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EDITORIAL.

Live-stock Situation in the Maritime Provinces.

A small field; inconvenience in securing pure-bred males for keeping up the studs, flocks and herds; a limited home market; extravagant prices of millfeed and grain; a light soil, requiring generous fertilizing; and a climate in which corn is not a particularly successful crop, while clover is not the stand-by that it is in Ontario; the lack—until recently, when the N. S. Agricultural College at Truro has undertaken to supply it—of any educational center where information about live-stock husbandry was to be obtained; the long-continued drain of young men from the country, particularly off the land, and the disarrangement of farming and breeding as a business—these are the obstacles which stock-breeders in Maritime Canada have ever been up against. That they have persevered, and are able to point to several conspicuous examples of success, stands to the credit of their intelligence, resolution and pluck.

A member of our editorial staff, while down in Nova Scotia attending the Dominion Exhibition, was interested in surveying the situation, and, incidentally, renewing acquaintances with Maritime stockmen, whom to know is to esteem. As regards the number of breeders, there was little change to note from the time of the writer's last visit, nearly two years ago. The hard winter of that year, following an unprecedented season of drouth and crop failure, shortened the flocks and herds, and reduced the immediate demand for pure-bred males with which to grade up. The business is recovering, however, and the people are becoming convinced, as never before, of the necessity for pure blood to improve their stock and increase the profits therefrom.

A good deal of pure-bred stock is purchased by agricultural societies, under whose auspices some of it gets into good hands and does well, although more is selected by men with inadequate knowledge of stock, who are given a sum slightly over ruling market price, and commissioned to buy a stallion, bull, ram or boar of a certain breed. Such is not the best kind of a market for the breeder, and we are inclined to think that before the Maritime Provinces can show many superior uniform grade herds, it will be necessary for more individuals to go in for keeping pure-bred males on their own account, using the animals for the service of their own females, and charging a moderate fee to their neighbors.

Apart from agricultural societies, and here and there an individual farmer who decides to go ahead and grade up his stock, the principal market is the Eastern States, where there are plenty of moneyed men with whom farming is a diversion, and who, knowing little about stock, judge merit by price, and buy freely from breeders discreet enough not to underrate the value of their offerings. A limited demand for Herefords has also developed in the West Indies, where, it is said, they stand the heat better than Shorthorns. Unfortunately, the Canadian West is rather distant to reach for anyone not extensively in the business, but for all that, we believe it would be worth exploiting. One Prince Edward Island breeder has sent quite a number of Aberdeen-Angus cattle to that region, and the field for the beef breeds there admits of development.

In horses, the trotter still holds the center of the stage. In every town and village a favorite topic of talk is fast horses and racing news. Slowly, however, the Hackney is winning recognition, and as the number of good colts by Hack-

ney sires increases, and a demand is worked up for heavy-harness teams, the Hackney's road to prominence will be more smoothly paved. In heavy horses, the Clydesdale is making headway, and it seems to us there is a good deal more interest taken in heavy horses than there used to be.

Sheep are the object of a brisk confidence. The woolen-mill industry is flourishing at Amherst, Truro and other points, goods made from fleece of Maritime flocks being very highly esteemed and finding a growing market in Ontario and the West. This has led to an effort to stimulate sheep-raising, and the high price of mutton and encouraging demand for wool are proving a tangible inducement to increase and improve the flocks.

Hogs, only, so far as we can see, are making little advance. The enormously high prices of millfeed (bran over twenty dollars, and shorts twenty-seven or twenty-eight dollars a ton), with grains in proportion, and peas out of sight at over a dollar a bushel, are a heavy handicap to the man who tries to show favorable balance in pork production; and, while we believe it would be well to bring a larger area of grass land under cultivation, grow more grain and seed to clover oftener, the fact is that farmers who have so long depended on hay are slow to do this, and any probable increase in grain produced will be needed for cattle feeding, without sparing much for hogs.

Only recently an established packing plant in St. John went out of business, owing to small supplies and high prices of hogs. Other plants, however, are running successfully. With an assured market at his door, we believe the Maritime farmer would find it profitable to go more largely into this branch of stock husbandry than he has done in the past. It works in well with dairying, and the two make a strong mortgage-lifting combination. Grass pasturage and rape would help to save feed bills.

