

Freight Rates on Breeding Stock.

Despite the presence in the public mind of other and more sensational questions, it is gratifying to note that the seriousness of the increased freight classification (doubling or tripling the rate on small lots of cattle stock) has been very promptly discerned, even by those not directly concerned. Any injury to stock-raising or agriculture very quickly affects prejudicially the whole business superstructure of the country. The *Globe*, of Toronto, appreciating the significance of this matter, observes that it would be most unfortunate if railway regulations were to force a retrograde movement in stock-breeding, pointing out also that the interests of the carrying trade are here identical with those of the cattle breeders. Mr. T. C. Patterson, of Toronto, with personal knowledge of the subject, in a vigorous letter to that journal, protesting against the increased rates, also points out that, compared with twenty years ago, the freight on a horse from Eastwood, where his farm is located, to Toronto has now actually trebled, being this year \$11.20, a very serious item, considering the recent low price of horses. Incidentally, Mr. Patterson points out the need for some simple partition for temporary use, so that a whole car need not be devoted to carrying one animal. We might add that shippers of sheep and other stock have suffered no little annoyance from the lack of uniformity in rates charged by different local freight agents, a grievance which is surely susceptible of remedy.

We notice by the *Hansard* that Mr. Mulock, M. P., brought the 4,000-pound classification before the attention of Parliament, so that public sentiment on the subject has been well awakened, and the Minister of Railways has the matter under advisement.

We might state that about 1888, the Railway Act of Canada was amended so that freight rates could not be lawfully collected unless the schedule was first approved of by the Governor-in-Council, so that, as we understand it, both the rates and classification are subject to revision. Our live stock organizations, therefore, finding any existing rate unjust, have an appeal to the Governor-in-Council. If a 4,000-lb. rate on a six months old (or over) bull were charged without that schedule being sanctioned, as we surmise that it never was, it could not legally be collected. The key to the situation, therefore, rests with the Government, a fact which but emphasizes what we have often pointed out, viz., the advantage of having a member of the Federal Government with personal knowledge of the matters continually cropping up affecting the interests of farmers and breeders, and also the need for efficient live stock organizations to guard these matters and to promptly advise the Government in regard to their interests.

We understand that the railway authorities have been reconsidering this matter, as we felt satisfied they would when its grave import was pointed out, and that they now propose the following classification:

Bulls under one year.....	2,000 lbs.
" one year and under two.....	3,000 "
" over two years.....	4,000 "
Calves, six months and under.....	1,000 "
" and under one year.....	2,000 "
" one year old and over.....	3,000 "

Whether "calves" simply means heifers and older females, or whether the "six months and under" calves would include bull calves, we are not advised. If the former, it doubtless would not fully meet the views of the committee representing the Dominion Cattle Breeders' Association, though it is a decided improvement over the 4,000-pound rating, so that further modification may yet be secured, which, we feel sure, would prove in the interest of the carrying trade itself, by promoting cattle breeding both numerically and in the more essential point of quality, as we indicated in our last issue.

With the spring trade in breeding cattle already begun, the need for a prompt, as well as a liberal, readjustment of rates is very apparent.

Dehorning Calves with Caustic.

SIR,—In reference to Mr. Thomas Baty's letter on Dehorning Calves by the use of caustic potash: I have used it for two years with the desired effect every time. I can easily see where Mr. B. has made his mistake, as he states in his letter that he made several applications, using a little caustic at a time. As soon as you can distinguish the formation of the horn, or when the calf is about six days old, take a pair of scissors and cut the hair from around the young horn, so as to admit the application of the caustic, then wet the little nub and rub it with the caustic until the part becomes raw. One application is plenty.
Beulah, Man.

STOCK.

Reply to Mr. Dunham's Christmas Article in the Breeders' Gazette.

TO THE FARMER'S ADVOCATE:

I did not reply to this article at the time for two reasons. One was because of the very excellent statement of the condition and prospects of the horse business in the first part of Mr. Dunham's letter, which I heartily endorse, and the other reason was that if any benefits accrued to the Oaklawn Stud from publishing such absurd and misleading assertions as were given in the last half of his letter they might be allowed to pass unnoticed without serious harm to anyone else. Since then, however, I understand the subject has been freely discussed and two correspondents have given in *The Gazette* their views, *pro* and *con*, on the subject, *Percheron vs. Clydesdale*.

