

Stock.

THE FARMER'S ADVOCATE PRIZE

—OF—

\$100.00

To be given annually by

WM. WELD, OF LONDON, ONT.

will be awarded for 1881, to "The Best Herd of Fat Cattle for Export."

This Prize will be offered at the Provincial Exhibition, to be held at London, Ont., commencing the 21st September, 1881.

CONDITIONS.

1.—The herd to consist of three animals, four years old or under, and must be at the time of exhibition, and for the previous six months, the bona-fide property of the exhibitor.

2. The herd may consist of animals of either sex or of both sexes.

3.—Pure-breds or Grades of any class may compete.

4.—Animals which may compete in any other class may compete for this prize.

5.—A statement of the breeding, mode of feeding, and weight of animals at the time of exhibition, must be given to the chairman of the judging committee before the animals can enter the show ring. An accurate account is desired, but if from any sufficient cause such cannot be given, an approximate estimate may be received by the judges. These statements will be the property of the FARMER'S ADVOCATE, and must be as full and concise as possible to be accepted.

6.—Special judges will be appointed by the Council of the Association to award this prize.

7.—The rules of the Association to govern all points, except as above noted. Entries can be made with the Secretary of the Association, up to Wednesday, the 21st of Sept.

Being desirous of encouraging the further development of our greatest resources, we offer the above prize, and hope to see strong competition for it, as it is one of the best ever offered at our Provincial for which the general farmer could compete. We have also introduced a new feature to Canadian agricultural exhibitions, viz., that embraced in condition "5." This need not debar any from exhibiting: any one who is capable of managing a farm successfully, is quite capable of fulfilling the above requirements, and if he has never made such subjects a source of study before, he will find them of much benefit. The winner of this prize may have, if he prefers, a SILVER CUP of equal value.

Next year we purpose to give a similar prize for the best herd of dairy cows, irrespective of breed, particulars of which will be given in due time.

Special Prize to Township Exhibitions and Plowing Matches.

SIR,—In your June number I notice the magnificent prize you purpose to give at the Provincial Exhibition for "a herd of fat cattle." Since you are so strong a believer in Township Exhibitions, will you not give a prize to them?

C. H. Whitby, P. O. Ont

[We offer to Township shows a larger and more valuable prize than that given by ourselves, or any one else, to the "Provincial," namely, a copy of the FARMER'S ADVOCATE for one year, as a special prize to each Township society, and to each plowing match in Canada, on application by their secretary.]

Calves and Cattle.

At this time of year when calves are dropping, and when grass farmers are stocking their pastures with purchased cattle, a timely word may be in season on one or two points connected with breeds and principles of management.

In regard to calves, in the first place, if they are intended to be pushed on rapidly so as to fatten them off at eighteen, twenty, or twenty-out in pastures during the best months, has been tried, and abandoned wherever the trial has been

made with two lots for the purpose of comparison. No doubt indoor life, or shed life—for the calves should always get plenty of air and sunshine—reduces the size of the lungs and liver as compared with the same organs of animals that lead active lives; but those defects will prove no drawback in their case; they will increase the propensity to fatten rapidly. On the other hand, breeding animals may easily be over-coddled and their constitution injured.

Another point about calves is that they ought not to lose their calf flesh rapidly, if at all—certainly not at all when they are intended for four months old, they should be kept under shedding from their birth. The plan of turning fattening at two or two and a half years old. We have often seen calves ill fed and injured in districts where neither the breed nor the system is first rate. We have frequently seen them half starved on poor pastures without corn, after weaning, and worth at eighteen months old little more than they were worth when the pinching began. Small farmers need not be indifferent stock farmers, but they very often are; and small farmers and ignorant or careless stock feeders lose annually large sums by mismanagement. Starving young things never pays. Cattle worth but \$25 at eighteen months cannot have paid for their keep. We have seen a certain sort of men hold up their hands with astonishment at oxen fattened from birth, and worth \$90 to \$100 at eighteen months. "What a lot they must have swallowed," they say; and the idea of imitating such a plan of feeding never enters their minds. Yet their own cattle, worth but \$25, would have paid them better if they too had never lost their calf flesh, and had been pushed on at a cost of \$1.00 a week, bringing, it may be, a little less at the present price of beef, but leaving two or three pounds each as the value of the dung. Such farmers have a very small "swallow" for science, and they are not aware of the value of the dung from different foods—that from cotton cake, is worth \$32 per ton; oil cake, \$22, beans, \$17, and so on.

Good stock farming axioms would be, "air and exercise for breeding animals," and fast "feeding and sunny sheds for young fattening bullocks." Sunshine and cheerful quarters aid digestion and improve the quality of young beef. A quiet disposition and gentle treatment also induce early maturity by promoting a habit of "masterly inactivity." How much may be lost by an ignoramus, by fast feeding such breeds as Texans, or hard-hided runts, instead of operating on Shorthorns and Herefords would be hard to say. Given a good breed and all the rest goes in at the mouth; but in grazing without much artificial feeding, the soil should suit the sort, nor should highly bred animals be put on poor land, or taken into bad pastures from those which are better.

