

Shorthorns at Mr. Alexander's, Bridgen, Ont.

Through the announcement that has already appeared in our advertising columns, our readers have learned that Mr. Alexander has decided to sell his herd at auction, the 23rd of March being the date he has fixed upon to hold the sale.

The coming event will present an opportunity for purchasing cattle of a special line of breeding that seldom occurs, as Mr. Alexander has been a stout believer in the efficacy of Booth blood, and Booth blood of a high order, in which line he has continued to breed for a number of years.

Having had many years' experience in cattle breeding in the old country, he readily understood the necessity of starting upon a right foundation. In view of this he selected and purchased two imported cows, Lady Violet Lustre =2181= and Beauty Fifteenth =31=, the first mentioned cow having been bred in the noted herd of the Duke of Richmond, Gordon Castle, Forchabers, Scotland, her blood lines containing some of the choicest Booth blood—through her sire, the Warlaby bull Royal Hope, and her grandsire, Montrose; and it was the character of the offspring which this cow produced that induced Mr. Alexander to continue in this line of breeding. Lady Violet has also proved a most profitable breeder, having produced nine heifers and two bulls, and, to judge by appearances, still has several years of usefulness in store for her owner.

Another choicely bred cow that has also left her mark in the herd is imported Beauty Fifteenth, bred at Upper Mill, and sired by that grand bull Heir of Englishman, that has done so much for the herd of Mr. W. S. Marr, of Upper Mill.

Upon these cows nothing but the best imported bulls were used for a number of years, the greatest care being made in selection, with a view to breed up a herd equal in merit to the original animals.

More recently Sir T. C. Booth, bred by Mr. William Linton, Aurora, sired by imported British Hero, his dam being imported Rachel, has been used. This bull proved an exceptionally good getter, and to him Mr. Alexander ascribes in a great measure the success and prominence the herd has attained, although he speaks in very high terms regarding the present lord of the harem, Lord Linton, also a thick useful bull; and to judge by the calves sired by him, he is quite equal to any of his predecessors.

It is now nearly four years since a member of our staff had the pleasure of visiting this herd, and the encomiums passed at that time we desire to repeat. The cattle are in a capital breeding condition; the cows and heifers are an exceedingly useful lot; they show the Booth characteristics in a high degree; their large, deep frames, thrifty appearance, depth of natural flesh, together with their predisposition to easy keeping and good constitutions, should make them most desirable cattle for those wishing to purchase.

The herd is in most profitable breeding shape, as every cow and heifer that is sufficiently old either will be offered with calf at foot or advanced in calf, no doubtful breeders will be offered for sale.

Extravagant prices are not expected, as Mr. Alexander considers himself rather out of the stream as regards locality. At all events this sale will afford a good opportunity for breeders in Western Ontario to lay the foundation of a herd, or replenish the ranks of one they may have already established.

Some Notes on Sheep Breeding.

To the Editor of the FARMER'S ADVOCATE:

DEAR EDITOR,—I have read the ADVOCATE with a great deal of interest; I think it is an excellent paper, and ought to be in the hands of every farmer. I noticed in one or two of the ADVOCATES a few practical hints on sheep raising. I thought I would add my experience to theirs; perhaps it may be useful to others. Now, while I have not raised a sheep in Manitoba, I was an extensive breeder in Ontario.

After trying the effects of different kinds of feed on my sheep, I came to the conclusion that there was nothing better than good pea straw (half threshed), with a little ground grain in spring. My sheep did well on it; they were in good condition in the spring. They gave me less trouble in lambing, and the lambs were large and healthy.

When I first started to raise sheep I noticed that several ewes had twin lambs every other year. I came to the conclusion that by care in mating I might have a pair of large, healthy lambs each year from each of my ewes. This was my plan: I selected the largest and healthiest twin ewe lambs for breeding purposes; then I secured as large a twin ram as I could get; I mated them, and the result was that I had two large, healthy lambs from each ewe every year.

I found, by selecting the largest lambs each year, my sheep increased in size instead of becoming smaller. I received the highest market price for my sheep and lambs. I might say that I started with Cotswold ewes and crossed with a Lincoln ram; by so doing I got a fair amount of wool of good sample, and a large-boned, fleshy sheep.

