

# Farmer's Advocate

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### EDITORIAL

#### Further Agitation for Embargo Removal.

Just at present there is some agitation among English feeders for the removal of the embargo against Canadian and American cattle. Quite probably, however, it will end as such clamor has on former occasions, and will be productive of no real results. The cattle embargo ostensibly imposed to insure that disease should not be introduced into British herds from stock imported into the country, has operated as protective measures always work, and while a few of the public have been benefitted by it, the great mass of consumers have suffered hardship. It has been maintained up to the present, on account of the influence wielded by the so-called "agricultural interests" of the kingdom for the protection of which it was instituted, much the same as our "manufacturing interests" have been protected here, and it works out in precisely the same way. Protected to some extent from foreign competition the British meat producer is enabled to dispose of his product at better prices than he formerly or would otherwise be able to do. But the consumer pays this difference, the embargo simply operates to transfer from his pocket to the pocket of the producer an amount exactly equal to the difference in the price of meat under existing conditions, and the value which would attach to it were foreign cattle allowed to enter the country without restriction of any kind.

This fact is quite patent to the British public. This kind of protection is tolerated by them for the same reason that the consuming public of this country tolerates the tariff protection afforded our manufacturing industries. The British public too, in any matter touching their food supply, are easily influenced. Astute politicians, who raise the hoodoo of impure food, especially diseased meat, can lead them whither they will. Add to this that the fact that the governing class consists largely of landed proprietors who depend on rental of their estates; remember that the rental value of this land depends on the prosperity of agriculture, that the largest British agricultural industry is livestock, and you have a combination strong enough to impose almost any kind of protection on the cattle industry, short of a direct duty, which, by the way, is the only form of protection which the Englishman will not tolerate. On the one hand, a public jealous for the purity of their meat supply, on the other, the great ruling class, far-sighted enough not to jeopardize their own interests by removing a paternal protection from an industry which is the most important of those on which they depend for existence.

At present, however, there is something of a change of front, even among those whom the embargo benefits most, viz., the farming community. Britain's livestock industry is on the wane, has been declining for some time. There are 600,000 fewer people cultivating the soil to-day than there were thirty years ago. This year a poor harvest increases the difficulties of the situation. British farmers, at present time, cannot produce as many cattle as they could profitably feed, hence the clamor for the removal of these restrictions which would permit them bringing in cheap American "store" cattle, which could be finished for market at a fair price.

Such removal would be a good thing for British agriculture, and a good thing for the Canadian and American cattle industry. It would be a boon to the British consumer, for on him the present restriction simply acts as a price booster. The importation of a few thousand head of store stock every year would considerably stimulate the prosperity of British agriculture.

#### The End in Sight.

Calgary exhibition board is to be congratulated upon being assured of the annual grant of \$50,000 to augment their prize list, and furnish accommodation for the holding of a Dominion exhibition next year. When the Dominion Government made the first grant to Toronto to hold a Dominion fair it probably did not anticipate that exhibition boards in the different provinces would be so clamorous for a grant to temporarily and permanently improve their fairs. By its equipment, its well established reputation as the best agricultural exhibition on the continent and by its geographical position, Toronto was justly entitled to a grant to assist it in making its exhibition more national in scope. Winnipeg's claim to the grant was also well founded, although scarcely as strong as Toronto's, and so it has gone on from year to year, the strength of the claim to the grant finally resting upon nothing else than that such and such a fair was held within a certain province and was capable of being adjusted to comply with the standards of a Dominion exhibition. One useful purpose, however, has been served by the prospect of the Dominion grant, and that is, the stimulus that each fair board has labored under to bring their exhibition up to a higher level, so that it could logically take rank with others that had more national advantages and therefore better claims to assistance. In this respect the efforts of Calgary and Regina are most commendable. Since the year of the first grant, for Dominion fair purposes, these exhibitions have steadily improved in merit and extended in scope so that with but very little additional effort they can now be brought to class with anything in the Dominion with the exception of Toronto and Winnipeg; both of which have an inestimable advantage, due to their population and the presence of manufacturing enterprises within the city limits.

