

Western Stock Growers

Range Cattle Interests Discussed—Better Inspection Wanted

(By Our Western Correspondent.)

The Western Stock Growers' Association held their annual meeting at Medicine Hat on the 9th April. About forty delegates representing all parts of the Territories were in attendance. W. F. Cochrane, the president of the Association, was unable to attend and was occupied by Mr. A. B. McDonald. There were also present the Hon. G. H. V. Bylves, Commissioner of Agriculture, and his deputy, Mr. C. W. Peterson, representing the Government of the Territories, and Supt. Deane, of Maple Creek, representing the North-West Mounted Police. The following officers were elected for 1903: President, A. B. McDonald, New Oxbow; First Vice President, T. Tweed, Medicine Hat; 2nd Vice President, G. Lane, Nananton; Executive Committee: Bow River, W. Hull; Maple Creek, D. H. Andrews; Lethbridge, H. Harris; Sheep Creek, H. Smith and E. C. Cross; Fincher Creek, W. F. Cochrane and T. Hatfield; Willow Creek, A. R. Springett and C. Sharples.

The following districts were authorized to elect an additional delegate as soon as the necessary legislation can be secured: Bow River, Maple Creek, Medicine Hat, and Lethbridge.

The financial statement presented by the secretary showed receipts of \$6,226.75 and expenditure \$5,531.33 leaving a balance on hand of \$695.42. The largest item of expenditure was for wolf bounties, the sum of \$2,595 having been paid out in bounties on 250 wolves killed. The bounties paid were: \$15 for grown animals and \$5 for pups.

DEALING WITH UNKNOWN BRANDS

The report of the Board of Management shows active and important work during the past year. The following are a few of the important matters referred to therein:

A resolution was adopted at the last annual meeting authorizing stock inspectors to ship any beef cattle, the brands on which were unknown, and to send the proceeds and description of the same to the secretary. The effect of this was that 137 head were shipped, and with the exception of 22 the owners have all been located and paid. A list of the brands on the 22 head was shown in the secretary's report. It is perhaps needless to explain that the main object of this action was to remove from all the range and out of "harm's way" those animals which were fit to ship, and which in many cases were deteriorating, and yet which according to the strict letter of the law, could not be shipped without the written permission of the owner of the presence of the owner's agent, and he might not be known. It was considered cattle of this description

were detrimental to the cattle business, being a standing temptation to "rustlers" and the board therefore were quite willing to act upon the resolution referred to, recognizing that what machinery the law endeavored to provide utterly failed to meet the case.

On the suggestion of Dr. J. G. Rutherford, Dominion Inspector of Live Stock the board had adopted a resolution dealing, with the necessity for prompt isolation and proper treatment of cattle showing symptoms of mange. Stockmen are now thoroughly impressed with the serious nature of this disease and are usually prompt in taking measures to treat any of their cattle that may be infected. Range cattle are fairly free from the disease but ranchers claim that it exists to considerable extent among "dogie" steers.

AMERICAN STRAYS

The work of Mr. Patterson, the stock inspector, in clearing the range of American strays was favorably commented upon.

The association had asked in April, 1901, of the Territorial government (1) That no butcher or his employee be eligible for the position of inspector of stock; (2) That every person, other than a butcher who slaughtered any head of cattle for beef shall exhibit the hide of such animal at the time and place the beef is offered for sale, and before such beef is presented and a record of the brands thereon made by an inspector of stock. Nothing, however, had been done in the matter, and there is as yet no check over indiscriminate beef pedlars.

DAMAGES FOR HORSES KILLED ON RAILROAD

During the year a schedule of damages for horses killed by trains has been arranged with the Canadian Pacific, the compensations to be \$35 for range or unbroken horses, and \$65 for broken animals. This valuation is much higher than is allowed by railways operating in the ranching districts of Montana and fully illustrate the difference in quality of the ranch horses from Canadian and United States ranges. The valuation in Montana is from \$2.50 to \$15.00.

The Government regulations regarding American round-up parties were discussed in the report. These regulations which were adapted on the recommendation of the association are substantially as follows: Round up parties entering Canada must report at the nearest custom house. They will be accompanied by a Mounted Police Officer, whose duty it will be to see that Canadian cattle are not disturbed on their ranges and that customs regulations are observed. After June 1903 the customs regu-

lations requiring payment of duty, on all cattle entering Canada for grazing will be strictly observed. Estrays will of course be exempt but owners must prove that their animals are entitled to be classed as such.

There were during the year heavy shipments of stock from districts covered by the association. For comparative purposes the figures of 1900 and 1901 are shown:

	1900.	1901.	1902.
Cayley.....	4,878	4,695	7,734
MacLeod.....	2,517	4,202	6,913
Calgary.....	5,096	4,465	6,876
Maple Creek.....	5,595	4,558	5,195
Lethbridge.....	5,188	6,452	6,251
Dunmore.....	2,624	2,721	6,390
Medicine Hat.....	499	1,385	5,212
Clareholm.....	2,905	1,390	3,551
Fincher Creek.....	2,751	2,882	2,915
Stair.....	3,180	813	2,051
Cochrane.....	1,725	1,609	1,752
Gleichen.....	1,472	283	3,102
High River.....	1,169	647	1,364
Strathmore.....	319	319	319
Cowley.....	57	57	153
Walsh.....	113	159	281

This is a total of 59,647 in 1902 as against 41,715 shipped in 1901, an increase of nearly 50 per cent. It includes 10,655 horses and 48,992 cattle.

CHANGES IN BRANDING INSPECTION

The most important matter that came before the meeting was the proposed alteration in the methods of brand inspection and raising the necessary revenue therefor. The association propose to employ five inspectors instead of one as has heretofore been the case and to give them full charge of the brand inspection of all shipments and other work connected with the uses and abuses of brands, making them in fact though not in name, policemen for the enforcement of brand and inspection of stock regulations. It was decided to ask for an amendment to the constitution enabling the association to levy 10c. per head upon cattle owned by their members instead of 3c. as at present, which sum it is thought, will provide the necessary funds for this and other purposes.

The association will also ask for power to raise more money through inspection fees, levying 5c. on each head of stock inspected for shipment within the Territories and 25c. on each head inspected for export, fees to be paid by the seller also that all stock inspectors be appointed by and under the control of the association.

The Dominion Government was enlisted for the action taken by them in inspecting stockyards and cars. The improvement in the latter, according to several speakers, was very noticeable.

Other resolutions dealt with the present dilatory manner in which the C.P.R. is said to handle claims for stock killed, and with the present system of hide inspection, which the association believe capable of great improvement.

The Western Stock Growers' Association has been in existence since 1896. It has been of the greatest benefit to the stock raising interests and includes a majority of the ranchers, and ranching companies in its membership.