

THE FARMER'S ADVOCATE

AND HOME MAGAZINE

* AGRICULTURE, STOCK, DAIRY, POULTRY, HORTICULTURE, VETERINARY, HOME CIRCLE. *

REGISTERED IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE COPYRIGHT ACT OF 1875

Vol. XXXVII.

WINNIPEG, MANITOBA, JANUARY 6, 1902.

No. 541

A Bright Outlook.

One of the most remarkable features in connection with agriculture on this continent during the year which has just closed is the revival of live-stock husbandry.

In Ontario and the provinces down by the sea, live stock is rapidly gaining in importance and popularity, as evidenced by the successful fat-stock and breeding shows, the valuable importations from over seas and the continued upward tendency of prices for animals of real individual merit. All down the circuit of the great fairs, and at the sales throughout the States of the Middle West, reaching a climax at the Platt sale in November and the International Live Stock Exposition in Chicago in December, evidences were everywhere present of this great revival of interest in live stock.

The great wheat crop of our own country would, a few years ago, have been a decided setback to the more general introduction of stock-raising, by demonstrating the comparative ease with which money could be made out of wheat without the necessity of investing capital in stock, buildings and equipment, or of working all the year round. Now, however, with the experience of the past to guide us, the proceeds of this big crop will help to bring about a more permanently successful system of agriculture by enabling everyone to procure seed stock, erect suitable buildings, provide pasture by seeding down or otherwise, and fencing, dividing the farms where necessary. There are, unfortunately, districts which, from lack of water or other natural causes, are not well adapted to a general line of mixed farming, but there is no intelligent farmer but will admit the necessity of treating land that has been cultivated for a number of years in some way which will inexpensively furnish humus or vegetable matter in order to restore the moisture-retaining and mechanical condition of the soil, no matter how much fertility it may yet possess, or how abundantly it may yield under favorable weather conditions. Unquestionably the readiest way of supplying humus, especially where the area cultivated is large for the force employed, is by seeding down to grass. Any variety that suits the locality will accomplish this purpose, but the heavier the root growth the better. The decaying grass roots not only increase the available plant food in the soil, but act as a sponge in taking up and retaining moisture, keep light, loose soils from drifting, and heavy clays from baking.

Seeding down to grass is generally displacing the summer-fallow in the rotation. Once establish a grass rotation and stock-raising follows almost as a natural sequence.

As a result of the big crop of 1901, we look for an immense amount of permanent improvements in the homes and on the farms of the West: house and barn building, fencing, etc., as well as the more general introduction of live stock.

Among the thousands of Westerners who are spending their Christmas holidays with the old folks in Ontario and the Eastern Provinces, many have money in their pockets prepared to buy pure-bred stock, either for improving herds or establishing new ones. There is room for all that may come: that is, if the quality is right. The prospect for the Western breeders was never more encouraging, as with the rapid development of the farming districts and of the great ranching country to the west, the demand for well-bred, hardy, vigorous males, reared in a common-sense way, is practically unlimited.

How to Farm in the West.

We take pleasure in directing the attention of all our readers, both old settlers and new, to the series of articles begun in this issue by Superintendent Bedford, of the Brandon Experimental Farm, on the momentous question, "How to Farm in Manitoba."

The articles will be specially calculated to help new settlers, a constantly-increasing number of whom are becoming regular readers of the "Advocate." Anything that helps the new settler towards success benefits every other resident, and we expect that many experienced farmers will add to the value of this series of articles by contributing of their own experience, whether it be in accordance or not with the views expressed by others. We shall be glad if new settlers (or others for that matter) will freely ask questions or state difficulties they are experiencing, so that the articles may be made as helpful as possible. Mr. Bedford has consented to lead off in this series of articles, and from his long experience, extending over 25 years in the West, he can tell us much that is most useful, but he is far too modest a man to claim to speak for the whole West, and these articles are not intended to be circumscribed within the narrow limit of Manitoba's boundaries, but to reach out as widely as the circulation of the "Advocate" itself, and consequently there is a broad field to cover, and we look for the co-operation of many of our friends and readers.

To Make the Drumsticks Tender.

One who has once drawn the tendons from a chicken or turkey, no matter how the fowl is to be cooked, will never again use one having the tough sinews unremoved. A marketman will draw a fowl's tendons for the asking, but it is a task every housewife ought to know how to perform herself. Buy a fowl with its legs left on, turn it on its breast and hold the back of each leg, one at a time, of course, in the left hand. With a sharp knife in the right hand cut very carefully just below the knee joint, through the skin, not any deeper. Inside will be found a group of tendons, there being eight in each leg, lying snug in a groove. They are attached to the foot, but through the dark meat they run away up into the leg, well into the upper joint. With a strong wire skewer lift each tendon separately, hold the chicken firmly, and pull. If the chicken is young and tender, each tendon will come out easily, and it can be pulled by a slight effort. If the bird has seen several Thanksgivings, all the muscle that can be put into the job will be required, but it is exactly such a bird that demands most the tendon-drawing process.