With Calgary getting the Dominion exhibition for 1908 there will be left only two provinces (Prince Edward Island received a grant of \$10,000 in 1906) that have not participated in assistance from the federal government, namely, New Brunswick, and Saskatchewan. The former will probably make its claims, and the latter can scarcely be denied in view of the forward strides that the Regina exhibition board has made since the Province was inaugurated. After these provinces have been favored it would appear a convenient time to discontinue the grant for Dominion fair purposes, especially since assisting exhibitions in most essentially the work of the provincial governments.

#### Get Out the Frozen Wheat.

Advice is usually given conscientiously and with good reasons, but circumstances frequently arise afterwards that offset the basis for reasons and leave the advice untenable, and often expensive. It is possible that this stricture may apply to some of the things we say; and, also, possible that one class of people may not need it and another not take it, but for the time being the course we outline looks wisest.

The suggestion comes to us from the traffic manager of one of our railroads that we should continue to advocate the getting out of damaged wheat with all possible haste. The reason is plain,

as has been pointed out before, namely: that keeping frosted wheat for any length of time is attended with considerable risk, and in some instances is impossible. It is also certain that a large proportion of the crop will have to be kept in store this side of the lakes on account of the wet weather and late season retarding threshing. At present we can be fairly certain that the prices for low-grade wheat are quite satisfactory, but how long they will continue so we cannot tell. There is no certainty either that they will follow the trend of the higher grades, though they might. Those lots that can be used for milling will, of course, realize milling prices, but there is a lot of wheat, that if utilized at all, will have to be taken by distilleries and feeders in the east, and here is another reason for getting out early, namely: to secure the cheaper transportation by boat, for it is evident that if any wheat has to stand the expense of the rail haul, the higher grades can do so better than the low. There is no evidence, however, that even feed wheat price will go very low, as barley, oats, and corn are light crops, and high priced.

These remarks, of course, apply to wheat already threshed or to that which will be threshed before winter. With that which will not be gotten out this fall, our suggestions of October 2nd particularly hold good; namely, to make certain that the grain is hard and dry before threshing, even if it has to be stacked and remain in the stacks over winter. It would be false economy to thresh frozen grain soft, and attempt to keep it back, as in the ordinary course of marketing, and it is also expensive to have to pay for drying at Fort William. Stacks, however, require to be well made in case they have to stand until after seeding next year.

#### The Season in the East.

Notwithstanding the capricious character of the weather conditions of the spring and summer of the present year, the farmers of Ontario and the other eastern provinces, as a whole, are in a position to congratulate themselves on their financial prospects. It is true, that in a few districts, owing to a protracted drouth at a critical period, the supply of fodder for stock is distressingly short, and in these sections the reduction of the number of animals kept or the purchase of feed at high prices appears inevitable. But this condition applies only to limited areas, while in other sections the opposite extreme of weather has been experienced, the unusually wet and cold weather having delayed the harvesting of the crops, which, however, have mostly been secured in fair condition. Yet, in by far the larger proportion of these provinces the crops in nearly every line have been fairly well up to the average in yield, the chief exception being the oat crop. The hay crop was not heavy, but for the most part was saved in unusually good condition, so that in the case of those who have these two classes of goods to sell, the remarkably high price prevailing will make up for the lack in quantity.

Owing to a partial failing of the pastures for a while, milk flow in cows was seriously checked, but the late rains refreshed the grass and increased the milk supply unexpectedly, while prices for milk, butter and cheese, and indeed for nearly everything the farmer has to sell, have ruled so high and promise to continue to do so, that he has little cause to complain of the conditions that face him. It is, we believe, safe to say that at the present time, while what appears to be a temporary financial stringency in commercial circles is causing some uneasiness, the farmers, as a rule, are in comfortable circumstances, and with reasonably good management need have no anxiety as to the outlook.

The keen demand and prices prevailing for choice eggs and table birds of all classes show that the poultry industry rests upon a secure