I intend securing a few good sheep, and my plan shall be the same in this country as in Ontario. I shall go further and select ewes that give the largest amount of milk. I also believe that, with care in selecting, I can have ewes that will give me three and four lambs each year, and large, healthy ones at that.

Yours truly,
Virden, Man.

PRACTICAL.

Scheduling Canadian Cattle Again.

DEAR SIR,—I see in a late issue of your paper an article stating that the restrictions imposed on Canadian cattle by the British Government is an outrage on Canadians, and the article is endorsed by Frankland, of Toronto, who also says that instead of said restrictions being upheld by public men should be cried down, as in his opinion the restrictions now imposed on the exportation of Canadian cattle will cause great hardship to men who have been selling a class of cattle known as stockers. Now, I claim the above is wrong. In the first place we have been shipping stockers to the Old Country markets, and shipping hay and other feed to be used by farmers in the said country for feeding stock, thereby paying extra freight on the food, whereas if fed at home the same cost that carries the stocker would carry the finished steer and save the extra freight on the feed. In the second place, if we kept our steers at home and finished them, there would be a better demand for fat cattle in the Old Country. From Canada we would send finished cattle to take the place of stockers. And I claim instead of the farmer taking less for cattle heretofore known as stockers, farmers and others who have started the system of stall feeding will be able to pay more for the stocker than dealers can possibly pay, or ever could pay, and make a profit exporting such cattle; and, by so doing, will also have a rich manure pile to enrich his land with, instead of poor, rotted straw, which would not pay for hauling out on the land, instead of enriching the land. Such manure opens the soil, and is no use to it, whereas a coat of manure from stables where plenty of rich food is supplied stock will cause the land to yield at least ten bushels to the acre more, making to the farmer double profit for feeding.

N. IRONSIDE.

[We would like to know what our correspondent thinks about this business now, since the American Government, acting on the assumption that the British Government knew their business and had discovered pleuro-pneumonia in Canadian cattle, have placed a ninety days' quarantine on cattle entering from Canada, thereby placing Canadian shippers entirely in the hands of the Canadian transportation companies, who will doubtless raise their rates, and in consequence the producer will have to take less for his beast, whether a stocker or a "finished" steer. And, again, does any thinking man imagine that our southern neighbors would have expended so much capital and energy trying to get the British Government to take off the present restrictions on their cattle, so as to enable them to export "stockers", if after some years' trial they had found it the "great blessing in disguise" so many Canadians now claim it to be? We recognize the fact that it would be better to feed all Canadian cattle at home and export them as finished beasts. But this does not overcome the difficulty. Our prime beasts must also be slaughtered at landing; they cannot be shipped inland alive, but must die at the abattoir a few hours after landing.]

Horse Breeding for a Special Purpose.

BY A. B. SCOTT, VANNECK, ONT.

I am well aware that this subject may not be very interesting to a great many farmers who are overstocked with horses, and, perhaps, trying to get out of the business and go into something that is booming. Now, that is a wrong course to pursue, for you will have to sell at a sacrifice and buy at a very high price, and by the time you have stock to sell again that class of stock may be as cheap as horses are now, so that, by that course, you are just chasing the market and are not likely to overtake it.

If ever we expect our horses to reach a high standard in their classes, we must breed intelligently, using our very best judgment, and not as a great many have been doing—breeding merely to raise a colt.

There was a time when the breeding of general purpose horses in Canada was carried on at a fair profit, but that time has passed. The introduction of the cable and trolley cars has greatly reduced the demand for this class of horses.

Anyone who takes the trouble to study the principal horse markets cannot fail to see that if there is anything to be made by breeding horses, it must be by breeding for a special purpose, and people who persist in breeding to cheap, mongrel-bred stallions must pay the penalty of their folly by being stocked with a class of horses that there is no demand for. There are plenty of pure-bred stallions of the different classes within the reach of all, at reasonable rates, so that there is no excuse for using poor sires; but do not suppose that all depends on the sire, for it is of the utmost importance to select our best mares for dams. Everyone ought to consider what class he is going to raise, and strive to have the very best in that class.

