

## STOCK.

## Prices of Pure-bred Stock.

A breeder of pure-bred pigs writes the "Farmer's Advocate" as follows:

Owing to the poor demand for breeding pigs, I have reduced my breeding stock to one-third the number I had a year ago. In future I will sell pigs for breeding purposes up to six months only. I find by experience and correspondence that 97 per cent. of prospective buyers want registered pigs, and even pigs from imported stock, at from \$5 to \$10 less per head than market price—that is, adding the extra expenses of registering, advertising, crating and expressage to the market value, to say nothing of the extra cost of up-to-date breeding stock of highest quality. Why they expect a breeder to sell his pigs for less than grade price I do not know. Do they think he is in business for his health, or do they think the Government supplies breeders with breeding stock, and pay up the deficit at the end of the year, to improve the run of hogs on the market; or do they never stop to think there are extra expenses in breeding, selling and shipping pure-bred stock?

Now, for instance, a man wants a sow in farrow, and everyone wants a good one, one that has been liberally fed, and not stunted nor held back. They expect this sow to be registered, crated and delivered at their station, satisfaction guaranteed, for from \$15 to \$18 (and to their shame, be it said, there are breeders quoting these prices). She has to be a fair, good, thrifty sow, in good condition, well forward in growth, and showing safe in pig, or she may be returned at the expense of the breeder. Most breeders know well that to breed a sow under eight months is going to stunt the sow, and the pigs will pay but a small profit, if any, on the feed consumed, except under most favorable circumstances. A sow eight months old, from good stock that have not been bred too young, of any of the large breeds, will weigh close to 300 pounds. She is bred at this age (but should be older), and has to be kept two months longer before she can be shipped, to make sure she is in pig; she is now ten months old, and weighs 350 pounds. At present market price, \$6.25 for light and fat hogs, she is worth \$21.87½. Now, the price of sows this age, and boars too, quoted by the best breeders, is \$25 delivered. She will weigh 450 lbs. crated, and will not be carried very far by express for \$1 per cwt. (\$4.50); then the other extras, such as interest on investment, advertisements, etc., about \$5, brings her up to \$31.37½, and 97 per cent. of enquirers expect to get pigs of this age and description for from \$15 to \$18. Is it any wonder, in view of these facts, that so many breeders conclude that pigs don't pay, and have been sending their sows to market this winter, while the majority of farmers breed from scrub sows, at the earliest chance, one generation after another, often using a boar only four months old?

DISGUSTED BREEDER.

## The Sow at Farrowing.

To the Editor "Farmer's Advocate":

I would like to emphasize the suggestion made by B. S., in your March 16th issue, under the above heading. One of the largest and most successful breeders of swine in Manitoba informed me that his method was as B. S. points out. He gave the sow a big nest and kept away himself, and as far as he could control circumstances, allowed nothing else to disturb her. We must observe nature's workings in order to arrive at safe rules to be used in the management of our stock.

I was always taught to have only a small amount of short straw or chaff for the farrowing sow's nest, but experience and observation (which are our best teachers) have taught me that when this is done the sow is in a perpetual state of confusion, and continues rising up, pawing and rooting, until she exhausts her strength, and when thus exhausted, and worried by the squealing of the pigs, she, seemingly, would rather lie upon them than not.

In some instances a careful attendant can place each pig into a warm box and help them along, but in the majority of cases greater success will be attained by giving a big penful of clean straw three or four days in advance of time when pigs are expected. The pen should be in a quiet spot if possible, where there will be the least disturbance, and the sow should not be coaxed or driven out for food at time of or subsequent to farrowing. She will come in ample time, and if she remain in the nest for 24 hours so much the better. Of course, I have had good results from watching and helping take care of the piglets, and, on the other hand, I have had the sow to hide away in the strawstack, where I did not see her for a couple of days, and with most satisfactory results. So I have concluded it is just as well to go to bed and get my sleep, and let the sow take care of herself and little ones in the way nature has taught her.

J. R. H.  
Wentworth Co., Ont.

## Prized in Maine.

You will please find enclosed \$1.50 for my subscription to the "Farmer's Advocate and Home Magazine." I am more than pleased with it since it has become a weekly. It is the very best now.