The gist of Mr. Dunham's claims for the superiority of the Percheron is based on the report of the commission salesmen at the Chicago Stock Yards, and he gives what purports to be the exact words used by those men. Now, although those salesmen had really stated everything that Mr. Dunham says they did, nothing would be proved as regards the superiority of one breed over the other. They are neither breeders nor users of heavy horses, but simply middlemen, charging so much per head on the horses they sell, regardless of the animal's breeding or value or usefulness. Any interest they might have in this matter would, in fact, be in favor of horses whose period of usefulness was shorter, and whose replacement was therefore an earlier necessity. But, unfortunately for Mr. Dunham's position, several of these men positively deny ever having made such statements as he credits them with. Mr. Newgass, for instance, who sells more high-priced horses at the Stock Yards than anyone else, and to whom I wrote asking for confirmation of Mr. Dunham's assertions, writes me as follows under date of January 20th:

"I have never made such a statement, and could not if I wanted to. I sold last year 25,000 horses and one-half of them Clydesdales and Shires, and will say that I sold a grade Shire horse last week for \$255. In regard to the average selling price between the two breeds (Percheron and Clydesdale) I don't see much difference."

This letter can be shown to *The Gazette* or Mr. Dunham at any time desired.

Mr. Berry and Mr. Cooper have always been considered Percheron men, and yet the former gentleman stated recently, in public, that in his opinion a draft horse got by a Percheron stallion out of a Clydesdale or Shire mare is a better animal than a pure-bred Percheron—thereby admitting that the infusion of Clydesdale blood improved the Percheron. Mr. Cooper contradicts Mr. Dunham by saying that "the English and Scotch foreign buyers do not buy draft horses at all. They buy what might be called tramway horses and bus horses, ranging in weights from 1,250 lbs. to 1,400 lbs., and the vast majority of those received at this market are of the Percheron breed." That is to say, that these undersized, nondescript, so-called "general-purpose" horses that sell from \$40 to \$75 are mostly Percherons, and they are bought for export simply because they are so cheap. They are, as Mr. Cooper says, "not draft at all," and are the very kind that farmers ought not to raise. The country has and always will have a superabundance of such horses and their market value is much below the cost of production. What the farmer should try to raise is not those bus horses of 1,400 lbs. and under, but draft horses from 1,600 lbs. and upward, with bone and substance and quality. That is the horse which is to-day, and always has been, in active demand at good paying prices, and even Mr. Berry, while claiming more quality for the Percheron, admits that the Clydesdale supplies the bone—a very essential point surely in a draft horse.

Blair & Evans Co. also complain that Mr. Dunham does not quote them correctly, for they say that their foreign buyers, when looking for draft horses, prefer Clydesdales and Shires just because they have better bone than the Percheron, although they state that the latter sell more readily for city use, where lighter weights are wanted, but, of course, at correspondingly lower prices.

Mr. Cooper and Mr. Berry both declare that, by all odds, the greater number of horses passing through their hands are Percherons, but they also both deplore the fact that really good draft horses are extremely scarce. Surely such a statement is no argument in favor of Percherons, but the very reverse. If the market is, as they say, supplied chiefly with horses of the Percheron breed, and yet there are but few good draft horses in that market, the logical conclusion—in fact, the only possible conclusion—is that the Percheron horse is not the animal to produce good drafters. Such an argument requires no illustration; it is self-evident. Then Mr. Cooper, in his circular, says he has just sold a carload of Percherons for \$148 a head, while Mr. Newgass sells grade Shires as high as \$255. The difference here represents a very handsome profit to somebody.

Mr. Cooper and Mr. Berry seem to differ materially in their opinions of color, the former expressing his preference for bays, browns, and grays, whereas Mr. Berry can only see good in grays and blacks. This, I need scarcely point out, is undoubtedly evidence of his strong bias and unreasoning prejudice. Bay colors the world over are prefer-

able to all others, except possibly in high-steppers, where they hold second place to chestnuts with white markings. Every farmer knows that his gray horse is worth so much less on this account. My favorite driving mare is a gray, and the color (her only fault) detracts greatly from her appearance and at least 25 per cent. from her value. For what reason was it that all Percheron importers and buyers of Percheron stallions during the last few years of the trade purchased almost entirely black horses? To get away from the unpopular gray color, of course! I have heard Mr. Dunham, within the last year, deploring the effect of this popular taste in the matter of color by stating that he was compelled to buy inferior black horses and reject superior grays. I merely mention this matter to show the utter unreliability of Mr. Berry's testimony, in spite of his lengthened experience.

