

form for doing what she is intended. 2. Re the ration for fat cattle, we refer J. D. S. to the letters on that subject in this issue. 3. The Wisconsin Experiment Station issued an excellent bulletin (No. 38), on "One Hundred Rations for Dairy Cows," in 1894. If not exhausted, a copy may be procured from Prof. Henry, Agricultural Experiment Station, Madison, Wis., U. S. A. The Massachusetts Agricultural College, Amherst, Mass., also issued Bulletin No. 39, on "Economic Feeding of Milk Cows."

COTTON-SEED MEAL FOR POULTRY AND CATTLE.

M.M.M., Middlesex Co., Ont.:—"1. Is cotton-seed meal good for fowls; if so, what quantity would you give 40 hens a day, and how often a week? Is it good for turkeys and ducks, and what quantity ought these to have at a meal? 2. Is it good for cattle, and how much should cows get at a feed, and how much for calves?"

[We have never known cotton-seed meal to be fed to hens, ducks, or turkeys, so cannot speak with authority upon the subject. We would not consider it a very suitable food, however, as it tends to constipate stock to which it is fed. 2. Cotton-seed meal is valuable for feeding dairy cows, especially along with a succulent ration, lacking in protein, such as roots or ensilage. From 2 to 3 lbs. per day, along with other chop, is sufficient for one cow. Would not feed it to calves; linseed meal is better.]

BLACK KNOT.

H. S. T., Mount Pleasant, Ont.:—"1. Can black knot be removed from the stems and larger branches of apple trees? 2. Are there any black-knot-proof plum trees?"

[1. Black knot may be removed from the stems and larger branches of trees by a little careful surgery. With a sharp knife cut round the knot, and remove the center with a chisel. If the wound is then treated with coal oil or turpentine, and covered with a mineral paint, it is altogether likely that the excrescence will not reappear. Plum trees two and three inches in diameter could be stem grafted, but the result might not be successful, and it would be advisable to first try the other surgical operation. 2. There are so-called black-knot-proof plums, but, in experience, I do not know that they exist, except in a relative degree.]

With reference to what might be called "nostrum specifics" to prevent black knot, I may say in these times quacks and patent medicines are very numerous. A knowledge of plant physiology makes such a remedy appear ridiculous. Some time ago a man was anxious to sell me the right to use calomel, in the form of an injection, to prevent pear blight. This is said to be a preventive against "worms" in children; but pear blight is hardly an analogous malady. It does not seem likely that we could kill one vegetable organism feeding upon another without injuring the host as well as the parasite.

JOHN CRAIG, Horticulturist.

NOTE.—The ADVOCATE was recently tendered, but refused, an advertisement of a "black-knot specific." It purported to be a secret powder, to be inserted in a gimlet-hole in the tree, that would make the tree "proof." We have rejected thousands of dollars' worth of such advertising which we believed would have been detrimental to the interests of our readers.—EDITOR.]

SAUNDERS PLUMS—INDUSTRY GOOSEBERRY.

J. E. W., Clifton, N. B., asks for information regarding the Saunders plum?

[With regard to the quality and value of the Saunders plum, I may say, first, that I am only able to speak from indirect experience with this variety. It was planted at the Experimental Farm six years ago, but died the second year. This variety originated near Belleville, and was brought into notice by the late P. C. Dempsey, of Trenton, Ont. It was thought very highly of by that experienced fruit-grower. It has had hardly time to prove its value in many portions of Ontario. Its principal valuable characteristic, so far as I know, is its earliness, and for this reason it is likely to be widely planted. The plum, however, is thin in the skin, and therefore will not bear transportation well. Our superintendent at the branch farm at Agassiz, B. C., reports that it is very productive, but that it does not hold its flavor long after maturity, soon deteriorating. The fruit itself is of medium size and yellowish-red in color, of good quality. Last year in British Columbia it was one of the most productive varieties in the collection.]

