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FARMER'S ADVOCATE AND HOME JOURNAL

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EDITORIAL

Our Draft Horse Interests

This year promises to break all records in horse shows and the horse business, so far as draft horses are concerned. Western Canada received a large proportion of the fourteen hundred odd Clydesdales exported from Scotland in 1909. Clydesdale men in this country have been buying freely in the East and South. Of Percherons there are more good ones on the prairies than ever before. Shires are coming in increasing numbers and in Alberta, Suffolk Punch breeders have increased the numbers of this excellent British draft breed by substantial importations from the Old Land. The outlook in pure-bred drafters was never more promising.

At Brandon, last week there appeared the largest rings of Clydesdales, Percherons and Shires ever seen at a Western Canadian exhibition—rings large in numbers and of a particularly high standard of excellence. Regina and Calgary spring shows will excel the Manitoba Winter Fair in some respects and followers of the draft breeds may anticipate this season the strongest exhibits of this class of horse ever made at Canadian fairs. Some of the rings at Brandon last week were sensational for the number of entries, quality in the individuals and attractiveness; but where the success of one fair is duplicated by two others within a month one should have some grasp of the magnitude of the draft horse interests of the West.

Handling Winter Wheat Fields

Farmers in some parts of the winter wheat country in Alberta are writing us with regard to what they should do with fall-sown wheat that did not appear any too promising when

winter set in. In some cases the seed does not appear to have germinated; in others it sprouted but did not get through the surface, while in other cases there was a weak stand in the fall.

As a general rule it is best not to do anything with such fields too early in the spring. How the crop will come along depends on the character of the season, and it may be that a field that appeared a total failure may turn out all right if good growing weather and plenty of moisture come. D. W. Warner, a well-known expert on winter wheat growing in Alberta, discusses this subject in this issue and his suggestions are worth considering by those who are in doubt as what they should do with winter wheat that is coming out in none too promising condition.

Sheep Versus Dairying

An interesting feature of the lectures given at Brandon Winter Fair was the attention paid to sheep raising. Several who had experience averred that sheep husbandry returned profits worth while when due intelligence was exercised in the handling of the flock.

What would seem to be a wrong tactic, however, was introduced at one of the sessions when comparisons were made between sheep raising and dairying—rather with the purpose of injuring the latter. Perhaps one gives more freedom as to hours of attention required and brings equal or greater returns, but the prairie provinces need men who follow all branches of the farming industry. Some can make most from a flock of sheep, while many will run chances on a herd of good cows. There is little danger of there being too many of either in the West for many years to come. Conditions must be considered in every case; but intelligence can be used to advantage in making a profit from either.

Hog Shortage

With five or six million shortage in hog supplies in the United States compared with a couple of years ago and hundreds of thousands less than a normal supply in Canada, the present high prices offered for hogs must necessarily remain at profitable levels for eighteen months to two years at the very least. For some time past Winnipeg quotations have stood around nine cents. At this figure little argument is forthcoming to support the claim that hog raising does not pay.

While, generally speaking, it is not safe to advise farmers to undertake any particular branch of their industry more than another, it is reasonably safe at present to advocate hog raising.

The Canadian West needs live stock. Many no doubt fear a return of the calamity of a

few years ago when a goodly supply was met with starvation prices. But conditions in marketing have changed. The transportation problem will be remedied and assurances are offered that satisfactory stock yards will be provided.

During the past, bacon has been imported from the United States. Scarcity of supplies there indicates that soon it will be difficult to draw from that source. Now, then, is the time for Canadians to take up the rearing of the proper type and go about the hog industry intelligently to hold the market that rightly belongs to them.

Any Breeder Can Win

One point of which all exhibitors should feel proud is the fact that at Winter Fairs held in Western Canada, they are not obliged to be classed among the large breeders or the extensive importers before they can carry off the ribbons that indicate they have the best animals at the show. Special care should be taken to see that conditions always remain thus. Up to the present the man who owns but a single stallion can enter the show ring and feel assured that his animal will get justice—at least in so far as the judge's ability goes. It is not thus at all exhibitions. It is commonly admitted that at certain shows representatives of one stable hold the easy end of the tug in pulling the coveted ribbons. That such insinuation can be made even in general ring-side talk is deplorable; but when the awards are of such order as to supply backing for such insinuation the situation becomes serious. Smaller breeders, and sometimes larger ones, consider it is not worth their while making an entry, or at least that there is no hope of getting justice in the ribbon presentations.

This treatment has injured many fairs. The fact that such treatment is unknown to the prairie provinces has made it possible to have an exhibition such as that held at Brandon recently. May it always remain so. Those who have the interests of the various classes of live stock at heart will use every possible energy toward maintaining such conditions that any breeder can win if his animal is fit.

Garden Varieties

The progressive gardener as a rule has his seeds ordered before April comes. Many crops are on the way in hot beds or window boxes. Popular varieties from reliable seed houses only should be bought. Sometimes when enquiry is made at a local store for certain varieties of garden vegetables the reply is that the supply of that particular sort is exhausted. But they offer another variety which they try to dispose of as being just as good. Every