Now, we all admire the splendid ability and courage and resourcefulness of Oaklawn's proprietor and rejoice at the success he has had, but when he attempts, as he has done before now, to belittle the influence of the British draft breeds in this country, and tries, magician-like, to wipe them out by the most wilful misrepresentations, he undertakes a task entirely too great for even his herculean and strategic powers. In this endeavor he bites off a good deal more than he can comfortably masticate, and as your correspondent pithily remarks: "He spoils his talk." While the Clydesdale breeders may not crow so lustily on the manure-pile, they still show their faith by their works and are ever ready to back their opinions with their pocketbooks. While "defence, not defiance," is their motto, they are perfectly willing to accept from Mr. Dunham, or any other Percheron breeder or breeders, any reasonable kind of a challenge to show the two breeds alongside; in fact, would hail with pleasure such a competition. I fear, however, that the recollection of the contrast which the two breeds presented at the World's Columbian Exposition of 1893 is still too vivid in Mr. Dunham's mind for him to court defeat by challenging a meeting of those Clydesdale clans which he affects to despise.

ALEX. GALBRAITH.

Janesville, Wis.

P. S.—The directors of the Wisconsin Agricultural Experiment Station, in connection with the State University, recently determined to make a beginning in the breeding of the best type of draft horses, and sent a committee of good judges to examine and compare several of the leading studs of Percherons and Clydesdales in the States of Illinois and Wisconsin, including Mr. Dunham's stud at Wayne, Ill. This committee was somewhat predisposed in favor of Percherons, but after making a most careful examination of the comparative merits of the two breeds, and especially with regard to weight, bone, soundness, style, and action, they unanimously declared in favor of Clydesdales. Acting on this decision, they have secured a pair of excellent mares from Mr. R. B. Ogilvie's well-known stud, for \$1,500, and are now looking around for some others to add to the foundation stock. Their aim is to breed from the best, independent of price.—A. G.

Our Scottish Letter.

The chief events of the past fortnight have been the spring bull sales at Aberdeen, Perth, Penrith, Inverness, and Stirling, confined to members of the Shorthorn and Aberdeen-Angus breeds, and all through increased prices have been realized. The first of the series was the Shorthorn sale at Aberdeen, where 170 young bulls were sold at the average price of £22 15s. 9d. each, an advance of about £2 per head on the average for the previous year. Trade at this sale was lively, the demand and supply being equally balanced and the highest figure realized being 32 guineas for the young bull Invader, bred by Mr. James Bruce, Inverquhomery, Longside, and bought by the well-known Ross-shire fancier of the Shorthorn, Mr. Peterkin, Dunglass. The Aberdeen-Angus sale at Aberdeen was held a week later, but here the supply was far in excess of the demand, and prices were, in consequence, rather less than last year. Two hundred and fifteen bulls made £18 13s. 11d. apiece overhead, the highest price being 37 guineas or a little under £40. There is usually a large attendance at this sale, the smaller farmers attending to purchase bulls for the purpose of rearing cross calves as store cattle. The best class of Aberdeen-Angus bulls are usually sold at Perth, and this season proves no exception to the rule. The quality of the exhibits this week in Macdonald, Fraser & Co.'s yard was of a high order, and some splendid prices were recorded. One hundred and ninety bulls were sold, their average price being £26 9s. 3d., and 243 animals of all ages and both sexes realized an average of £25 1s. 2d. apiece. The leading herds were those of Sir George Macpherson Grant, Bart., at Ballindalloch, and the Earl of Strathmore, at Glamis. Eleven young bulls from the former made an average of £53 10s. 7d. each, and ten from the latter made £51 9s. each. The Glamis herd made the highest individual price, the first-prize winner, Best Man of Glamis, being bought by Mr. Sleight for 135 guineas or rather more than £140. This youngster was scarcely a year old and was bought to go to Sussex. The first-prize winner in the older class, Edenhall, an Erica bull from Ballindalloch, was bought at 100 guineas by Lord Rosebery. Other two Ballindalloch-bred bulls were sold at 72 guineas and 74 guineas, and yet a third made 80 guineas. The 74-guineas bull was bred by Her-