

THE FARMER'S ADVOCATE

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EDITORIAL.

The cool and cloudy days of the first week in May, following the heavy rains of the previous week, had a good effect in preventing the soil from crusting, which would in many cases have been the result had warm, bright days prevailed. The recent showers and warmer temperatures have given the crops a good start, and the prospect for the farmer is bright indeed.

The statement has been made in several of our contemporaries that the lot of Canadian-bred hogs secured and slaughtered as an experiment by Messrs. Armour, of Chicago, the cured product of which greatly surpassed that from the Western States reared animals, were all Yorkshires. Mr. D. McIntyre, the Canadian buyer who purchased the hogs for Armour, informs us that they were simply a mixed lot of grades of various breeds, such as he can pick up at any season in Middlesex or Huron Counties, Ont., where he buys for the Ingersoll Packing Co.

Canadian breeders have special advantages in importing breeding stock from Great Britain at the present time, being free from the vicissitudes of war, and having the use of excellent steamship lines, carrying animals at reasonable tariff rates to Quebec and Halifax, where liberal quarantine regulations obtain, and ample and comfortable accommodations are provided for stock. Being happily free from distractions of either a public or social character, our people may peacefully pursue their avocations and avail themselves of the increased volume of business which is bound to come our way. Canada will continue to be the breeding ground from which pure-bred stock will be sought for the supply of the United States, and our breeders are awake to their advantage in this regard, and are preparing to meet the great demand which seems to be inevitable for high-class stock in all lines, as well as for farm produce, of which we are now in a position to supply the best in nearly every line and in large quantities. The prospect is that more stock will be imported this year than has been brought out for several years past.

We regret to learn that the indications are that no Provincial Exhibition will be held in Prince Edward Island this year. The present Legislature of the Province has taken a new "kink" and purpose importing stock and running the Government stock farm more strongly, thus reversing the policy of the last seven years, which was to encourage agriculture and stock-raising by the instrumentality of industrial exhibitions, the success of which plan has been undeniable and has produced a great change for the better in dairying and fruit-growing, as well as in the breeding of live stock of all sorts. The great benefit of such exhibitions in stimulating improvement in these and kindred lines in all the other provinces is undoubted, and the step contemplated by the Island Legislature is, in our opinion, a retrograde one. On the other hand, it is a well-known fact that the breeding of thoroughbred stock on Government farms has not been a success in any country. In our opinion their proper sphere, in so far as stock-raising is concerned, is by keeping pure-bred sires to show the improvement that can be made by grading up, and by conducting experiments in the feeding and management of stock with a view to profitable and economical production of the most desirable quantity and quality of meat and milk. For the purposes of such experiments good grade animals answer every purpose, and to secure these the purchase of pure-bred male animals for use at the Government farms is the only outlay really necessary in that direction. For the rest it is infinitely better to encourage private enterprise and competition by liberal grants for prizes at the exhibitions.

Fattening Steers Loose in Box Stalls.

The farm department of the Ontario Agricultural College at Guelph recently completed a stock-feeding experiment, which serves to keep that institution in the front rank by continuing to grapple with problems that have a practical and important bearing upon the principal branch of farming operations. The question of fattening steers loose in boxes or tied in stalls is important apart from the comparative gain in weight, because of the simpler and more inexpensive internal arrangement of stables required for the former plan. Over a year ago a member of the FARMER'S ADVOCATE staff was furnished with particulars, which we published at the time, of a test conducted on the farm of the Hon. Mr. Mulock, Postmaster-General, near Newmarket, Ont., between a bunch of steers tied in stalls and another lot dehorned and running loose in a large stall. The difference in gain in favor of the latter was so great (nearly 160 lbs. each in the six months' fattening period) as to excite widespread interest and not a little incredulity on the part of some. However, subsequent accounts published of the results of that system, as pursued by Mr. W. C. Edwards, M. P., of Rockland, Ont.; the Messrs. McMillan, of Huron Co., Ont.; A. & D. Brown, of Elgin Co., and others, were decidedly confirmatory, though such high gains were not reported, and emphasized the necessity for further investigation where the conditions from first to last would be such as to insure accuracy. Discerning the importance of the subject to the farmer from a dollars-and-cents point of view, the authorities of the Ontario Agricultural College made arrangements last fall for an official feeding test, under the supervision of Mr. Wm. Rennie, Farm Superintendent, whose report upon the test we give below, and which indicates that the loose steers gained about 70 lbs. each per head in the six months more than those confined, worth in cash \$3.25 each at the price sold, in addition to the cheaper system of stabling. The report states that the two lots were fed the same rations, of the same weight, though it has been generally understood that cattle fed loose would consume larger quantities of food. We commend a careful study of Mr. Rennie's letter to our readers:

