

## THE FARMER'S ADVOCATE AND HOME MAGAZINE.

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AND N.-W. T.

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### The National Live-stock Association's Work.

The above Association has, in the minds of many, become confused with the National Record Association, an entirely separate body, with different and distinct aims from those of the former. The N. L.-S. A. is more or less a Government institution—the other is not—with a constitution and by-laws containing plans for big work, but depending upon Government patronage. Up to date it has been a useful sheep-dog in folding reluctant record societies into the great national pen at Ottawa. What this great association is to do will depend largely on the wishes of the promoters, and it is to be hoped that it will embrace more than a safe haven for decayed politicians. The second annual meeting was held recently, at a distinctly bad time for farmers and live-stock breeders from the West, and the association, when convened at Ottawa, did practically nothing beyond electing officers, for which material seems to have been limited, judging by the way Government officials were elected. Personally, one has no objections to these men getting such advertising, but the far-too-prevalent tendency of electing such men does harm to the organization. As a rule, they can be depended upon to do as they are wanted, but not being engaged in the active operations of the live-stock trade, cannot be expected to have so many pertinent ideas on the subject as men engaged in the live-stock trade for a living would have.

At present the N. L.-S. Association resembles more nearly a college for instruction in practical politics than anything else. Probably after it gets the novitiates properly touched, some business, such as the building up of a dead-meat trade for Canada, will be attempted. As an institution supported by Government money, the people will soon look for results.

Western men can be expected to balk at meetings called in such busy times as seeding, especially when after a chase across half a continent nothing is done.

The National Live-stock Association can well afford to give its attention to big problems, amongst other things, deliberating over the work of the experimental farms with live stock, and aiding that work by words of suggestion or encouragement. The Association might well press upon the Minister the needs of the West in the way of additional experimental farms, and urge the inception of work by some member of his staff looking to the creating of varieties of clover and corn suited to the West, for on corn and clover depend the building up of a strong beef industry.

The Live-stock Commissioner did a lot of valuable and not always pleasant pioneer work in the nationalizing of the records, in which work he had the benefit of the help and advice of Secretary G. H. Greig. It is to be hoped that now the first-named gentleman will be able to get a dead-meat (beef) trade established in Canada, on a par with the bacon and cheese trades, and also that he may be able to placate the B. C. stockmen, who have no particular reason to be thankful for the help withheld from them for the last few years.

### The Need of Good Sires.

The urgent necessity for the use of more good sires in the breeding of beef cattle in this country is clearly evident to all who visit our stock-yards and markets. Prime cattle, such as are suitable for the export trade, are steadily becoming scarcer, while good cattle for grazing or stall feeding are hard to secure, even at prices that used to be considered satisfactory for finished heaves. There is no great profit even in feeding first-class cattle for beef, beyond that made by selling the grain and fodder at a good price through the cattle, and the fertility added to the farm by feeding the stock. But feeding inferior cattle is usually a losing game, and the only way to make it reasonably profitable is to improve the quality of the stock by the use of good pure-bred bulls. A glance at the market reports shows that there is generally a difference of at least one dollar a hundred weight between the price of good and medium cattle, and nearly another dollar between the value of medium and common, which means a difference of from ten to twenty dollars each in the selling price. A pure-bred yearling bull may be bought just now for about what he will bring for beef at maturity, or at the end of a term of service in the herd, and he will, in the meantime, probably add from five to ten dollars a head to the value of every calf he sires, if sold for beef at two years old, as compared with common stock at the same age and with the same feeding. The farmer who does not see his way to keeping a bull for use in his own herd, can, in most cases, secure the services of a pure-bred sire for a fee of from one to two dollars, and the calf will be worth from five to ten dollars more than one from a scrub bull, at any time after it is a year old. And we would advise a farmer with only a herd of grade cows not to be content to use a third-class pure-bred bull. A first-class one, if purchased at a reasonable price, will probably make up the difference between his cost and that of an inferior one in the quality of his progeny, in the superior feeding properties of his get. The prices at which first-class bulls are now being held by breeders are not excessive, considering the investment in the sires and dams from which they are bred, and the expense incident to maintaining a high-class herd, while medium-class bulls are plentiful, and may be purchased at a very moderate price.

The need of the use of good sires in the country applies not only to beef cattle, but to all other classes of stock. The producing capacity of our dairy cows might be nearly doubled, on the average, in a very few years, by the use of pure-bred bulls bred from deep-milking strains, whereas a large proportion of the cows in the country are barely paying for their feed, and many are not even doing that. Good horses would sell for high prices now, and are likely to for many years, but so many farmers have been content to breed their mares to cheap-grade stallions that good horses are extremely scarce, and inferior ones

rightly sell for inferior prices, though they cost just as much to raise and keep as the better class that bring big money. A large percentage of the pigs, sheep and poultry in the country are inferior in type and good feeding quality, owing to the penny-wise and pound-foolish policy of farmers in using mongrel sires, or looking for cheap ones, instead of going in for the best, the first cost of which is higher, but which is more than made up in the increased value of their offspring when placed upon the market, while the expense of raising them is no more than in the case of common stuff. There are hundreds, we might say thousands, of good young sires of all these classes in the hands of breeders in this country, and many mature ones that have proved their usefulness, held for sale at very reasonable prices, or their services available at a moderate fee, and there is no sensible excuse for continuing to produce inferior stock, which is raised at a loss and which is injuring the reputation of our country in the markets of the world, and discounting the profits of the farmers and the wealth of the Dominion.

If we are to hold our own in the British market, we need to profit by the example of the farmers and breeders in the Argentine who are buying the best bulls in England and Scotland to improve their cattle, and will leave us in the lurch when their improved stock meets ours in the market to which we are both catering, as are also our neighbors of the United States. Let us get a move on, and go to work in earnest to improve our products and keep them up to a high-class standard.

### Export Tax on the Farmer's Raw Material.

According to the Statistical Yearbook of Canada, the value of ashes exported from the Dominion in 1903 amounted to \$117,326. As most of these are used by American farmers, who pay transportation and middlemen's charges, and consider they are still getting good value for the money, it requires no expert to calculate that their potential value to the Canadian farmer must be at least double this estimate. Meanwhile, our lands are being gradually depleted of available potash that must be sooner or later replaced at three times the price for which we are now selling it in the form of ashes. How long shall we thus continue to enrich our neighbors with our own resources? Fertility is a raw material just as is timber or minerals—a raw material which, although extensive, is by no means inexhaustible, and which it therefore behooves us to conserve. It is universally agreed that of all forms of fiscal protection, export tax on raw material is by far the best. Why not place such a duty on ashes, so that if we cannot wholly stop the export of them, we may at least realize a revenue, instead of magnanimously permitting the American farmer to enjoy the benefit of cheap potash at our expense?

A similar argument applies to the by-products of the packing-house, for instance, bones, of which, according to the above-quoted authority, we exported in the same year (1903), 49,211 cwt., appraised by the customs at \$32,228, which figures, if they mean anything, indicate that a lot of phosphorus has been sold at a price away below its agricultural value.

Again, the agitation for an export duty on wheat could be quite justifiably met by a demand for similar customs toll on by-products of the mill. It will be no difficult task to persuade the stockmen and dairymen of Canada that the 351,641 cwt. of bran that left our ports would have been better fed at home than sold to competing stock-feeders in the United States and Great Britain. For years the Canadian manufacturer has been clamoring for cheap raw material and conservation by fiscal legislation of the supplies we have: Is it not time the farmer had a schedule framed in his favor, and what better move is there than an export tax on fertility and feeding stuffs?

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