A turkey calls for more muscle, and "a long pull, a strong pull, and a pull all together." Cut the skin in the leg about half way between the knee joint and foot, and there will be discovered immediately the group of shining white tendons. Slip a strong skewer, or if the bird is quite elderly, the point of the sharpener that belongs to a carving set, under the bunch of tendons. Lift them carefully, then twist around two or three times, acquiring a firm hold. Give a strong pull and out they will come, together. Count them, and if there are not eight, go after the ones that are left. With these tough sinews removed, the dark meat is so delicious and tender that the drumsticks of one turkey will be found scarcely a large enough supply for the family table.—(Good Housekeeping.)

Winnipeg Industrial Fair Dates.

In response to a request from the Cattle Breeders' and Sheep and Swine Breeders' Associations, the Winnipeg Industrial Exhibition Association have fixed the dates for the 1902 fair a week earlier than last year, the dates selected being the week beginning July 21st. This date will be found much more convenient for the live-stock exhibitors and for the farmers who visit the fair, as it will not interfere so much with haying, and will not run so dangerously close to the harvest.

Baby Beef for Winnipeg or Local Markets.

There is always a good market for a limited number of well-fitted light butchers' cattle in Winnipeg and local towns of the West in the spring months when the frozen meat is about done and before grass beef can be ready. By selecting early spring or winter calves that are in good flesh in the fall, feeding then generously till about the middle of January or first of February, and then putting them on liberal grain feed, gradually increasing it towards spring, these youngsters, at about fifteen months old, can be made to weigh 1,000 or 1,100 pounds, and being small, will suit the early spring butcher trade. In this connection the following item from the Farmer's Gazette, of Ireland, is of interest:

"As all who make a specialty of finishing off young stock for the market when from 18 to 20 months of age are aware, it always pays to treat calves generously in the matter of feeding. In order to make the most of them, they should be well supplied with such foods as are required to keep them steadily improving from the date of birth until they are fit for the market. It may seem an impracticable idea, this, but we know of a number of cases in which it is studiously observed, and in which the results obtained more than justify the expense and trouble gone to. We know one successful feeder who, as soon as his calves are weaned—even when they are on the best grass—commences to give the animals a small allowance of concentrated foods (cake and corn), and continues doing so right through the year, steadily increasing the allowance as the winter season comes on, and, as a consequence, getting the animals to emerge in the spring in the sleek, plump condition which is so pleasing to behold, and which is in gratifying contrast with the appearance presented by so many of the young stock reared in those parts of the country where the animals are put off with what they can pick up on the fields, supplemented by an occasional wisp of hay or other fodder during hard weather. In the case to which we refer, the calves are kept steadily improving from day to day, with the result that when they reach from 18 to 20 months of age they are fit for the butcher, and then bring prices ranging from £13 to £14 and £15. Of course, it costs a bit to feed them up to this stage, but when the fact that fully a year is saved in the time required to fatten them, and that the breeder gets at least three lots of them through his hands while the ordinary feeder is working off only two sets, more than makes up for the extra expense incurred, and leaves a substantially better return than is obtained where the old-fashioned system of keeping the animals until two or three years of age, and practically starving them on their first and second winters, is followed."

Preventing Abortion.

A writer in the Veterinary Record reports most satisfactory results in preventing abortion in cows by the persistent use of a new antiseptic, Chinisol. He says:

"Four years ago I was consulted concerning an outbreak of abortion in cows, which had been prevalent for several seasons amongst the herd on the premises. I treated it with Chinisol. Directly a cow aborted she was removed to a separate building, and the calf and placenta, after being disinfected with a solution of Chinisol (1:1000) were burnt. The womb of the cow was then irrigated with a solution of Chinisol (1:1200) and this repeated every day for three days, and then every other day for a week. All the pregnant cows were sponged daily round the vulva and anus with a similar solution. The floor in the shed was scraped and swept every week, and then disinfected with a solution of Chinisol (1:2400). Only one case occurred after, due, I consider, to the germ having gained access to the pregnant womb previous to treatment. The treatment was carried out again in 1898, since which there have only been a few isolated cases, which, after treatment, did not spread to the rest of the herd. I have made enquiries this year, and there has not been a single case of abortion on the premises. Chinisol is still being used."