C. F. SLIPP.  
Houlton, Maine.

## Cost of Steer Feeding.

Doctors differ. In your issue of Feb. 2nd, 1905, Prof. J. H. Gridale, Ottawa, gives the following relative cost of a pound of grain in a beef animal:

From birth to six months.....	2 cents per lb.
Six months to one year.....	5 cents per lb.
One year to two years.....	8 cents per lb.
Two years to three years.....	17 cents per lb.

In the issue for March 9th, Mr. John Kennedy, of York Co., who has been in the steer-feeding business for thirty years, disputes Prof. Gridale's conclusions. He says, "My experience is that three-year-old cattle can be fed at a cost of from seven to eight cents per pound." He refers to Mr. S. Rennie's statement that a gain of 300 pounds on a fattening steer of 1,000 pounds, live weight, is produced at a cost of \$24.52. Before this discussion began, Mr. R. J. McMillan, Huron Co., in an article on cattle-feeding in the "Farmer's Advocate" of Nov. 3rd, 1904, gives this opinion: "The 3½-year-old steers will get along on rougher food better than the 2½-year-olds will. The latter may grow equally as well, but the former will fatten better. Hence, I think, when the quality of feed is taken into consideration, there is a little more profit in the three-year-olds."

What are we to think of it all? There may be, as you suggest, considerable difference in the valuation of foods, but certainly very far from sufficient to make up the difference between eight and seventeen cents per pound gain. Every one of these gentlemen is, we believe, telling what he knows to be true. A possible solution may be, that while these feeders deal with ordinary pasture cattle, Prof. Gridale, in his experiments as to cost of feeding at different ages, may have used the same animal or animals throughout, counting the cost of feed, as the experiment progressed, and

## Winter Feeding of Sheep

AS PRACTICED IN GREAT BRITAIN, AND THE IMPROVEMENT OF PASTURES.

To the Editor "Farmer's Advocate":

I have often felt that it was a matter for regret that Canadian farmers have not seen fit to give more attention to sheep-raising. It appears to me that they have neglected to use the most useful animal on the farm, inasmuch as they lose every year fully one-third of the value of their pastures, as cattle and horses (after eating all they can off a field seeded down with, say, a mixture of timothy and red clover) leave as much as would afford pasture to a small flock of sheep for several weeks. Perhaps one may think at first sight that the saving of so much pasture is a very small matter compared with the labor and care demanded in properly tending sheep during the long Canadian winter; but the value of the sheep as a disseminator of manure seems in Canada to have been totally lost sight of. The time is coming, and is, in fact, close at hand, when we shall be obliged to keep more stock than we have hitherto done. This, of course, will necessitate the cultivation of more roots or corn; and while corn is perhaps the more easily cultivated, and will for that reason be probably more in favor than roots, I should imagine that taking the Eastern Provinces as a whole, the increase in the roots grown will preponderate over the increase in the acreage of corn. Herein lies the importance of keeping sheep. Like the calf, whose duty it would seem is to eat "spiled hay," the sheep has to prevent waste in the root patch, by eating off the small roots which do not pay for dressing and hauling in.

The system to be pursued on the small farms in Ontario (where a holding so rarely exceeds one hundred or one hundred and fifty acres, and it is rarely practicable to sow the whole of a ten-acre field with roots), following the English method as nearly as possible, under the different conditions of climate and season, the system to be pursued might well be as follows:

One-half of a field being sown with oats or barley, and the remainder to roots, after the straw crop has been carried off, sheep netting should be put down, so that the sheep can be turned onto the stubble without over-running the roots. The sheep will clean off a great deal of the spear grass and other unwelcome weeds, and at the same time will be close enough to the roots for it to be only a matter of a few minutes' work to carry a load of the turnip tops and spread around for them on the stubble.

When the turnips have been drawn off in the fall, and the tops disposed of, by feeding them to the sheep on the ground, the sheep should be allowed the run of the land under roots, and kept on it until they have fairly cleaned off every vestige of herbage. Allowing them on only a small piece of the land at a time ensures their cleaning up the land effectually, and their manure is more equally distributed over the land than would otherwise be the case. This applies, of course, to such sheep as are fattening for the butcher; in-lamb ewes being kept on pasture with the ram.

