. We have several inquiries for information upon the construction of the modern barn. What we would like to have described is the method of building a barn so that the roof will be supported only upon the plates and not only self-supporting, but also sufficiently strong to carry an unloading track without purline plates. Along with the description there should be drawings showing the appearance of the barn from the end, and also the method of supporting the rafters at the hip. For the sake of uniformity and to give all competitors an equal chance, we will suppose the barn to be from 36 to 44 feet in width and from 56 to 86 feet in length. The regular rules will govern in selecting the descriptions for publication, namely:—for what we consider the best we will pay $3.00, for the second $2.00 and for any others used $2.00. The replies will be published in the March 17th number. Descriptions should reach us by March 10th.

This week, the discussions are published in the Poultry department and next week they will be found in the Farm department upon the problem of getting rid of wild oats.

The World's Wheat Situation

Broomhall estimates that between now and the season ending July 31st, the wheat consuming portion of the world, that is, Europe and certain Asiatic and African importing states, will require 31,300,000 quarters of wheat. This estimate is based upon the known consumption of wheat in the United Kingdom and Europe. 31,300,000