

Lessons from the Chicago Stock Yards.

MEN WHO MAKE.

"There are cattle feeders who have never lost a cent during the whole period of depression. It takes common sense and practical business management as well as good breeding and good feeding to make beef raising pay."

MEN WHO LOSE.

"The difference between prices for scrubs and extra grades of cattle was never more marked than it is at the present time. While the former are quoted as low as 75 cents to \$1.00 per 100 lbs. there are eager buyers for the latter at \$6.25 to \$6.60."

The general correctness of the foregoing quotations was well illustrated in what was seen by a member of the FARMER'S ADVOCATE editorial staff on visiting the Chicago Union Live Stock yards in the latter part of October. To a Canadian, the quality of low grade cattle offered for sale was simply astonishing. It was not that the steers, for example, were merely low in flesh, for with the exception of a few fairly creditable lots they were all that, but it seemed that the western farmers and ranch men were forced, because of drought and the scarcity of money in some quarters and the approaching winter, to rush forward upon the market everything possible. That it would never pay to put good hay and grain into vast numbers of these animals was obvious from their appearance. They were not only scrubs in origin, but were rendered doubly so by lack of food and care in raising. Their evident destiny was either the soap grease or fertilizing tanks, or the tins of the great canning establishments. Ancient dairy cows were there that had long ago outlived a doubtful usefulness as milk producers, and an army of dejected yearlings and two-year-olds whose scrawny anatomies were barely held together by the ill-used hides that covered them. "Where can I find the best bunch of beeves in the yards to-day?" was asked of an attendant. "Well, I cannot tell you that," was the reply. "In fact," he said, "there is no best." In some of the better lots of steers there was an unevenness which revealed a serious lack of care in the matter of selection. Uniformity in size, weight, general appearance and ripeness are all points of more or less importance when it comes to marketing.

With very many in the west dehorning has found favor for the very reason (though perhaps a minor one) that it gives the herd a more uniform appearance, so characteristic of polled cattle. Probably one-third of the steers in the yards this day had been dehorned. There is something, too, in favor of uniformity of color, though the shrewd, experienced buyer of beeves is not easily deceived by these things. He is looking for the probable available carcass beneath the covering, whether it be red or roan, black or white. Every little point counts, however, and the prudent man will send his cattle forward so as to strike the prospective buyer favorably at the outset. The range of prices on the day of the writer's visit was from 80 cents to \$1.60 for inferior cows and heifers up to \$8.50 for prime steers.

What lesson do the cattle pens teach the farmer and feeder of beef cattle? 1, Breed for beef; 2, select for beef; 3, secure uniformity; 4, get the calf going and keep it going till ripe maturity.

Quotations of sales might lead to the con-

clusion that only the big 1,500 and 1,600-pound capture the top prices. As a rule they do, but not because of their great size; it is because they are thoroughly fattened and "ripe" for the market. Smaller sized steers equally well finished command high prices.

The offerings in sheep were liberal, and the infusion of black faced blood throughout the Western States is showing very marked effects upon the flocks delivered at the yards.

The bulk of the hogs were Poland Chinas and Berkshires, weighing from 175 lbs. to 250 lbs. The average weight in 1890 was 234 lbs.

As compared with the cattle, the horses seen in the long row of stall stables were, as a class, far superior in general appearance. Really first class, stylish driving or saddle horses were decidedly difficult to find, but the stalls were full of the blocky, general purpose type.

The business done in these yards is something enormous, the receipts last year being:—

No. cattle.....	3,484,280
" hogs.....	7,663,828
" sheep.....	183,667
" calves.....	175,425
" horses.....	101,566
Total valuation.....	\$31,344,898.00

Up to date the largest number of cattle received in one day was 27,000, and in one week 96,000. The trade in dressed beef appears to be largely increasing. The great slaughter and packing establishments are a world of business in themselves, though not the place for tourists with weak stomachs. At the time of our inspection Armour's place was reported killing about 5,000 hogs, 3,000 cattle and 3,500 sheep per day. Swift was taking more cattle than Armour, almost as many hogs, and probably more sheep; Nelse Morris 2,000 cattle, 1,000 hogs and from 1,000 to 2,000 sheep; and eight or ten other establishments smaller numbers.

The report from Germany that sides of American inspected pork had been discovered at Dusseldorf badly affected with trichine has caused considerable commotion, and will probably stimulate the inspectors to greater vigilance in the midst of the vast and rapid operations of the packing houses.

Railways and Farm Produce.

