

Manitoba Studs, Herds and Flocks.

REA & HICKLING'S THOROUGHBREDS.

The recently imported thoroughbred stallions belonging to Rea & Hickling, of Rapid City, have been doing well and promise to come out in the spring in excellent form. Further information regarding them will interest our readers. Canova is a bay horse, 5 years old; sire Rostrenor, by Thormanby, by Melbourne or Windhound; dam of Rostrenor, Lady Augusta, by Stockwell; dam of Canova, Cascade, by Master Richard, by Teddington, by Orlando; her dam Niagara, by Colonist, out of Lister to St. Lawrence. The other stallion, Wellgate, is a brown horse, 3 years old; sire Cavaliero, by Camburcan, out of Idalia, by Thunderbolt; her dam Dalcibella, by Voltigeur, out of Priestess, by the Doctor; dam Chaff (late Tillage), by Wild Oats, by Wild Dayrell; her dam Matilda, by Orlando, out of Jarella, by Emilins. Canova and Wellgate have both great substance and power, possessing good bone; they are gentle and grand feeders, pronounced free from any vice, and their pedigrees speak for themselves.

J. H. COCHRAN'S AYRSHIRES.

On a beautifully commanding situation, about a mile to the north-west of Crystal City, is the farm of Mr. J. H. Cochran, who has pinned his faith to the Ayrshire breed of cattle, especially for dairying purposes, but also because he has found them and their grades useful in producing excellent beef. His foundation stock was from the herd of Mr. Youill, of Carleton Place, Ont., and at the time of the writer's visit numbered eleven head, including the bull "Dakota Joe," four cows, one 2-year-old heifer, two heifer calves and three bull calves, all in healthy condition, though not in anything like show order. Mr. Cochran purposes shortly placing a new bull at the head of his herd. His stock is comfortably housed in a bank barn. His horses are of a useful type. Mr. Cochran is a believer in mixed farming, and to that end keeps, in addition to his cattle, a small stock of well-bred pigs. He secured his wheat crop last season in capital order, sold it early, and realized a very satisfactory price.

WILLOW BROOK STOCK FARM.

The proprietor of the above farm, Mr. John Oughten, was absent at the time of a recent visit by a representative of the FARMER'S ADVOCATE, but his flock of pure-bred Shropshire sheep were found in the very best of condition. Their healthy, vigorous appearance was a sufficient answer to the enquiry:—Are the "Shrops" adapted to the climate and general conditions of Manitoba? At this time the flock numbered 10, including the imported ram, and they were certainly not only a credit to Mr. Oughten, but to the Prairie Province. True, the flock is not yet large numerically, but the foundation is there, and having made so good a start, there should be no doubt about the future. The Berkshire and other pigs inspected were a decidedly superior lot, but the rest of the Willow Brook Farm stock it was not the writer's privilege to see, owing to Mr. Oughten's absence. This farm is only a few moments' drive from Crystal City.

BREEDING HORSES.

A few miles further from Crystal City Mr. Wm. Werry has an excellent farm, and is making a specialty of breeding draught horses. That he has been successful would appear from the Winnipeg Industrial Fair prize list, where his winnings included two first premiums and one second.

Endorses the Advocate.

John Jowsey, Saltcoat, Assa., N. W. T., writes:—During last year I saw your paper often, and like it very much for the information given, but particularly the way it stands up for farmers' rights. I was very glad to see a paper with courage enough to publish such an article as in December number of the ADVOCATE on "Railroads and Farm Produce."

A Visit to Balder.

On Thursday, February 11th, a well attended and interesting Farmers' Institute meeting was held at Balder. Mr. James Dale, president, in the chair, Mr. F. Schultz, secretary *pro tem*. A resolution similar to the one adopted by the Brandon Institute, asking the Dominion Government to remove the duty from binding twine, was unanimously adopted. Mr. Thompson, of the FARMER'S ADVOCATE, was introduced, and gave an address setting forth the advantages to be gained by the more general adoption of mixed farming, indicating, however, that each individual farmer should make a careful study of the natural adaptation of his farm and other conditions, and conducting his operations accordingly, bringing to bear the very best knowledge and skill possible.

Mr. Dale congratulated the speaker upon the way in which he had introduced the subject, and invited discussion.

Mr. Strang said the position taken by Mr. Thompson in warning farmers against an indiscriminate rush into mixed farming, regardless of circumstances, was sound. He agreed that there were farms especially well adapted to wheat growing, and on such it should be made a specialty, but enough cows, pigs, poultry, etc. should be kept to supply at least domestic wants. In going into stock raising or dairying, the two main things to be considered were, the suitability of the farm to grazing or producing hay, and the question of labor, hired help being scarce and expensive. He summerfallowed to "give the land a rest," and to gain time in soil preparation for the next season.

Mr. Playfair spoke in favor of mixed farming, reporting that his returns from stock, etc., sold last season, were \$760, yielding him a profit that satisfied him, and afforded good prospects for the future.

