

### The Most Remunerative Agricultural Industry—Which is It?

This question can only be answered in a general way, as the natural situation and modifying accidental circumstances have an important bearing on the nature of the reply. Different epochs, too, will very likely evoke answers that may widely vary.

The companion of wilderness life, forty or fifty years ago, would have said that grain-growing was the most profitable of all the agricultural industries, as he sat in his lowly, mud-clinked cabin, enjoying the bright blaze of the big, wood fire after a day of weary toil. Some fifty years hence the farmer, comfortably seated on his steam plough, of a different construction from anything the world has yet seen, may answer in a similar strain, which, however, is not likely to be the case. At the present time the question in these older Provinces admits of but one answer, and that is, growing stock; and of the different lines of live-stock industry, *beef producing* this year unquestionably takes the lead.

Dairy products are much lower than last year, but on this account dairymen should by no means be discouraged, as the lull in the cheese trade may be but temporary, and the low price of our export butter is only what we may expect from its lack of character.

The average price of wheat, the great staple grain, has not been more than 80 cents per bushel since last harvest, and although the prospect of a shortage in the world's crop, particularly in the United States, may raise the price somewhat, with the immense surplus held over, we cannot reasonably look for a very great advance. There is but one opinion amongst our farmers regarding the unprofitable nature of the growth of this great grain staple at the prices of the past season. Other grains that have been shipped have also ruled low, notably barley. We do not look on this state of matters in the grain trade as at all calamitous. If it has the effect in any degree of concentrating the attention of our agriculturists on the importance of stock-production, it will prove a blessing in disguise. If, like the frosts of winter, which by the very sternness of their action suitably prepare the ground for the reception of seed, it but tends to pulverize the tenacious grain-growing notions of the masses and thus prepares them for the germination of the grand ideas that underlie the importance of stock-growing, the results will be happy indeed.

Stock-growing, like an octagonal barn, which has many sides, has many advantages. Even though the returns in a given number of years did not overtop those occurring from grain-growing (we speak of grain-growing for the market), the advantages remain—

1. It is not so liable to sudden changes in market fluctuations. Some years must transpire before there can be a sudden reversal, unless in perishable products, as butter and cheese.

2. The employment of farm hands continues through the winter, usually an advantage to both parties.

3. Virtually no time is lost in marketing the produce, which in some instances absorbs much of the profits.

4. It affords employment to the young people of the household at every season of the year, and of the most interesting character to the inquiring mind.

5. It leads to the adornment of the country, by the retention of shade-trees, and the necessity which it creates for planting these.

6. It tends to produce a more thorough style of farming from the very necessities of the case, where the farms are heavily stocked.

7. It favors the eradication of weeds from the amount of pasture land that must needs be retained.

8. But its crowning glory is the enriching influence it has on the lands. While the grain-growers' capacity for producing lessens every year, that of the stock-growers continually increases. It is not difficult to foresee what the end will be in such a case.

Meat-producing has unquestionably been the most profitable of Canada's rural industries for several years, unless it has been the production of cheese. This year it is undoubtedly ahead, and just about as profitable as in former years. While producers realized on cattle but 5 and 5½ cents per pound live weight, the difference in the value of the grain-fed was more proportionately than that in the prices secured.

The shipping trade in live-stock this year promises to be large. Shippers often say that they cannot make it pay. Never fear, though we have much respect for them we cannot believe that their generosity prompts them to carry on a business for the benefit of Canadian farmers by which they are out of pocket. The returns may be light, but there are returns, and we most sincerely hope for the best interests of all concerned that there will continue to be returns of a most substantial character.

Once stop the shipping trade in stock and we cut the leading artery that bears in upon us a constant flow of English gold. It would not be easy to predict the consequences, but if such were to follow, we would not despair, as the towns and cities of our land will grow at a rate far more rapid than the growth of the rural population, and citizens are great consumers of beef.

We do not imagine that any will dispute the correctness of our assumption that stock-raising at the present time is the most profitable of the rural industries, and that of the departments of live-stock production the making of flesh is to-day ahead. If so, then why not adopt it? Why not get a first-class male and begin the work at once?