As for the crop to follow roots, dealt with in the manner described, the land is in as good shape as if it had been summer-fallowed, for it is clean, not only from hoeing, but from the sheep eating off any late weeds, and it has the benefit of an even coat of rich manure.

As to the feeding of sheep in the winter, the method followed must be to some extent governed by the conditions under which they are housed. They should be allowed as much exercise as possible, when the depth of snow permits, and whenever practicable should have their feeding troughs out in the yard or in an adjoining field, if not too deep with snow. Their turnips should really be cut into finger pieces by a turnip-cutter.

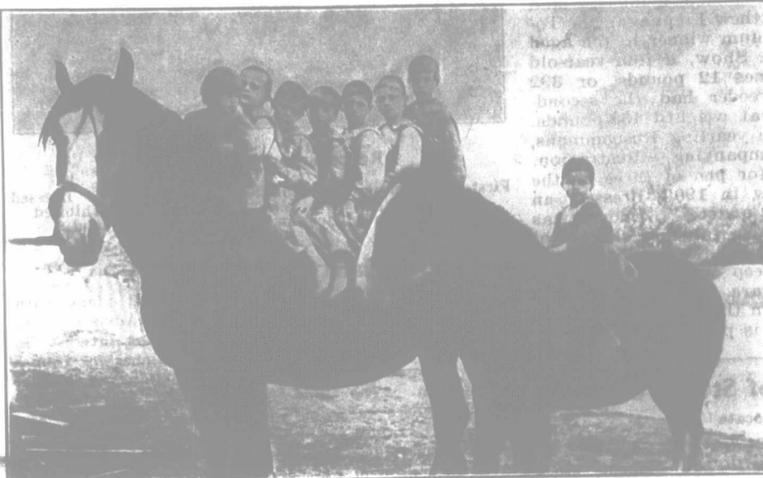
Sheep do not require much bulk of grain, and to make it go round evenly, it is advisable to mix it with a fair bulk of damp cut hay, and scatter this over the turnips in the troughs. Ewes expected to lamb in the coming spring should have only a very restricted quantity of roots, and many shepherds declare against their having any, but they should have free access to good water, though they drink very sparingly, and not often.

Stafford, England.

ERNEST S. SANDERS.

## Since it Became a Weekly.

I have been a subscriber to your paper since the first edition, and consider it most beneficial to all farmers, especially since it has become a weekly journal.

JAS. I. DAVIDSON.  
Ontario Co.

Champion Clydesdale Mare and Foal.

At New Westminster Exhibition, B. C., 1904. Owned by H. M. Vasey, Ladner, B. C.

weighing the animals at stated times. If he did so, then the beast at one year old would probably be fat; at two years old real fat, and the third year would be spent fattening a beast already fat, which, as every feeder knows, is a very costly business. Like the extra two or three knots an hour on a vessel's speed, the last extra fat is put on at great expense. Most feeders will have noticed that during the first half of the fattening period, with a much less expensive ration, cattle make as large or larger gains than they do during the latter half. This, not because they are younger, so much as they are not so nearly finished. Speaking generally, a very good motto for feeders is, "When your beast is fat sell him."

T. BATY.

[NOTE.—It strikes the "Farmer's Advocate" that, in this discussion Prof. Gridale is now entitled to the floor; but, unlike a public meeting, anybody who has something good to say, within reasonable limits, can have his say at the same time in these columns.—Ed.]

## "Pigs for Profit."

The above is the title of a decidedly useful handbook on swine-rearing, by Mr. John Walker, based on forty years' practical experience, coupled with scientific knowledge of the subject. It is written in plain, popular style, and is well illustrated. The characteristics and history of the British breeds of pigs receive treatment, but the greater portion of the book relates to housing, breeding, feeding, general management, with chapters on dressing, bacon-curing, and common diseases. It concludes with a calendar of hints for each month in the year. It sells at one shilling, and is published by W. H. & L. Collingbridge, London, Eng. We have seen no better book of the kind.