With regard to the Industry gooseberry, it is not a variety that one can commend with confidence for general planting. It is a variety that nearly every one should try if they have a good piece of clay soil and a sheltered location and are prepared to spray for the prevention of mildew. Where it succeeds it is certainly a joy to the grower, and, as I say, is always worthy of a careful trial. On sandy ground and exposed locations I would not recommend the Industry. J. C.]

MARKETS.

Toronto Markets.

The first market of this year augured well for the ensuing twelve months. A slight advance in cattle, sheep and hogs. Prices firmer for all qualities. The trade for Christmas cattle has been considerably better than could reasonably have been expected in view of the unfavorable mild weather and plentiful supply of poultry. It is quite noticeable that the cattle offered were not nearly so big and fat as they were a few years ago. There was a good attendance of buyers from Montreal and outside districts; in fact it is set down that many strange faces were seen as were present during the first week

of the New Year. The number of cattle passing through this market during the last three years shows a marked increase, as follows:—

	1894.	1895.	1896.
Cattle.....	93,431	99,233	104,887
Sheep.....	119,710	125,732	93,875
Hogs.....	139,862	151,384	194,104

In 1896 the increase in cattle was 5,651; there was a decrease in sheep, 30,057; whilst the hogs increased 39,720 over 1895.

Export Cattle.—Four loads of cattle for export via Boston; more would have sold had they been on the market. One or two lots of really good shippers would sell. A few sales at the following figures: One carload of steers, 1,200 lbs. average, 3½c. per lb.; one carload mixed cattle, 1,300 lbs. average, 3½c. per lb.; one carload cattle, 1,350 lbs. average, 3½c. per lb.; price ranged from 3½c. to 3½c. per lb.; one carload of cattle, 1,140 lbs. average, sold for \$39 each. There were several dealers buying to-day, having to fill space contracted for at St. John and Portland.

Butchers' Cattle.—Good supply and a brisk market; all butchers of the outside districts on hand. Choice cattle sold for 3c. per lb.; good to common, 2½c. to 2½c. per lb. Prices ruled from 2c. to 3c. per lb. Cattle were small in size, not many going over 1,000 lbs. in weight; buying for Montreal was slow, and the yards were not cleared up; firmer feeling prevailed.

Bulls.—There were a few sold at 3c. per lb., some fetched 3½c. for export. Stock bulls are dull, but a firmer feeling prevails.

Stockers and Feeders.—Light stockers not in demand; a few changed hands at from 3c. to 3½c. per lb. These would weigh about 900 lbs. each. There is a limited demand for feeders weighing 1,100 lbs. to fill vacancies in the distillery byres.

Sheep and Lambs.—Firm; light offerings made the market steady. Shipping sheep, ewes and wethers, 2½c. to 3c. per lb.; backs, 2½c. per lb. Lambs selling at 3½c. to 4c. per lb. Scarce and steady.

Calves.—Wanted; \$1 to \$6 per head. Choice veals wanted and scarce; \$8 would be paid for choice veals.

Milk Cows.—Offerings light, all on offer sold. Prices ruled \$20 to \$35 per head. One or two choice milkers fetched \$40. Sales were poor for anything but choice cows—these sell and are wanted.

Hogs.—Market firmer; large offerings, 1,500 choice selections of bacon hogs selling at 4½c. per lb., weighed off cars; thick, fat hogs, \$1.50 to \$1.60 per 100 lbs. Towards the close of the day a further slight advance was made. All sold and good hogs wanted, except rough and stores. Market steady and prices firmer. Stags, \$1.75; sows, \$2.75; boars, \$1 to \$1.50.

Dressed Hogs.—Deliveries of dressed hogs were free and market steady; prices advanced as high as \$5.25, and for selections, \$5.50. Packers are paying from \$4.40 to \$4.60; for carlots, \$5.

Hay.—About 10 loads of hay per day, sold at \$12 to \$13.50 per ton; four loads on Monday fetched \$14.

Straw.—About five loads of straw, at \$8 to \$9.50 for bundled.