Mr. Dale believed in mixed farming and practiced it, but his hobby was growing No. 1 hard. He purposed keeping more stock, as it saved him one year in case of drought, and might again.

Mr. Schultz started a discussion on smut by propounding the theory that it did not result from spores sown with the seed or in the ground, but from sowing defective grain. This brought out a lot of clear testimony on the subject, the conclusion arrived at being that smutty seed should not be sown, and that bluestoning was a most effective precaution. One experiment reported proved conclusively that sowing seed intentionally smutted had produced a smutty crop.

Discussing the horse question, Mr. Martin contended that every farmer should, at least, breed enough good horses for his own use, and believed that a heavy type was the most likely to be profitable.

The next meeting was fixed for March 12th, when Mr. Chas. Martin will read a paper on spring cultivation, and Mr. H. Sexsmith on the selection of seed grain. Two good topics.

Several pushing farmers in the vicinity of Balder have made a good start in the keeping of well bred stock, Messrs. A. Cramer and W. Playfair having laid the foundation of shorthorn herds by excellent selections from the John E. Smith stock farm, Beresford, Brandon. Mr. Cramer has also pure-bred Berkshire pigs, and Mr. Playfair a Clydesdale stallion, also purchased from Mr. John E. Smith.

Mr. James Dale erected an excellent barn 26x32 last season, which he proposes to place upon a stone foundation, and to extend until his stock yard is enclosed on three sides. He has a fine water supply, the pump being in the stable—a great comfort in severe weather. Mr. Dale and his sons now own two sections of land. On his own section Mr. Dale last year grew 2,400 bushels White Fyle wheat, average 32 bushels per acre, grading No. 1, of which he has sold about 1,500 bushels for seed. His sales averaged 77 cents. He grew also 700 bushels of oats and barley, and his sons raised 3,200 bushels wheat and 1,300 bushels of oats. Mr. Dale says his locality has only suffered from frost once since he settled in 1882, and that was in 1885.

Fair Secretaries or Directors—A Request.

In order that farmers, stock breeders and others may be correctly informed in time of the dates of next season's exhibitions, we request the secretaries or directors of all agricultural societies or exhibition associations to send to the FARMER'S ADVOCATE office, Winnipeg, the date and place of holding fairs as soon as fixed. We wish to publish a complete list, and rely on our friends for official information.

Sweepstake Prizes.

BY D. F. WILSON, BRANDON.

When agricultural societies offer prizes for the best animal of any particular breed there can be no objection raised, though when the competing animals are exceptionally good and vary in age from calves to aged it will sometimes give the judge some difficulty to place them right. When, however, a prize is offered for the best herd or flock of any breed, or for the best horse or bull on the grounds, it is quite another thing. How are the judges to make their awards?

When such a prize is offered for cattle it goes to the handsomest animals, which means the best specimen or specimens of a beef breed, and no matter how good the animals of dairy breeds competing with them may be they have no chance, provided the beef animals are fairly good. Take for instance a herd of Shorthorns in the pink of condition and a herd of Jerseys with their bones almost sticking through their hides. The Shorthorns will get first nine times out of ten, although if each were judged by a scale of points of their own, the Jerseys would score the highest. If the different breeds are to compete with each other, they ought not to be judged by comparison. They should be judged as to their standing in their own particular breeds, and those that stand the highest to be winners. But where is the judge that can do this? He is not yet born. Of course, in some cases, there would be no difficulty in judging. Where the difficulty comes in is when the competing animals are exceedingly good ones. If stock was judged by a scale of points, a sweepstake prize would be all right, for the animal scoring highest by its own scale would then get the prize. Sweepstakes of this kind used to be more common than they are now. I remember a county show in Ontario at which year after year prizes were offered for both the best bull and best herd of cattle of any breed.

A few years ago a prize was offered at the Ontario Provincial Show for the best flock of sheep most suitable for the farmer, exporter and butcher. Here was another difficulty! The judges in the case, I understand, did not attempt to judge the flocks for these qualities, but very wisely gave the prize to the flock they considered the best representative sheep among the different breeds competing.

This subject was brought forcibly to my mind by the sweepstakes for the best light stallion at the Winnipeg Industrial Show. There competed there stallions of four different breeds, name'y, Thoroughbred, Hackney, Cey and Bay and Standard-bred. The prize was awarded to the latter. Here at an Agricultural Show the successful horse was the only one of little or no use to the agriculturist, unless he attempts the very risky business of raising trotters, while stallions of each of the other breeds bred to the different styles of mares are just what is wanted by farmers to get light and general purpose horses. Then again, there was the objection I have already mentioned—Was this Standard-bred horse a better specimen of his breed than were the other horses of theirs? It is questionable.

The only class where breeds can compete with each other at all fairly is draught horses. Cydes and Shires, for instance, can, and often do, compete, but even here there is an objection. Judges generally have a leaning towards one breed or the other, and though perfectly honest in their intention, this leaning has a weight with them, so that all things considered, the sooner sweepstake prizes (except those for single breeds) are done away with the better.