"I occupied a farm that had been rented by our family for nearly half a century," says a Lammern sheep-farmer; and he goes on to relate that, when the Dishley sheep came into fashion, he cleared his farm of Cheviots in their favour; but on "our coarse lean pastures they gradually dwindled away." Some Leicesters were sold into Normandy with wool weighing ten pounds each ewe, fourteen pounds the ram. In six years the progeny clipped only three pounds of bad wool. Large sheep will do well on poor hills with plenty of corn and artificially provided forage, but Thomas Hale's rule still holds good as a general principle. He says of cattle of all kinds, "The larger kinds are bred where there is good nourishment, and they require the same where they are kept, or they will decline; the poorer and smaller kinds, which are used to hard fare, will thrive and fatten upon moderate land." It is with live stock as with trees—they do very poorly when transplanted from a rich into a poor soil. Good old Fitzherbert says, "And take heed where thou byest any lean cattle or fat, and of whom, and where it was bred. For if thou buy out of a better ground than thou haste thy self, that cattle will not lyke with thee."

In order that "thy cattle" may like their quarters, it may be as well to breed them at home as far as may be possible; this plan has won favour in many districts where it was not deemed expedient, until our present system of artificial feeding and bringing early to maturity, came into fashion, the breeders having got the best of the bargain through the increased demand for their stock. But in breeding at home on an artificial system, it is worth while beginning with the best—in fact, only the best will pay the extra food and coddling.—[English Agricultural Gazette.

The Cost of Feeding Sheep.

The Massachusetts Ploughman, in reply to a correspondent, gives a detailed statement of the amount of hay, &c., consumed by a sheep, in an ordinary New England winter of five months. Such calculations by Canadian farmers would be very beneficial. Why should not every man know the proximate profit or loss in every branch of his business. A sheep will eat 3 per cent. of its live weight in good hay, or its equivalent daily. Giving then to each sheep, of small size, say 75 lbs., 1½ lbs. of prime fine hay, which is 2 per cent. of its weight, amounting to 225 lbs. for 150 days of winter, which, allowing for the hay \$10 per ton, would be \$1.12½. The other 1 per cent. should be made up of corn, whole or cracked; of this ½ a lb. should be fed daily, and would amount to 75 lbs., added to 225 lbs. of hay, making 300 lbs. of food consumed. The required amount of straw for bedding will make up the additional half per cent. The total expense would be hay, \$1.12½; corn, 85cts; straw, 80cts; or \$2.87½ for a winter of 150 days. If the winter be six months, or 180 days, requiring feeding, one-fifth of the above amount will have to be added, making \$3.45.

What's in a Color?

There is considerable discussion going the rounds now concerning the relative value of different colored animals of the same breed. All the evidence in so far goes to prove that the color of an animal has but little to do with its worth as a milk or beef-maker. It has been pretty clearly proven that the shade of an animal's coat has little or nothing to do with what is under the jacket, the whole thing being a matter of prejudice or fancy, which, by the way, we may parenthetically remark, is something very few practical breeders can afford in to indulge to any considerable extent. A breeder of means who has an established herd of thoroughbred animals is perfectly justified in pleasing his fancy in the matter of what colored animals he will retain as breeders. No one for a moment will hold that a herd of one colored cattle do not present a much better appearance to the eye than a lot including nearly all the colors peculiar to cattle—yet the color is not what the practical butcher looks at. He wants an animal that will cut up with the smallest waste, and since the color is no index to the killing quality of the beast, he pays no attention to it. However, "it's an ill wind that blows no one good," and while fine stock breeders are discriminating against the color, according to the standard they are working by, perhaps our more enterprising owners of large unimproved herds will avail themselves of the opportunity of getting an occasional fine individual animal at comparatively low rates on account of the "off color."

The Evil of Overstocking Pastures.

The overstocking of land is one of the surest and quickest ways of ruining pastures. It is an everyday thing with many farmers, who cannot be made to believe that they are getting the full benefit of a pasture unless the grass is eaten off a little faster than it has time to grow; consequently, all who put this method in practice always have bare pastures and poor cattle.

The advantages to be derived from allowing the grass to gain on the cattle during the growing season are many, some of which are the following: Cattle keep growing all the time come to maturity at the proper age. Animals keep constantly on bare pastures never mature properly; those kept on good pastures do not have to work day and night to satisfy a craving appetite, or use up all their food in building up a system continually worn down by labor and semi-starvation.

A good covering of grass is a protection to the land in warm weather and protects the young grass from the bad effects of cold dry weather between the rains of winter, so that new grass will be growing under a covering of the old, when that on bad ground will be sometimes literally starved to death. Old and new grass, when eaten together, is better for cattle than all new, while the seeding of the matured grasses keeps up the full variety of those kinds native to the soil. Consequently, pastures thus treated produce more food for stock during the year than those kept continually eaten down to the bare earth.