Grain.—On the street market only one load of wheat sold, at 85c. per bushel; two of oats, at 65c. Receipts to-day were somewhat larger, but prices fell ½c. per bushel.

Wheat.—This market had quite a flutter. Prices were stronger to-day. Holders asked 8½c. for red wheat and 8½c. for white. Quite a few lots of export wheat have been taken from this market.

Oats firmer; 1,000 bushels selling at 25c.

Barley firm; 300 bushels selling at 25c.

Rides.—The demand quiet and market firmer in sympathy.

Local dealers are paying 6½c. for No. 1, asking 7½c. for cured; No. 2 5½c.; the market is uncertain.

Sheepskins.—The market is steady, with a fair demand. Best quoted at 80c. each. Country skins are quoted steady, at 50c. each. Dealers have advanced the price 5c., now paying 55c. for choice skins.

Wool.—Pace combings, 2½c. to 2½c.; tub-washed fleece, 2½c. to 2½c.; rejections, 1½c. to 2½c.; pulled supers, 20c. to 2½c.; extras, 22c. to 23½c.

Butter.—All lines of butter are accumulating and prices are easier. Dealers are willing to shade prices rather than miss sales. Creameries are selling well at good prices; large rolls at 12c. to 13c. per lb.; small dairy rolls, 14c. to 15c. per lb.; creamery pound, 15c. to 20c.

Cheese.—Quoted, although there is considerable enquiry for export. Dealers here sell summer make at 10c. to 10½c. and September make at 11c.; stocks short in warehouse.

Poultry.—Mr. Wm. Hinds the well-known cattle dealer, shipped \$30,000 worth of turkeys to the Old Country before Christmas by the steamer "Mongolian." The price paid to farmers was 6c. From an exchange we hear that they arrived in good condition and realized good prices.

Jan. 8, 1897.

Montreal Markets.

Cattle.—The markets have settled back into much of the old groove since the holidays. The spurt put on to send in good cattle was not of long duration and the same old stab lots are now coming in large numbers. During the week just closed a number of the best cattle offered were taken up for export account, for shipment via St. John and Portland. For these as high as 3½c. per lb. was paid for the tops, and others, 3c. to 3½c., for the same purpose. The numbers offering for this purpose have been limited as to quantity.

Butchers' Cattle.—The trade has been very fair and demand good, but drovers have not been able to make much money on their deals, as butchers have become so accustomed to low prices of late that it is difficult to get a raise on anything that is really good. For best butchers' 3½c. has been paid; fair to good, 2½c. to 3c.; medium, 2½c. to 2½c. per lb. Culls as low as 1c. per lb.

Sheep and Lambs.—This is one branch of the trade that has been fully maintained, and whether it is that good sheep and lambs are becoming scarce throughout the country, certain it is that a good many more would find ready markets at fair prices. Choice lambs are now making well up to 4½c. and for anything fancy a shade more per lb. From that to 4½c. and 4c. per lb. is being asked and paid for mixed lots of sheep and lambs. For choice sheep, suitable for shipping, as much as 3½c. per lb. are realized, but not a great many are offering.

Calves.—Offerings very light; some 30 or 40 on each market, running in value from \$3 to \$10 each, according to quality.

Live Hogs.—With the advent of cold weather receipts have become almost nil, but the few that are offering make from \$4 to \$4.25 per cwt. in the yards.

Hides and Skins.—Since our last writing no change has taken place in this market in price and the movement has been somewhat restricted, tanners either being well stocked up or confident that lower prices will prevail in the near future. Some grounds were given them for this expectation in the sudden jump from 8c. to 7c. a short time ago, but we do not see anything in the present situation to warrant putting any faith in a further decline. However, dealers are firm holders. Hides are accumulating and the chances are that it will be the tanners who will have to come round in the end. Nos. 1, 2, and 3 make 7c., 6c., and 5c. per lb.

DRESSED MEATS. Hogs have been in good active demand, the supply of good light hams being still on the light side, very few finding their way as far east under the 200 lb. mark; as all offerings here are to be any overabundance in the market, as all offerings here are quickly picked up by different parties as soon as put on the market.

