

# THE FARMER'S ADVOCATE

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## Editorial.

### The Manitoba Live-stock Breeders' Convention.

After two weeks of curling, and the invasion of a horde of curlers, Winnipeg settled down to receive, during the last week in February, the staid, sober farmer representatives, dubbed by politicians, the backbone of the country, but generally known as the live-stock breeders of the Province.

The horse-breeders conducted a quiet, orderly and harmonious meeting, as will be seen by the report in another column, and gave some attention to the matter of enrollment of stallions, and veterinary inspection of all such standing for hire. The Territories have now a stallion-enrollment ordinance, which has accomplished and promises to accomplish a vast amount of good, and the Manitoba horse-breeders feel that a combination of the Lien Act and some enrollment plan would be feasible and desirable, an opinion to which we subscribe. The proposition to enforce a veterinary inspection of stallions is quite radical, and we opine the country is not yet ready for it, but think such might well be applied to stallions for breeding purposes, admitted free of duty at the various ports of entry; beyond that we should not care to go at present.

The cattle-breeders' meeting was livelier, and while it cannot be called inharmonious, certain resolutions and notices of motions, some ostensibly to facilitate business, precipitated the meeting into discussions which wasted a lot of time. The cattle-breeders would do far better to adhere to the system of open nominations, the names being plainly displayed on a blackboard, and have their elections by ballot, the man getting the majority of votes cast to be considered elected, in place of requiring one to have fifty per cent. of the total vote. Neither the fate of the live-stock industry, nor the future of the country, depends altogether on who is elected president or vice-president, and so long as a live, far-seeing secretary is elected there is little need for fear by the members, if they will keep in view the desirability of introducing new and young blood to the various offices from time to time.

A large number of new faces were seen at the meeting to discuss the nationalization of the records, which project was unanimously endorsed by resolution.

Several other important resolutions were passed, including one which practically endorsed the position taken by this paper on the administration of the Dominion Experimental Farms in the West.

Score-card work was handled this year better than ever before, the convention having the advantage of having before it superb animals of three beef breeds (Aberdeen-Angus, Hereford and Shorthorn), contributed by Messrs. Yule, Chapman and Sam Martin.

The Live-stock Commissioner addressed the meetings on topics connected with his work, and explained the method by which equitable representation for each Province would be had in the different record associations. The Angus breeders of Manitoba and the N.-W. T. met the Commissioner, and asked him to take control of the recording of the breed in Canada. It was decided by the cattle-breeders to hold a combination sale of live stock, leaving the details and exact date to be settled by the executive.

The sheep and swine breeders' meeting was uneventful from the standpoint of business, the wolf question being discussed at length. The resolution regarding the experimental farms' work with live stock passed by the cattle-breeders, was added, calling upon the Director to see that build-

ings were provided at Brandon suitable for live-stock experiments. The city tendered the usual banquet to the visiting stockmen.

### To Assist in Controlling Weeds.

The question of weed destruction and control is the all but universal problem in Manitoba, and it helps nothing toward the mastery of the situation that grain-growing is the most popular branch of farming in this Province. Successive crops of spring-sown grains provide the most favorable opportunity for such weeds as wild oats, French weed, Canadian thistle, etc., to produce seed and to propagate themselves from year to year. The situation has become positively serious, and the public is open to any suggestion and will support any practical scheme that will assist in the war on these parasites of the grain field.

A hint as to the course to pursue comes from the State of Texas. Down there the U. S. Department of Agriculture is establishing demonstration farms, apart and distinct from experimental farms, for the purpose of demonstrating the system of farming it will pay best to pursue in that State. This idea applied to Manitoba would mean that the Government select certain farms throughout the Province to be used to illustrate what methods of cultivation and cropping would be most practical and profitable to follow, in order that the invasion of weeds might be checked and the minimum grown. These farms would not necessarily be owned by the Government, for there are plenty of such places throughout the Province where weeds are being controlled, but the detail work of each farm might be compiled by the Department, and a report issued weekly or fortnightly during spring, summer and fall.

