

FARMERS' PRICES AND CONSUMERS' PRICES.

The city housekeeper who studies the market rates of farm produce in the papers with the view of reducing his expenses through careful and economical purchases, is in a fair way to become insane. For example, the rates quoted for choice dairy butter are 18 to 19c. perhaps. This he knows means wholesale prices, and he is quite prepared to pay 20 or 21c. He tries it, and what is the result? Good dairy butter fit for the table will cost him from 27 to 33c. per pound. This has the effect of astonishing him, to say the least of it. He protests, and the retail grocer quietly tells him that he is welcome to do better elsewhere if he can, but he is assured that he cannot, and if he tries he is very apt to find that the grocer is right. He quotes the market rates, and the retailer laughs at him, and assures him that the newspaper quotations are all nonsense—that they are dictated by the wholesale men for the express purpose of bulldozing the farmers out of their produce, but that in reality the wholesalers never sell at the prices they quote.

He goes to the market reporters, and they assure him that the rates they quote are based on actual transactions in round lots. It is of no use for him to offer to take one or two hundred pounds at a reasonable advance on the quotations. He can only buy his produce through the ordinary channels, and after a great deal of worry he finds himself just about where he started. After all this, should he go to the farmer to buy a tub of butter the chances are that the farmer will take it for granted that there has been a sudden rise, or that butter is cornered, and he will be afraid to sell at any price. We have no quarrel with the average farmer, but it is a singular fact that an experienced dealer can make a much better bargain with them on the market than he can on their own premises. When they haul their produce to market they will take what they can get for it, but as long as it is on their own premises they will take nothing less than what they want for it.

From eight to ten cents per pound on butter is considerably more than city middle-men have any right to tax the producer and consumer, and it looks as though would it not be a bad plan for the farmers to adopt some means of doing away with the intervention of such a class of extortioners so far as the home trade is concerned to say the least of it. There would not be much expense attendant upon the establishment of a scheme of co-operative marketing, by which those of one township or portion of a township could sell their butter, eggs, beef, mutton, and other products intended for local consumption at a city depot where merely the actual cost of handling would intervene between the price paid by the consumer and that received by the producer.

City tradesmen combine to keep up their profits. There are associations of butchers, bakers, and retailers of all sorts, and these combinations are formed for the purpose of keeping

the producers' prices down to the lowest possible figure and the cost to consumers up to the highest rate available. All these combinations are formed for the express purpose of robbing the farmer and those who consume what he produces. The only course open to the farmers is to meet combinations with combinations, until the butchers, bakers, grocers, and milkmen of the city are content to do business on a reasonable basis and eschew combinations of every kind.

IS IT JEALOUSY OR CANDID CONVICTION?

Hardly a week passes that some one is not coming forward with the declaration that he has a scrub cow or a grade that with the same feed and care that has been bestowed on the Cattle Club Jerseys would yield as much butter in a week. Now, this may be jealousy or it may be the result of honest conviction, but in either case it is high time that some of the critics of the crack Jerseys should substitute proof for mere "say so." We do not say that there may not be grade cattle or scrubs in Canada that could be made to produce as much butter in a week as Mary Anne of St. Lambert did, but at present we think it is highly improbable, and we shall continue to think so until some advocate of cross-bred butter cows has the pluck to give one of his favorites a fair test. The expenses of such a test would not be great, and three dozen pounds of butter would go a long way toward paying them. At all events, it savors of childishness for the enemies of the Jerseys to keep up a constant stream of bunkum when if their pretensions are well founded they can be so easily established by incontestible proof. Let them come to the front and make good the claims of their grades, or else cease this idle boasting as to what they can do.

THE NATIONAL REGISTER OF NORMAN HORSES.

We have just received the third volume of the National Register of Norman Horses, published at Quincy, Ill., by the National Norman Horse Association. It is a handsome 8vo. volume of some 300 pages, including introductory matter, and this brings the Norman Horse Register up to 642 pages. Of course the value of registration in this book largely depends upon the caution and accuracy used in the registering of Norman horses in France, but the dealer can at least confidently rely on the fact that no contamination of this race will be countenanced on this side of the Atlantic.

THE BRITISH AMERICAN HERD BOOK.

The British American Shorthorn Association shows no signs of decadence, but on the other hand appears to be about as thoroughly alive and vigorous as any live stock organization on this side of the Atlantic. We are indebted to

its competent and energetic secretary, Mr. R. L. Denison, for a copy of vol. III. of the British American Herd Book, a handsome 8vo. volume of about 500 pages, published for the British American Shorthorn Association by Messrs. Hunter, Rose & Co.

FAIR PRICES FOR THOROUGHBREDS.—Mr. B. N. E. Fletcher, whose exportation of mares to Mexico was mentioned in an article in THE CANADIAN BREEDER of Feb. 20th, under the heading "Exporting Raw Material," paid an average price of \$525 for the lot.

Correspondence.

DOCKING HORSES.

To the Editor of THE CANADIAN BREEDER.

DEAR SIR,—I notice in the issue of your valuable paper of the 20th March a letter by Henry Bergh, of New York, strongly condemning the practice of docking horse's tails.

I have seen a great many horses docked in the North of England, by both veterinary surgeons and blacksmiths, "especially the best veterinarians in England," the operation being performed by the smith equally as well as by the vet.; not with such barbarous cruelty as Mr. Bergh mentions in his letter. The horse being merely held by the owner, or man in charge, the operator ties a piece of strong string tightly around the tail, the hair tied back the required distance from the body, "sometimes a little being cut away to give a cleaner cut with the shears." The shears are then given a sharp pull together, and off drops the tail. The horse scarcely moves or feels the loss of his tail, as the operation is so quickly done. No doubt the string being tied tightly round the tail above where cut off deadens the pain by pressing upon the nerve and staying all flow of blood. An iron specially made for the purpose is then applied to the tail, but is not used in such a manner as Mr. Bergh says, the end of the tail merely being pressed unless there is a flow of blood; then the iron is used a little oftener, in the same manner as in the castration of lambs, &c. if the flow of blood does not stop.

After this operation the horse is taken home, the string remaining on for a few days. I have certainly known a few cases where the horse has died, the operation being performed by a veterinary surgeon, but in all probability owing to the owner not having taken care of the horse, turning him out and so taking cold in the rainy days usually found in spring in the North of England. All this is done in broad daylight, without fear of an officer of the S. P. C. A. Almost every horse-owner and breeder has his horses docked.

At a meeting held at Manchester, England, at the National Veterinary Association, the question of docking was raised; some were for, others against, the practice. If I have not trespassed too much already, allow me to quote a few words by Professor Axe. He said it was undoubted that a horse which was docked was more safe for the riding of women and children and unskilled persons than a horse the tail of which was allowed to remain long. Docking was not a painless, but still it was, at times, a very necessary operation. Again, Professor Williams defended the practice and said it was not cruel, nor very painful, nor did it afterwards cause inconvenience to the animal. He maintained it was necessary.