No part of the community is so dependent upon the railways of the country as the farmers, for while all to a certain extent depend upon the rates charged for carriage of imported articles consumed, the farmer, as the producer of the majority of the exports (these being of a bulky character), is most interested, as the cost of carriage is deducted from the price received from his products. The absurdly exorbitant rates charged for local over through freight is a matter of every day experience, one instance of which is sufficient to exemplify the situation. The writer was interested in two cars of imported stock recently shipped from Boston, Mass., to London, Ont. These came *via* Montreal, and yet the charge was less by the sum of seventeen dollars per car than if the same cars had been shipped from Montreal to London, less than half the distance. It is well known that non-competitive railway branch lines, which received assistance in building through bonuses from municipalities, charge such excessive rates that much of the merchandise is now often more cheaply hauled by teams, thus showing the short-sighted policy pursued by the railway corporations. Ontario has borne the heat and burden of the day in subsidizing railways from which she has received no adequate benefit. Vast sums of her money have been expended in building railway lines that have gone to build up other countries, which not only has been

brought into competition in the line of agricultural production, but those lands have been enhanced in value at the expense of eastern farms. All farmers and dealers in farm products are aware how entirely they are at the mercy of the two corporations that hold the reins that govern our whole commercial economy, and we mistake the attitude of our people if they continue to submit to the thralldom to which they have been subjected. The price charged for carrying pure bred stock in less than carload lots is absurdly high. This is a subject farmers' institutes, granges and other farmers' societies should discuss. The following article, which recently appeared in the Oshawa Vindicator, is so much to the point that we reproduce it in our columns, and commend it to the careful consideration of farmers everywhere. It is entitled "The People and the Railways":—

"Two incidents which occurred recently should attract the attention of the people of Canada. The first is the evidence taken at the North Perth election trial in which it appears that the leaders of both political parties had solicited and received favors at the hands of the Grand Trunk Railway Company. Though the Reform party got the influence and most of the favors yet two or three leading Conservatives were favored to some extent. The Grand Trunk Railway never does something for nothing, and when it thus gives favors it expects they will be returned, and that with interest.

"The second incident was the speech of Sir Henry Tyler, President of the Grand Trunk Railway Company, at the annual meeting of the Company in London, England. Speaking of the determination to maintain rates, he said the Grand Trunk would have to meet the competition of United States railways and the water route, but 'it would take all it could get out of the people of Canada.'

"What that means, the simplest can understand. The Grand Trunk Railway is a business corporation, and its object is not sentiment but to make money. While this is so there are two things to be considered. There is a broad method of doing business which looks at the interest of others as well as of its own. Then, too, the Grand Trunk is under some obligation to the people of Canada for financial aid rendered it.

"It is a most unfortunate thing for this country that the Grand Trunk Railway Company has never made the first farthing towards paying a copper of dividend on its original stock. Mr. Van Horne has said that the best thing that could happen to Canada would be the payment of a dividend of one or two per cent. on its stock, but that, he added, is a practical impossibility under existing circumstances. "These circumstances are not attributable to the people of this country, but to the management. The Grand Trunk has taken the narrowest views of business, and forgotten its obligations to Canada. It has never sought the well-being of the community it was supposed to serve, and its great aim has been to build up a through United States trade. It has always acted on the motto of Sir Henry's, 'meet United States competition and take all you can out of Canada.' It has spent enormous sums to secure connection between Chicago and New York, done the business as a rule at unprofitable prices, and then sought to even up by levying the highest possible rates upon the districts solely depending upon it. When a former superintendent was remonstrated with and shown the enormous differences in freight rates between Oshawa and the seaboard, and Chicago and the seaboard, he replied that places like Oshawa were their special preserve and it had to take all it could get out of them. And the railroad has done so, and with a vengeance. The consequence can be seen in the census. As a rule the towns depending on the Grand Trunk have for twenty years been either at a standstill or drying up, while those with competitive routes have grown.

"There are signs of a change in this policy, and if the officials in this country who know the circumstances were left to themselves there would doubtless be an improvement, but it is evident from the speech of the President that the old rule is still to be enforced.

"To the farmers of this country this is a serious thing, because every dollar of high freight tariff must come out of their pockets. Every cent paid on a bushel of wheat to the ocean is a cent less in price for them, and every cent too much paid on goods for consumption is a cent higher on the price.

"It is in the power of the parliaments of the Dominion to prevent this abuse of power. We do not want to see the foolish legislation of the Western States repeated here, but proper laws can be enacted that will neutralize Tyler's tyranny. So long as political parties sue the management of railways for favors, and so long as members of parliament travel on railway passes, so long will the people look to parliament in vain for relief. The railway dominancy is now a serious question in Canada, and the apathy of the people to the danger will make it more so."