The lighter weight bacon hog is bringing in car lots from \$5 to \$5.15 and \$5.25 per cwt.; small lots and single carcasses from 25c. to 35c. per cwt. advance on these figures.

Beef.—The market is a trifle dull owing to the low prices obtaining in the live stock markets. Fronts, 3c. to 3½c. per lb.; hinds, 4½c. to 5½c. per lb.

Lamb. Good value and continues in active demand, as high as 7c. being paid for good round lots; that is, less than car lots; for the latter the highest we have so far heard of being between 6½c. and 6½c. per lb., dressing from 38 to 40 lbs. each.

Chatty Stock Letter from Chicago.

(BY OUR SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT.)

Following are the current and comparative prices for the various grades of live stock:—

	Present Prices.	Two weeks ago.	1896.	1895.
CATTLE.				
1500 lbs. up.....	\$ 4 60 to 5 40	\$ 5 25	\$ 5 00	\$ 5 80
1200 @ 1500.....	4 20 to 5 45	5 35	4 75	5 35
1000 @ 1200.....	3 55 to 5 20	5 80	4 65	5 30
800 @ 1000.....	3 40 to 5 20	4 65	4 50	5 15
600 @ 800.....	3 35 to 4 85	4 65	4 50	4 60
Stallions.....	4 60 to 4 90	4 20
Stks. and F.....	2 90 to 4 25	3 80	3 75	4 00
Fat cows and heifers.....	3 10 to 4 40	4 10	4 00	4 50
Canning cows.....	3 20 to 4 40	2 35	2 40	2 50
Bulls.....	2 40 to 4 00	4 40	3 80	4 50
Calves.....	2 25 to 6 05	5 75	6 75	5 00
Texas cows.....	3 25 to 4 30	4 30	4 25	4 40
Texas C. & H.....	2 50 to 3 80	3 65	2 90	3 75
HOGS.				
Mixed.....	3 90 to 3 55	3 45	3 87	4 60
Heavy.....	3 90 to 3 55	3 45	3 90	4 75
Light.....	3 90 to 3 60	3 45	3 90	4 40
Pigs.....	2 50 to 3 55	3 45	3 82	4 15
SHEEP.				
Natives.....	1 75 to 3 75	4 00	3 75	4 00
Western.....	2 45 to 3 75	3 50	3 75	3 30
Lambs.....	3 00 to 5 75	5 50	5 00	4 50

The cattle market was higher lately than for some time past, considering quality, which is very poor.

Average weight of hogs at Kansas City last year, 227 lbs., against 216 lbs. for 1895. Average at Sioux City last year, 274 lbs., the heaviest on record, and 50 lbs. heavier than in 1895.

The big corn crops of the past two years showed less in the increased weights than might have been expected, partly because of the prevalence of sickness, which drove farmers to sacrifice their young hogs for fear of losing them; also, the agitation for lighter, leaner hogs had some effect. The cry for more light bacon hogs instead of so many 300 and 400 lb. fat backs is growing louder and promises to last long.

The latest word from Iowa, which is the great hog growing State, is to the effect that the hog crop is very short on account of the ravages of disease. In that State an effort is being made in railroad circles to afford relief by inducing the railroads to make temporary concessions in the way of permitting feeding in transit. One-third of the entire corn crop is unmerchable. It cannot be shipped, and unless fed at home to stock will be a total loss. But as nearly one-half of the hogs in the State have died of cholera in the past few months there is not stock enough in the State to consume the corn. More stock must be shipped in. Local railroad men, in view of these circumstances, are urging the managers of their roads to grant concessions, such as feeding in transit and lower temporary rates, that the farmers may be enabled to dispose of their surplus corn.

Dealers say most of the cattle coming are being "picked before they are ripe," regardless of the fact that corn never was so plenty and cheap. However, feeders who last year saw these same little cattle outsell their ripe, fat, heavy beefs became tired of the game and thought they would sooner market their cattle when light than to take chances on selling heavy exporters at stock cattle prices, as they have so often done in the past.