### Spring Stallion Shows.

At the recent convention held in Winnipeg, the question of holding a Provincial spring stallion show was mooted, and the opinion expressed that the time was ripe for such a show. The holding of a Provincial stallion show is of sufficient moment to merit considerable thought before it is ventured upon. Shows of this character, no doubt, do considerable good, but it is an open question whether this is the best way to advance the interests of a breed or the horse-breeding industry of the country. Ontario has had an experience with Provincial spring stallion shows that is not altogether encouraging. They were inaugurated and first held with the object of facilitating trade, particularly among the small breeders, but it was very soon evident that the larger importers reaped all the benefits in the way of sales, and these, again, claim that the extra feeding, fitting and expense of exhibiting is out of proportion to the business done.

Spring stallion shows that would do considerable good, and that we would like to see encouraged, are those of a more local nature, where the horses that are to stand for the patronage of a certain district would be compared, and where the awards would be of interest and value to every horse-owner in the community. Such shows would stimulate local ambition to provide the best stallion purchasable, and would discountenance the use of inferior sires. These shows could be held just before seeding, when the horses would be fitted for the season. The work of conducting them would be light, and they could be held in one day. By holding shows of this nature, it would not be long before certain localities would become famous for certain classes of horses, and these in turn would compete with each other at the larger fairs. This would still further arouse interest, and produce a far-reaching effect for the efforts expended.

### The Manitoba Experimental Farm and Live Stock.

The recent editorials in this paper, dealing with the Western Experimental Farms, have advocated more experiments with live stock as part of the scheme to improve things at the farms, so that Western farmers may be benefited thereby. While in earnest regarding such need for live-stock experiments, we would draw attention to the inadequate provision in the way of buildings made for conducting such experiments at the Brandon Farm. The buildings for live-stock purposes at the above farm may be summed up in one barn (which is 111 feet by 50 feet, on a stone basement 10 feet, and has accommodation for 40 cattle and 12 horses—vide report 1890), such as may be seen on many Western farms today, some of which are not more than 320 acres in extent, and on which only sufficient stock is left for working purposes. The barn at Brandon houses the horses and cattle, and is even too small for the number of stock which should be kept on any up-to-date farm of its size.

It looks very bad to any thinking person that in a system of farms instituted with a view to improve the agriculture of a country, at one or more of these farms ordinary provision is not made to house the number of stock that should be kept for working and experimental purposes, and we might here add that a similar condition of things to that at Brandon exists at the B. C. farm, as seen by editors of this paper.

The farmer who is convinced of the necessity of keeping live stock as part of his farming operations, is so largely because of his recognition of the fact that manure is necessary to keep up the fertility of the land. Such a farmer stocks up to what he considers the limits of his holding, and erects buildings to house the animals, and in so doing demonstrates that he is up-to-date. In a previous issue we took the charitable view that the Director was content to keep up with agriculture in the West, but are forced to admit that if the provision made for live-stock work at Brandon is a fair criterion of his idea of the importance of such work, then he is hopelessly behind the times in his ideas as to the needs of Western agriculture, unless we except poultry, the provision made for which is probably sufficient, seeing that two poultry stations (Morden and Virden) have been established in the Province.

We do not suggest the erection of elaborate buildings or edifices on the church order of architecture, but are convinced that the farms specified should have these pressing needs attended to, and would suggest that the farmers' organizations memorialize the Minister of Agriculture regarding this matter, and that individual farmers write their representatives at Ottawa, and instruct them to look into these things.

The keen interest manifested by stock-breeders and grain-growers in the work of the conventions recently assembled at Brandon and Winnipeg augurs well for the future of farming in Western Canada. The resolute firmness of their reasonable demands for their rights in the matter of grain-shipping privileges, fair rates of transportation, for cheap lumber for building purposes, and of the breeders for adequate representation on the boards of the so-called Dominion Stock-breeders' Associations, and a voice in the distribution of their funds, will doubtless serve to emphasize the fact that they mean business, and will have those rights or know the reason why.

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