To the Editor FARMER'S ADVOCATE:

SIR,—I herewith give you the result of the experiment in feeding 21 steers for six months at the O. A. C. Fifteen were tied in stalls on Nov. 1st, 1897, and six were fed in box stalls, 14 x 15 feet each, loose (3 in each stall) until April 28th, 1898, nearly six months. The steers were bought at the beginning of October and ran on grass till Nov. 1st, when the experiment began. Both lots were fed the same rations, as follows:

November—	30 lbs. out fodder corn	\$.0225
	4 " " chaff	.003
	15 " pulped roots	.016
	24 " chopped grain and bran	.025
	Rape (only) at noon	.02
	Cost per steer per day	\$.0885
December—	30 lbs. ensilage and fodder corn	\$.0225
	10 " pulped roots	.0100
	10 " out clover and chaff	.0187
	6 " chopped grain and bran	.0388
	Rape (only) at noon	.0200
	Cost per steer per day	\$.1100
January—	25 lbs. ensilage	\$.0188
	10 " out clover and chaff	.0187
	10 " pulped roots	.0100
	7 " chopped grain and bran	.04875
	30 " turnips (only) at noon	.0300
	Cost per steer per day	\$.12625
February—	25 lbs. ensilage	\$.0188
	10 " out clover and chaff	.0187
	10 " pulped roots	.0100
	7 " chopped grain and bran	.0500
	30 " turnips alone at noon	.0300
	Cost per steer per day	\$.1375

March—	25 lbs. ensilage	\$.0188
	12 " out clover and chaff	.0225
	10 " pulped roots	.0100
	8 " chopped grain and bran	.0580
	Cost per steer per day	\$.1093

April— Same rations as March

Average cost per steer for 6 months	\$.1940
Total cost of food for 21 steers	407.50

The steers were weighed the 1st of each month before receiving their noon meal or being watered that day. The following is a table of the cost of the rations:

Fodder corn and ensilage, per ton	\$.1 50
Roots, per ton	3 00
Clover hay, per ton	6 00
Chaff, per ton	1 50
Chopped grain (barley, oats and peas, a good part screenings) per 100	75
Bran, per ton	5 50

The chopped grain and bran were mixed, grain and bran.

One of the steers in the box stall was off his feed for a few days at the end of March, which accounts for the small gain for that month, and the very small gain in April was owing to the allowance for shrinkage when sold.

COMPARATIVE INCREASE IN WEIGHT DURING EXPERIMENT.

Weight of 15 steers in stalls on November 1st, 1897: Total weight, 15,333 lbs.; average weight, 1,022 2/3 lbs.	
Average gain for November	87 7-15 "
" " " December	73 9-15 "
" " " January	62 10-15 "
" " " February	37 9-15 "
" " " March	50 1-15 "
" " " April	11 1-15 "
Total average gain	291 7-15 "
Weight of 15 steers on April 28th, 1898: Total, 25,705 lbs.; average, 1,713 1/3 lbs.	
Total gain, 4,372 lbs.; average gain, 291 7-15 lbs.	

PROFIT AND LOSS ACCOUNT.

21 steers weighing, when bought, 25,000 lbs. at \$4.10 per 100	\$1,025.00
21 steers weighing, when sold, 32,185 lbs. at \$4.65 per 100	1,498.00
Less cost of food	407.50
Net profit	\$60.50

Those that were tied had water before them all the time, and were not let out for exercise; those that were loose were watered twice a day.

The steers were all sold to Mr. A. P. Scott, of Brampton, and shipped April 28th, 1898. While we made this test as accurate as possible, still we hope to repeat the experiment next winter. On the 2nd of May we purchased fifteen two-year-old steers; next day they were dehorned; and are being fed loose in box stalls, the intention being to finish them off on the grass.

WM. RENNIE,
Ontario Agricultural College, May 6, 1898.

Trusting the Judges.

A number of our contemporaries of the English agricultural press are, we think, unduly exercised over the decision of the Council of the Royal Agricultural Society to furnish the judges of live stock with a catalogue of the entries so that they may avail themselves, if they choose, of such information as it contains as to the ownership, age, and breeding of the animals which come before them. The report of the Stock Committee recommending this innovation, as it is called, was adopted by the Council by a vote of two to one, after an exhaustive discussion, and one would naturally conclude that the opinion of so large a majority of the well-informed members of the Council ought to be accepted as a tolerably safe index of the sentiments of stockmen and judges generally. But the majority of the leader writers of the agricultural