



From a painting by J. Arch. Browne, Toronto, Canada.

"Co-Boss, Co-Boss."

Prospects of the Live-stock Industry in Canada.

By Hon. John Dryden.

Within the last fifteen years, and especially the last ten, Canada has made rapid strides in the development of agriculture. Better educational methods have been devised, carrying to the remotest parts, not only "theories" in agricultural work, but what has proven to be the "best practice."

In the prosecution of this industry, the practical, or "HOW to do," is valued much more than the theoretical, or "WHY it is so." In the first case, the added knowledge produces results at once in "dollars and cents," while a study of the theory, at best, can only gratify the student mind.

In live stock, especially, this knowledge has been disseminated east and west, north and south. How to select, how to feed, how to judge the best, have been proclaimed from the house-tops, first through journals devoted to this industry, and, in addition, great classes of men—young and old—have been taught at conventions, institutes, colleges and fairs. The result is an added and growing interest in live stock generally. An ever-increasing number are engaging in it, putting into actual practice the information received. This, we believe, is true of every Province in the Dominion. It is certainly true of Ontario and the Provinces by the sea, as well as in the Far West. In both cases conditions are changing, and as the original vegetable matter of the virgin soil is taken out, live animals are introduced to recover it. In our Northwest Territories, before the plow was seen at all, large tracts of country had been devoted to this industry; cattle, sheep and horses have been and are now grown on the open prairie without shelter. It will not be claimed that this is the best way, but when land is abundant and settlers few,

it sometimes yields large profits. But conditions are rapidly changing. The "Far West" cry is carrying in thousands from all parts of the world. These demand land for a home. The rancher is thus gradually pushed beyond, so that where his cattle a few years since grazed peacefully without molestation, waving fields of grain, with the attendant cry of the locomotive, proclaim his retirement. Soon—very soon—he will be crowded to the mountains, but the live stock will not decrease. On the contrary, a great increase will, ere many years go by, be seen everywhere. The cultivated farms will take the place of the ranch; the number of cattle will increase; the quality will also improve. The education being given everywhere will multiply in force as it passes from father to son, comrade to comrade, man to man. Undoubtedly, the greatest impetus comes from satisfactory returns. The breeders of horses have already reached that point. The infilling of the new country with settlers, with only a small percentage bringing with them the live stock necessary as a foundation, will increase the local demand considerably for some time to come. But, in addition to that, the railway construction to be prosecuted for the next five years in that vast country must, of necessity, add further to the local demand for fresh meats as well as for working horses. Where such demand exists, there will always be the effort to supply it. The difficulty in this case will be the fact that horses, and cattle too, take years to mature. The farmers in the West will do well to start now to meet this certain demand. It is altogether probable that everything, good and bad, will be brought into

use; but let the producer beware. In the end, only the best will be acceptable, while the inferior will surely go a-begging. If I could rule arbitrarily in this matter, I would have every inferior mare worn out in railroad building, leaving only the best to be mothers of a better class. I would send every inferior heifer to feed the hungry navy, leaving only the select to become the foundation of the supply of the future, which must come into open competition with the food supply of other countries.

When that time comes, cattle and horses, fewer in number but better in quality, will bring the best returns. It seems that some producers delight only in numbers. To count ONE MORE is the chief thing with them. This additional ONE may be useless, either for milk or beef; it may tend, inevitably, to the degradation of the herd, but it is ONE more—let it alone. False doctrine, surely. Whatever comes, let there be no reproduction of such animals; they are cumberers of the ground. Let the NUMBER be less, if, by reduction, we can increase the value in dollars. I would not like to say that the true stockman does not find much satisfaction in the impressions he receives as he looks on his superior animals; but, after all, does not the satisfaction largely come from the fact that such animals are worth more in dollars and cents?

I hope our Western cattlemen will rapidly look away from mere numbers and devote their attention to better average quality. Then they will be ready for any market at home or abroad. Let me express another wish, that the dairy and beef breeds be kept apart. In Ontario we have suffered much in real deterioration because, when there was small demand for beef, dairy bulls were introduced with a view to increase the value of