

STOCK.

The Pig for Profit.

Time was when pork was commonly held in low esteem by the wealthy classes in cities and towns, and mainly sought after for lumbermen's and sailors' supplies and food for those in humble circumstances, but times and tastes have changed, and now breakfast bacon and sugar-cured ham are reckoned among the luxuries of life, ruling so high in price that only well-to-do people can afford to indulge in them, and the pig, once despised by prudish people, but prized in the Emerald Isle as the "gentleman that paid the rent," now commands consideration as a money-maker and a mortgage-lifter in wide America, as well as in the older lands of Europe, where, by improved processes of curing, together with judicious breeding and feeding, a type and quality of product was produced that tickled the palate, making the pig a peer among meat-producing animals. The Danes and the Irish taught Canadian purveyors the secret of mild-curing, the packers, through the press, proceeded to enlighten farmers on the type of pig suitable for the production of the largest proportion of high-priced Wiltshire sides and fleshy backs, instead of an excess of cheap-selling shoulders and lard, and in a surprisingly short time the style of our stock has been changed by intelligent breeding and treatment, until now our bacon-type pigs produce a quality of meat that ranks high in the discriminating market of Great Britain, rivaling that of our mentors, the Danes, and our farmers are receiving as much per pound for live pigs at six months old as they sometimes sold dressed hogs for at the age of a year and a half. And when we consider how much more cheaply weight may be added in the first half year of the life of a hog than later, and that much of the food used in the growth of the bacon-type pig is cheaply grown and of low market value, as compared with peas, that formerly went into the production of fat hogs, weighing up to a quarter of a ton, we are forced to the conclusion that if there was any money for the farmer in feeding the latter, there must be surer profit in the present-day pig and his manner of preparation for the market.

In these good times, farmers complain if the price of pigs drops to five cents a pound, apparently forgetful that a large proportion of the food that goes into the production of pork is such as could not be profitably disposed of in other ways, such as the by-products of the dairy, clover and other crops that enrich the land by their growing, rendering it fertile for producing other crops. But now that prices hover around six cents, as they have often in the last few years, there are certainly few if any branches of farming more profitable than pigs if kept in such numbers as can be handled in a way to safeguard health and ensure a thrifty condition. And the question of constitutional vigor is one of great importance in pig breeding and management. The clamor for

extreme length, which is generally associated with narrowness and limited lung room, may, if followed too far, be responsible for a class of stock lacking in vigor, unthrifty, slow in maturing, and an easy prey to disease. Medium length of body, with a broad chest, good thickness through the heart, and a strong, slightly-arched back and good texture of bone, are among the indications of a robust, a profitable feeding and an impressive breeding animal, and farmers will do well to pay more attention to these points, as it is too true that considerable loss has been experienced in the last few years from disease, which should not occur in a country where pigs are not kept together in large numbers as in some other countries.

A Sheep Beats a Hoe.

Prof. Thos. Shaw, of Minnesota, an ex-Canadian, is one of the best authorities on the weed question to-day. He has studied weeds and the best methods of eradicating them, and offers the following eulogy to the meek and inoffensive sheep as a destroyer of weeds and weed seeds:

"Sheep stand supreme among weed destroyers. In this respect the average sheep is better than the average boy. It is far away ahead of many men. It never looks up at the sun to see if noon is at hand when it is destroying weeds. It never gets discouraged because weeds are numerous, but goes right on fighting them through all the days of the season of pasturage. In the early part of the season it will prevent them from coming into bloom. In the latter part of the same it will put the seeds into a living sepulchre from which they will never emerge alive.

"Weeds are much more likely to escape the eye of the farmer in byplaces than to escape the eye of a sheep. It is in fence corners and other places where the plow cannot be used that they find a refuge when driven from the cultivated fields. But in their covert the sheep will find them, and when they do their eye will not pity nor their teeth spare. The stomach of a sheep in relation to weeds is like the grave. It is ever crying, 'Give, give,' and with weeds it is never satisfied. A small band of sheep on any farm that is reasonably well fenced will far more than repay their winter keep in the weeds which they destroy in summer. It follows, therefore, that a small band of sheep can be kept on any farm under the conditions just stated without any cost whatever for the food which they consume, to say nothing of the return which they give in wool and mutton."

The Shorthorn Judging at Winnipeg.

To the Editor "Farmer's Advocate":

It is not often that my name appears in your columns connected with criticism of any article that appears therein, but I wish to take issue with your report, dated August 11th, on judging of Shorthorns at the Dominion Exhibition, Winnipeg. First, the Shorthorn ribbons were supposed to be tied by F. W. Harding, of Waukesha, Wis., who was prevented from being present. This necessitated appointing another judge or judges. Walter Lynch, of Westbourne, Man., and J. M.

Gardhouse, of Weston, Ont., were selected, both gentlemen of sterling character, and acknowledged judges, and their opinions would go much farther than the gentlemen your correspondent names as concurring with him in his criticism. It is not my intention to discuss the points of any of the Shorthorns that were exhibited, but being present all the time the judging was done, I had an opportunity of watching closely the decisions, and was much impressed with the careful manner in which the judges did their work, and think it would have been much more becoming of your correspondent had he thanked the judges, through your columns, for their arduous duties, so well performed, and, at least, left the criticism to some one who knows more about the reds, whites and roans, and understands the difficulties of making awards where close and strong competition takes place.

Yours very truly,
W. D. FLATT.

What is the Ox Warble?

To the Editor "Farmer's Advocate":

In the May 12th issue of the "Farmer's Advocate," Dr. Alexander says that the ox warble is hatched from an egg deposited in the back of the animal, and now H. M., of Peel Co., says that the egg is taken in through the mouth, hatched in the interior of the animal, later boring out to the back. Now, if such is the case, why should they be found in an animal's tail, at least six inches down from the body? I have found such myself, and think that it did not bore its way from the inside of the digestive tract. How many persons have ever seen an egg of the warble fly attached to the legs or other parts of an animal? I know that I have not. I know that a large black fly attacks cattle in the summer, sometimes driving them frantic as it makes its raids on their backs. This fly appears to be the same as the big black shiny fellow sometimes seen on horses, but which I have never seen described in the farm papers. If you could print cuts of the different warble, gad and bot flies, it would be of service to many of the "Farmer's Advocate" readers who are not familiar with their proper names. I am enclosing you a specimen of one of the large black flies. If it is not the true warble fly, please give its name and habits.

G. A. S.

The fly referred to is not the adult of the ox warble, but the gadfly or breezefly. The females are very blood-thirsty, and their attacks are very alarming. The males do not suck blood, but live on the sap of flowers. Gadflies are most frequently found in the vicinity of marshes. The young stages are passed in water under stones, where it feeds upon aquatic animals.

The adult of the ox-warble fly is a very hairy insect, and resembles a small black bee. It is not more than half as long as the gadfly. It has a black and polished thorax, covered with yellowish-white hairs. There are four more or less distinct longitudinal lines on the thorax, or middle portion of the insect. The abdomen is marked as follows: First two rings white, then a broad black band, then a whitish tip. This insect is not at all rare.

W. LOCHHEAD.

O. A. C.



In the Aged Clydesdale Stallion Ring at Brandon Fair, '04.