In the principal markets of the United States, good road, carriage, express and heavy draft horses are selling well, and, I think, there is a fair prospect of having the privilege of selling in these markets in the near future; but, if we do not breed the right kind, we will not have them to sell when the opportunity comes.

Chatty Letter from the States.

From our Chicago Correspondent.

The cattle market is still disappointing to feeders, though some dealers look for much higher prices shortly.

The best cattle are selling at \$6, or quite a dollar higher than a year ago, considering the difference in quality.

Cottonseed-meal-fed Texas cattle are selling here now at \$4@4.75 per 100 lbs., and are sharply competing with the poorly fed corn cattle.

The Government figures on the number of live stock in the country are not regarded as being very accurate. The estimated present number of domestic animals on farms, ranches, and the public range are as follows:—Horses, 16,206,802; mules, 2,331,128; cows, 16,424,087; other cattle, 35,954,196; sheep, 47,253,553; swine, 46,094,807. The increase in mules is very slight. The apparent increase in sheep exceeds 2,000,000, a continuation of the movement which commenced in 1880, by which numbers have increased nearly 5,000,000 in four years. In the case of swine there was a small pig crop last spring, and the late advance in pork products has caused the slaughtering of some portion of the stock of mature animals. As the average age now attained by these animals is less than a year, there is a liability to extreme fluctuations in the numbers, which is possible of no other species.

If there is one thing more certain than another in the American live stock industry, that thing is that there is no longer any profit in raising scrub horses.

The following people are buying export cattle in Chicago, and the numbers following their names show about the number of cars they are buying per week:—Goldsmith, 47; Hathaway, 37; Lehman, 13; Morris, 81; Myers & H., 5; Schwartzchild & S., 30; making a total of 213 cars, against 443 for the corresponding week last year.

The top price reached for hogs so far is \$3.75. The cause of the check in the upward tendency was twofold: (1) Prices were very high and considered dangerous, and (2) farmers and feeders have been crowding everything in the shape of a hog to market to realize while prices were so tempting. Lately the market has been on the down grade quite rapidly. Some dealers think it will be only temporary, and that prices will, after a while, go higher than ever, while others think that the bear influences will be strong enough to keep prices below \$7 until more hogs can be raised.

Some dealers are expecting more sheep than hogs at Chicago some one month within the next six months. As there are more sheep than hogs in the country, according to the Government estimate, their expectations may be realized. Sheep receipts for the week ending Feb. 18 eclipsed all previous records, being 53,754 head. But large as was the supply prices were a shade higher at the close than at the beginning of the week, the demand having developed unusual and unexpected activity. Less than 10,000 head were taken by eastern buyers, local dressed-meat shippers being the principal buyers. From \$4.75 to \$5.25 was the range at which most of the trading in sheep was done, and \$5.25 to \$6 bought the bulk of the lambs. The fact that values have held up so well during the late heavy receipts has been a source of much encouragement to sheep feeders. One of the strongest factors that has operated toward strengthening sheep prices has been the high price of pork and pork products. The consumption of mutton has been greatly increased for this reason, and is likely to be until the crop of hogs is again sufficient to reduce values to their natural level. There is very little demand for sheep from Eastern sources, partly because supplies in the Atlantic States have been heavy, and again because prices at Chicago are too high, being buoyed up to a great extent by competition among refrigerator men. The general outlook of the sheep situation for the next ninety days is considered favorably by many sheep men, though there are some who entertain the opinion that no such prices will be secured in April and May as prevailed last year. Sheep receipts the following week, however, were over 60,000, again breaking the record. It is said there are lots of sheep at western stations which owners are anxious to sell, not caring to make them very heavy.

A New Herd Book.

We have received a copy of Volume I. of the Canadian Holstein-Friesian Herd Book, compiled and edited by Mr. D. E. Smith, of Brampton, Ont., under authority of the H.-F. Association of Canada. It contains a list of the Association members, list of cattle owners, constitution and by-laws, a history of the breed, scale of points and description, the pedigrees of 400 bulls and 714 cows, and list of transfers. It is well indexed, contains illustrations of many noted animals, and is a very creditable volume of great value to breeders of the "black-and-whites," the preparation of which must have involved an immense amount of labor on the part of Mr. Smith.