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A BREEDER'S VIEWS ON THE SHORTHORN HERD-BOOK.

SIR,—The question of control of the Canadian Herd Book, including the expunging of entries of cattle already registered, having arisen between the breeders of pure Shorthorns and the agricultural Association, a question in which the whole agricultural community is interested, and that cannot be decided without serious consideration and the consulting of all interests involved; and as a very large number of farmers are not very well posted on the thorough-bred question, I have deemed that a letter on the subject from a thorough-bred breeder might not be unacceptable after the late discussion mentioned in other parts of this number.

The foundation of the system being a law of nature, that "like begets like," this is being applied to every department of agriculture seeds as well as animals.

From very early times there has existed in the North of England a breed of wild cattle with strong distinctive qualities, while in color these are supposed to be the original of the "Shorthorn." Over a hundred years ago the cattle of the country were noted for certain qualities excelling all others.

It occurred to two men, Bates and Booth, that by careful selection of animals of both sexes, notably pre-eminent in certain qualities, these qualities would be further developed and transmitted by continuing the same family, choosing only the most perfect, culling all that were not up to their standards, these qualities would be established. The present character of the thorough-bred, or cattle traced by registered pedigree in dam and sire direct to the founders of the various families, fully proves the soundness of their judgment. It is not to be supposed that there were no other cows or bulls in England of equal excellence with these originators, as undoubtedly there were and are. But on account of the acknowledged excellent judgment of these breeders, we feel confidence in animals that can be traced in an uninterrupted line to these herds, that we will not be disappointed in obtaining the results we aim at.

Now to the question of the moment, "Shall the Canadian Herd Book," the property of the agricultural community of Canada, be handed over to an association of a portion of the breeders of Shorthorns, or retained as a general register of pedigreed animals of the class?

The object of a Herd Book is that an animal may be traced by its recorded pedigree, which according to the fidelity with which it is kept, is evidence as to professed purity, namely, the amount of blood that may be called for, whether of imported or local celebrity. It is intended to stimulate the general improvement of cattle. This improvement may and will take different directions.

Qualities called for may be:

| | | |
|--------------|---|----------|
| Beef | { | Quality |
| | | Quantity |
| Dairy | { | Milk |
| | | Cream |
| | | Butter |
| | | Cheese |
| Adaptability | { | Soil |
| | | Climate |
| | | Food. |

No honest breeder would recommend an ordinary Canadian farmer to buy a thorough-bred cow, but would recommend his procuring a cow of well known indigenous stock, that is, one that had been acclimated for several generations, and possessed of the individual characteristics required; and using a purebred bull of a family possessing the qualities desired. There are numbers of excellent animals

through the country possessing in a marked degree these individualities, and would it be just to a man possessed of requisite ability, who should carefully select and judiciously improve a family thus specially adapted to the requirements of the country, to shut him out from guaranteeing this production of intellect and purse, by official recognition? It is also a security from piracy.

No Shorthorn breeder would be affected in the sale, or misled in the buying of pure bred stock, as he would trace the animal's pedigree to its earliest source. Furthermore, any "Shorthorn" record now started will soon require to be further remodeled on account of the differences between the two principal tribes, namely, Bates and Booth, for even now no Bates breeder will risk the character of his stock by the introduction of a Booth bull into his herd, although the Booth may possess qualities thought by some superior, yet the types are so markedly distinct as to necessitate a different Herd Book, and cause objection to crossing.

Taking this view I think it will be generally admitted that it will be better for the H. B. to remain in the hands of the Agricultural Association. I would suggest the raising the qualification for cows to the seventh cross with pure bulls, and the shutting out of grade bulls entirely. I would also suggest that herd names be registered as trade marks, thus preventing confusion from using the same name by different herds.

COLUMELLA.

TAX OR NO TAX ON BULLS?

SIR,—This is a subject of great importance to the public generally, and one to which for some years I have given thought, pro and con, and have come to the conclusion that a tax should be placed on bulls. The questions to be taken into consideration are as follows:—

1. Are we to support thoroughbred male animals or not?
2. Should all male animals be taxed?
3. If not, what class of animals should bear a tax?
4. The amount of tax to be imposed and how disposed of.

At present I merely write on taxation of the male bovine tribe and shall entirely confine myself to them; in doing so, your readers must not think I wish to place an unnecessary burden on the back of the farmer. My object in writing is to court the opinion of the public on this point, and to see what is best for the improvement of the stock of our country. Private feeling must give way when the public weal is concerned.

Now as to the first question. A few years ago when the country was in a transition state, from forest clad ground to the cleared bush, it would have been premature to have placed a tax on bulls; that time has now pretty well gone by. In conversations held with high class breeders, and more particularly with those who are breeding up, with very few exceptions they admit a tax can be fairly imposed without interfering with the liberty of the subject, and the stock of the country improved in a very important degree.

