

The Condition of Agriculture in Prince Edward Island

The harvest is past and the summer ended on the Island. The farmer is not by any means jubilant over the ingathering. Hay was good, although hard to make on account of the showery weather. It was got under cover with difficulty in fairly good condition.

The wheat crop was badly scourged with rust, many of the fields were scarcely worth harvesting. Even those varieties usually considered rust-proof, notably the White Russian, will scarcely yield half the return of other years.

Oats have also been more or less blighted, but not to the same extent as wheat. In exposed situations, along the coast and near the shores of bays and tidal rivers, the straw turned black, got broken down and ceased to fill early in August. Many of those fields were cut and raked up for cattle, feed being utterly worthless as to grain product. On inland farms the visitation was not so disastrous, and many of the farmers are thankful for a fair crop of this grain.

Wet seasons and bad potato years are synonymous terms with us; the present year confirms the rule. Potato digging, which usually begins about the first week in October, is now pretty well advanced. Many farmers have the crop cellared and some shipping done, so that the average return can be approximately estimated.

Fifty to one hundred bushels per acre of small stunted tubers are reported from several farms here at New Perth, where the average yield in good seasons rated at two hundred bushels per acre or thereabout.

Turnips and other root crops are still mostly in the ground. There is little complaint about these; they will likely turn out fairly well. Ensilage corn is much the same as in other years since dairying led the farmers to try it on an extended scale. This is not saying much in its favor.

Fruit did better a good deal than last year, though not of course so well as the year before. We are not exporters of fruit in Prince Edward Island and our local market has been overstocked since the strawberries came in. It requires patience, fortitude and courage of the highest order on the part of the fruit vendor when he undertakes, with a barrel of apples or basket of plums, to negotiate a sale with the stony-hearted dowager who presides over the household jam crocks and preserving kettles in our small villages and towns. A small consignment of apples and plums were sent in cold storage the other day in the Winnipeg steamer from Charlottetown as a trial shipment to England.

During the autumn sheep and lambs have been bought up freely for shipment to Halifax and St. John by butchers and others in the trade. Later on fowls and mutton for St. John's, Nfld., and St. Pierre will be bought up and shipped in large quantities as in former years towards the close of navigation.

Pigs have been multiplying and growing moderately fat during the past twelve months—since the packing emporium was opened in the city. The breeding sow and the bacon hog will soon command equal consideration and regard with the much-belauded dairy cow. Pasturage was never better at this late season, and cheese factories are busy at work with little or no diminution of the milk supply.

When full returns are secured later on I think the season of 1898, although prices are not high, will rank as the most successful cheese year we have had since the factory system was established on the Island.

J. HAMILTON.

New Perth, P.E.I., Oct. 22, 1898.

Cattle and Sheep on the Western Ranges

The following is taken from a bulletin of date October 1st, issued by the National Live Stock Association of the United States, and may be of interest to Canadian stockmen:

"The greatly discussed shortage of range cattle has

manifested itself beyond doubt, principally in the northern and western sections, where shipments will show a falling off from last year's record of from 10 to 15 per cent. The heaviest decrease is in aged cattle, three years old and over, of which class there is an actual famine in some sections. Young cattle are also not as plentiful in the range sections as last year, but the territory covered by Kansas, Nebraska and South Dakota report a large increase, hardly enough, however, to make up for the decrease in the West and North.



Two Holstein bulls, the property of A. & G. Rice, Curries, Ont. The one on the right is Homestead Albino de Kol 23589, calved April 22nd, 1897. First as a yearling at Toronto, London and Ottawa, 1898. The other is Calamity Jane's Paul 1383, calved Nov. 12, 1897, out of Calamity Jane, with a show record of 85 lbs. in or-day Sire Paul de Kol Clothilde, a noted prize-winner. This bull was first at London and Ottawa.

The percentage of range cattle that will go for feeders this year is considerably less than usual, owing to the good feed that has prevailed on the range and the strong demand for beef cattle. Most of the markets report a good percentage of arrivals fit for beef, and for the first time in some months the range steer is worth more for beef than as a feeder to be finished on corn. The demand for feeders in the West, including the territory west of the Missouri river, has been far less than last year up to the present time; but in the territory east of the river the demand is larger than it has been before in years. The crop of rough feed has been large in nearly all sections of the country and indications are favorable for the rough feeding of an unusually large number of cattle during the winter. While it is generally conceded that the number of cattle going into the dry lots for winter feeding will be lighter this season than last, this is considered a favorable sign for the maintenance of the present satisfactory prices for fat cattle. Packers report the beef demand for home and foreign consumption most satisfactory and the demand for good cattle well finished is unusually strong. It is expected that while the number of cattle on dry feed for the winter will be less than last year, the quality will average better, another factor towards maintaining the good prices.

While the movement of sheep thus far has been rather lighter than last year up to this time, the decrease in the movement being about ten to fifteen per cent., flockmasters are feeling independent and are holding prices pretty firm. In some sections the high prices have held the movement down to a very low point.

If present conditions continue, the number of lambs and sheep moved from western ranges this fall will fall fully 20 per cent. below last fall's movement.

The scarcity of cattle on the ranges of the West has made good grazing during the summer, and both sheep and lambs are coming out in better condition than usual. The expected demand from New England and eastern farms for stock sheep has not been as heavy as expected. Good ewes, both lambs and yearlings, are offered more freely than a year ago, though flockmasters still show a leaning toward keeping the breeding sheep on the range. . . .