The greatest stock interest in the Provinces should be dairying, and the dairy breeds really hold sway, although there is quite an interest in Shorthorns also. For a long time Nova Scotia—a better, rather than a cheese Province—has been partial to Jerseys, and there are still a good many fine ones. Ayrshires also occupy a prominent place, being well suited for grazing on the high land and for cheesemaking, which is carried on to considerable extent in New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island; and, for some reason, Guernseys have obtained a stronger foothold here than in "the West" (Ontario). However, the most rapid progress is being made by the Holsteins, which have prevailed after a long experience of prejudice and discounting. A reason for their rise in favor is the excellent showing that has been put up at the exhibitions of recent years by one or two very successful breeders.

On the whole, the Maritime live-stock situation is looking up, and as the country develops thriving centers of industrial activity, an expanding market is bound to be afforded the products of flocks and dairy herds, while the wise direction of more effort into the lines of heavy-draft and harness-horse breeding will open an attractive avenue for enterprise which has hitherto been absorbed in a profitless pursuit of speed.

One thing, too, is noticeable: The breeders are becoming better educated and more self-confident. As one of them put it, the time was when any judge who came down from Ontario, could place animals about as he pleased, and when the local men were surprised, they merely pitied themselves for their ignorance. Now it is different, and an incorrect decision is detected as promptly as anywhere. Knowledge is satisfaction, as well as power, and the Maritime breeders, though pretty

well shut off by themselves, are quite thoroughly posted as to what is what, and are building up some flocks and herds equal to the best.

The Dignity of Farming.

With the fall of the year there usually comes a general summing up, in all the newspapers and magazines, of the resources of the country—a sort of annual stock-taking, showing the profits, losses, and possibilities on hand for future development. In Canada, this stock-taking operation has, of late years, been a most satisfactory one, and returns for the present year are by no means behind the mark, but rather the other way.

We did not set out, however, to write a resumé of the good things the old Dominion has spread on her board during the summer of 1906, but rather to comment on the important estimates which the public prints, both in Canada and United States, are placing upon the vocation of farming, or, perhaps, one might more properly say, upon the results which tend to make a vocation the very first of all the industries a nation can possess.

The Toronto Globe, for instance, while alluding to the value of the wonderful silver mine at Cobalt, calls attention to the fact that upon agricultural prospects of the district running from Cobalt northward along the White and Red rivers, rather than upon the fascinating lure of the white metal, depends the real future greatness of that North Ontario region. "It rests with the Ontario Government," the article concludes, "to see that nothing is left undone to secure that this great country shall be filled as rapidly as practicable with a great industrial community, with agriculture for its greatest industry."

Turning at haphazard to United States publications, one finds in Leslie's Weekly—one of the expensive publications of the U. S., with a subscription list mainly composed of city readers—a series of most jubilant editorials, proudly headed, "Prosperity and Our Wonderful Crops." Not "Prosperity and Our Wonderful Manufactures," mark you, nor "Prosperity and Our Wonderful Mines," nor "Prosperity and Our Wonderful Cities," but "Prosperity and Our Wonderful Crops"—an indirect concession again that agriculture stands as the veritable base and pillar of a nation's well-being.

It is not necessary to multiply examples; they may be found in every publication in the land. The point is that all this dependence upon the farmer is but an unexpressed acknowledgment of the dignity of his calling and its tremendous importance in the economics of the world.

An ulterior point, and one that we should like to emphasize, is that the farmer should quietly, unassumingly recognize that importance. When the young men and women of the land fully come to recognize it, the drift toward will be to a great extent stemmed. One of the greatest blocks to the agricultural development of any country—for agriculture, when compared with the possibilities, is still in its infancy—has so far been the sort of contempt with which many of its brightest young people have regarded it, a contempt sufficient to prevent enthusiastic study of or experiment with farming, or even that interest which can make the farm life as happy as any on earth. Possibly these young people, not yet come to years of judgment, have heard slighting allusions to the vocation, perhaps from the lips of the father who should stand as the very personification of the dignity of his calling, or from those of the mother who, instead of showing how perfect a lady the head of a farm home may be, thoughtlessly plants in the hearts of her children a seed that will grow stealthily, and leave her,