A breeder of black polled cattle says prices for black cattle are about one-third higher than a year ago, and the demand exceeds the supply at that. There are now comparatively few large herds of choice breeding cattle, where a few years ago there were so many in the West, and as the demand is growing steadily stronger the effect of the small supplies is to stiffen prices.

The 33 head of two-year-old 1405-lb. Herefords which sold at \$3.45 lately were fed and shipped by Chas. Anderson, of Sturgeon, Mo.

Short horns continue to hold their own very well as a breed of cattle that everybody knows is all right when properly handled. Choice high-grade Short horns are in evidence at market much more commonly than the other breeds, and are therefore less of a novelty. The Herefords, which made the best showing at market, are now invariably sent in before they are three years old. They make the best beef at two to two and a half, but practical butchers here say they begin to deteriorate in quality from the block-test point of view after three years.

Among the receipts of lambs at Chicago lately was a consignment of fancy thoroughbreds from the Iowa Agricultural College at Ames, which, in point of quality and finish, could hardly be excelled the world over. This station makes a specialty of feeding high-bred lambs, and the experiment this year was very satisfactory to Professors Wilson and Curtis, under whose personal direction it was conducted. The shipment was as follows:—

10 Southdowns, 95 lbs. at.....	\$5 75
10 Shropshire ewe lambs, 90 lbs.....	5 65
9 Shropshire wether lambs, 115 lbs.....	5 60
9 Dorsets, 119 lbs.....	5 50
9 Oxford, 126 lbs.....	5 40
9 Cotswolds, 126 lbs.....	5 25
9 Leicester, 125 lbs.....	5 25
9 Lincoln, 133 lbs.....	5 00
8 Suffolks, 123 lbs.....	5 00
8 Merinos, 103 lbs.....	5 00

These youngsters were all bought in Ontario by Prof. Curtis, who will follow up the feeding test by issuing a bulletin showing the practical butchers' block results.

Comparative hide prices now and a year ago are as follows:—

	1897.	1896.
No. 1 packer hides, 60 lbs. and up.....	97	81
No. 1 native steers, spreads.....	91	74
No. 1 native steers, light, under 60 lbs.....	84	71
No. 1 native steers, butt branded, heavy.....	84	71
No. 1 native steers, butt branded, light.....	84	64
No. 1 Texas steers, 60 lbs. and up.....	81	64
No. 1 Texas steers, 50 and 60 lbs.....	81	64
No. 1 Texas steers, extreme light.....	8	6
No. 1 Colorado steers, 60 lbs. and up.....	9	7
No. 1 native cows, heavy.....	9	7
No. 1 native cows, light.....	9	7
No. 1 branded cows.....	8	6
Native bulls, all weights.....	73	67
Bulls, branded.....	6	6

	1897.	1896.
No. 1 buff, 40 to 60 lbs.....	81	64
No. 2 buff, 35 to 60 lbs.....	71	61
No. 1 extreme light.....	84	71
No. 2 extreme light.....	73	67
No. 1 native steers.....	84	71
No. 2 native steers.....	71	67
Side branded steers, flat.....	7	54
No. 1 heavy native cows.....	81	64
No. 2 heavy native cows.....	71	54
Side branded cows, flat.....	7	5
No. 1 bulls.....	61	47
No. 1 calveskins, 7 to 15 lbs.....	104	9
No. 2 calveskins, 7 to 15 lbs.....	9	7
No. 1 kips, 15 to 25 lbs.....	71	64
No. 2 kips, 15 to 25 lbs.....	91	71
Deacons, each.....	374	40
Stunks, each.....	20	224
Horse hides, each.....	\$2.50	\$2.00 to \$2.50

The British Markets.

A slight reaction has taken place since our last and a decline of ½c. per lb. for tops resulted. Best States steers, sinking the offal, 11c. to 11½c. per lb.; best Canadian, 10c. per lb.; sheep, 10c. to 11c. for choice.