There is surely a lurking fear that the business will be overdone. It may, but we do not look for this. The number of our yeomen is so very large who live from hand to mouth, as it were, that they will not adopt a system of agriculture which is at first slow in its returns.

Never fear—you need not hesitate to embark on this inviting sea, where, though the sailing is not always pleasant, the financial haven is so well protected. The storms of fluctuation beat about it for long before they gain an entrance. You need not linger about the gateway of this fair avenue. The crowd will remain outside, and they will be sufficiently numerous to attend to the interests of the grain market.

Our Legislatures cannot be too fully alive to the doing of everything that they can to foster the live-stock industry. It is of national importance. It not only means more money, but more grain grown, and increased revenues. It secures an ever-increasing capacity for production, which is a vital matter. If a stock farm at the end of twenty years is capable of producing one-half more than a grain farm at the end of the same term, it is just one-half more valuable, and hence the country is just to that extent the richer. We cannot complain of our Legislatures in this respect, as they have shown a most commendable willingness usually to attend to measures calculated to advance this great industry.

The practical summing up of the whole matter is this: If convinced that on the whole grain-growing is the most profitable, continue to grow grain; but if satisfied that stock-raising is better, at once set about the work, but please remember that while grain-grow-

ing may have an adverse influence on stock raising, stock-raising never has an adverse influence on grain-growing.

For the CANADIAN LIVE-STOCK JOURNAL.

### Bull for Beef Breeding Purposes.

In the selection of a bull for the purpose of breeding beef and dairy animals, in order to insure complete success, there are certain essential points which must be considered, as has been satisfactorily proved time and again by many of the most experienced breeders.

I know that long-legged, slab-sided animals, with gothic roofed shoulders and long necks, will bring certain ruin on any herd with which they may be brought in contact, and it seems to me that there is scarcely any direction in which a penny-wise and pound-foolish policy is so short-sighted and so disastrous in its results as in the breeding of cattle from an inferior male; and yet there are but comparatively few farmers that do otherwise. Those attempting to breed suitable animals for the production of beef will be the gainers by bearing in mind—

1st. That in all breeds of cattle there are individuals which show a tendency to "breed back" or to produce offspring bearing the marks of their less improved and comparatively valueless ancestors? This clearly proves the necessity of breeding only from animals of the purest blood, whose ancestors for several generations, both male and female, were known to be uniform in all that constitutes excellence.

2nd. That the reproductive germ will stamp upon the animal developed from it the characters of the parent organism; an animal cannot be supposed to transmit to its offspring that which he does not himself possess.

3rd. If certain races and individuals have characters fixed and will transmit and perpetuate them in greater proportion than others, to animals with which they may be crossed, it is of the utmost importance that the sire selected to breed from should possess the most desirable qualities?

4th. If the animal to be selected be a Shorthorn, his purpose being to beget model beef animals, since "like generally begets like," he should be a model beef animal himself, with chest broad and deep, legs short, straight and fine; shoulders broad and level; shoulder blade oblique and well covered, the ribs springing out so as to leave the crops broad, full and well rounded; top line straight from shoulder to rump; skin yielding and mellow, covered thickly with fine, soft long hair: head small on short neck; muzzle clean, eyes full, and withal a mild, expressive countenance.

5th. Perfect developments and a sound and vigorous constitution are the conditions of fertility.

J. WILMOT.

### Our English Letter.

(From our English Special Correspondent.)

The month of June has witnessed in England a slight revival in the value of pedigree breeding stock, but none in the ordinary "commercial" stores. Meat values are materially affected by the temperature. On the whole they incline upward; but not to such an extent that a close sultry day will not check the rise, and even push prices lower than they have hitherto ruled. And, whereas, June came in with nice rains and a sudden outburst of vegetation, it goes out with cold drying winds, and an appearance that grass is likely to be short. Probably nothing in England has altered during the month its position for the better so much as has good hay. This is distinctly