No one who has read the evidence given before the Agricultural Commissioners can doubt that a time has arrived when more attention must be paid to the class of stock we raise. A market is in our hands; I am referring to our English market, and if we allow our chance to flit by, we have only ourselves to blame. This country possesses most valuable animals. But when we travel through the country and see the fields carrying the wretched stock we do, stock that would take double its value to make it fit for market, we are led to ask, how is this? Simply this: Good stock is in the hands of the few and not of the great whole. Wherever enterprising men have imported good stock, we see an improvement in that immediate locality, but even with such an advantage, when a superior animal is close to the door, we find the ignorant and the penurious man will drive his cow a mile or two past the good animal to be served by a wretched grade, rather than pay a fair price of say \$2, for the service of an animal that would produce a calf worth \$5 the day it was dropped. I have heard many say they do not care for the calf, they only want the milk and that they kill the calf as soon as born. I can only answer such an one in the following terms, "Oh, murderer of the innocents! have you a right to deprive your fellow creatures of good veal to gratify your avariciousness." Surely such a man should pay for his wantonness, thus, as a very large number of the community agree with me that a bull should bear a tax. We come to the next point, Are all bulls to bear a tax? I for one see no objection, and

and would willingly pay a fair tax. Some think only grade bulls should be taxed, others that all should be taxed, the grade bull to bear a heavier tax than the pedigreed bull. I incline to the latter view, but with certain exceptions, which I shall mention in due course. Many farmers will think it hard perhaps that they should pay a tax for a bull kept for the service of their own stock; to meet their view, in a liberal way, I would advance my exception (i. e.) I would allow a farmer the right to keep a bull (pure bred of course) for his own use, provided he is not allowed to serve other animals than his own, with or without profit, such bulls to be exempt from duty. Having advanced thus far we naturally refer back to the original question, "Shall all bulls be taxed?" I think all bulls should be taxed when let at profit or for use to other cattle than the owner's own stock. There can I think be no objection to this, and will therefore suggest that the duty on a registered animal be \$5 per annum, that to be charged on a grade or unpedigreed beast \$15. Some are of opinion the latter tax should be higher; I think this would answer every purpose. If such tax be imposed we should no longer see the disgraceful animals in the country, so disgraceful to a good breeder's eye. I can fancy I hear the slovenly and antedated farmer say: The grade bull did well enough for our fathers, why should it not do for us? My good man, you have other interests to consider besides your own; the country calls upon all to exert themselves in providing good food for the world in general, and if you will not come out of your shell we must draw you out; no longer can you be allowed to injure your neighbors. Why not say, how do I injure them? Why, first of all, you deprive him of his veal, you then raise an animal that is unmarketable, and worse than all, you keep an animal that often injures his good stock; a case of this latter injury occurred a couple of weeks ago in my neighborhood. A most disreputable bull scrub leapt over a high fence into the field of a Shorthorn breeder in which his yearling heifers were grazing, and spoilt a valuable heifer. I am glad to say the breeder made the owner pay \$15 costs, but this was a very small sum in comparison to the mischief done. I have counted as many as three scrub bulls grazing on the public road near some valuable Shorthorn stock. If people will be so perverse and keep such animals to injure their neighbors, they must be taxed; the community calls for it. Then comes the point, If bulls are to be taxed, what is to be done with the tax? I would propose that the tax be raised in the same way as other taxes are raised, and all bull duties should be handed over to the directors of the township cattle shows, in which levied, and applied by them in prizes for improvement of stock, and save the present grants, if I mistake not, at least half of them; but if this should not be the case the tax will work well for improving the stock of the country. The time has come when we must look at what other countries are doing. Our neighbors in the States are far outdoing us in the improvement of stock; look also what our brother colonists are doing, also France, Russia, Germany and other European countries are vying with each other in stock raising, getting the best animals. So we must use the whip and spur to drive those benighted men who call themselves agriculturists, and who are contented to drag on in the old groove. When I tell you that it took a shipper the past part of six weeks driving round this part of the country this fall to make up two car load of cattle good enough for Manitoba, you can hardly be surprised by my advocating the imposing of a bull duty. I dare say many will differ as to the desirability of taxing bulls. The general opinion of the country could be easily ascertained by asking the directors of the county and township shows to put the matter before their meetings in a calm, dispassionate manner. I do not fear the result; I have but one view in writing, viz., the welfare of the cattle trade and general improvement of stock.

G. F., Oakville.

ALL CLASSES FIND THE ADVOCATE USEFUL.

SIR,—I like the ADVOCATE very much. I am a carpenter, and have a small place (about an acre), which is in fruit trees. Last year I raised over 75 barrels of apples, besides other small fruit, and there has not been \$10 worth of manure put on the land in 25 years. I am going to try raising peaches. I saw an article in the ADVOCATE of last year, and am going to try and get the kind you mention and take them home with me if I can get them.

W. W., Falmouth, N. S.