

BREEDS OF HORSES AND CATTLE
BEST SUITED TO NOVA SCOTIASUGGESTIONS OF A FARMER FROM
ENGLAND.

Last month we indicated what was proposed to be done in regard to the importation of stock. Several communications have appeared in the *Colonist*, from various correspondents, as to what breeds ought to be imported, what ought to be eschewed, and as to the best means of obtaining desirable animals. It will of course be impossible to meet the conflicting wishes and recommendations of all, even were that desirable, but it serves a good purpose to ventilate the subject fully at the present time. We therefore transfer to our columns a few selections from a letter recently published in the *Colonist* from a gentleman signing himself "*A farmer from England*." We ought to premise that whilst his suggestions are upon the whole valuable, they do not accord in every respect with the experience of others. Nothing is said of the Scotch farm horses, which are the best ploughers in the world; short horns we should not choose as milkers, but as beef cattle, in fertile pastures. As regards sheep, it is to be kept in view that *lamb* is the principal form in which the flesh is used with us, not mutton, as in England, and Leicester lambs do not have the coarse flavor of the old sheep. The Chinese breed of pigs, will, we fear, require too much care and shelter, to form the common herd of this country:—

HORSES.

"I do not believe in the same horse being good either for slow or fast work. If you want really good and useful horses, there should be a breed for slow work and plough, and another for the saddle and driving. For the first purpose, looking at the light character of your breed of horses, the large English dray horse. I have no hesitation in saying, would be the best kind of a horse to use as a cross. Such an animal should stand from fifteen to sixteen hands in height, with a girth of about eight feet in circumference. To rectify the bad points of your horses generally, he should have, in excess of, and in addition to the other necessary points of a good horse, a small, well formed head, rather thick and well arched neck, oblique shoulders, well ribbed up; tail well upon the rump, and his hind legs set well apart. For riding or driving, a well-bred horse, of not less than sixteen hands; and here increased attention should be paid to a well-formed head. The neck moderately arched, but not so thick as in the before mentioned animal, the oblique position of the shoulders still more prominent, the wither also should rise higher, with due consideration as to

all other good points: but it should be always borne in mind, that a thoroughly perfect animal in all respects is not attainable. The heavy cart horses for the London market are principally bred in Lincolnshire and the midland counties. The lighter breed is distributed all over England, but the London dealers purchase largely in Yorkshire and at Horn-castle Fair, in Lincolnshire."

HORNED CATTLE.

"So far as I have seen, your cattle of this description are too light in the hind-quarters, or, as we say in England, deficient in roasting beef; they are also coarse in bone. To obviate this defect, a cross with the North Devon breed, I consider, would be the most desirable. The North Devons are hardy, possessed of a good constitution, their loins wide, long, and full of flesh, hips round and of moderate width, legs small and straight, with feet in proportion, rich and mellow in touch, and handsome in their appearance; added to which they have a greater proportion of weight in the most valuable joints, and less in the coarse than in any other breed, and also consume less food in its production. As working oxen, they excel all English breeds, being perfectly docile and good walkers; their milk is rich, but not so abundant as short horns; and this brings me to the only other English breed which I think could, with advantage, be introduced into your Province. The improved Short Horn are now established in the old country as one of if not the most profitable breeds in England. They arrive earlier at maturity and fatten to a greater weight. The quality of the meat is only surpassed by the Scotch and Devon; are good milkers, and I always found them as hardy in constitution as any other breed; but with all these strong recommendations, I believe a cross with the North Devon breed would have a better effect in improving the symmetry and value of the stock of Nova Scotia as a grazing animal, than any other sort,—the short horn being coarser in the bone, and their hind-quarters not nearly so fully developed, neither are they equal to the Devon as a working animal. At the same time I think both breeds should be introduced: but if only one, I should prefer the Devon."

SHEEP.

"As to Sheep, there is not a more beautiful sheep in existence for its size, than the South Down; but I should prefer, for the purpose required, the Hampshire Down, being a larger and a hardier animal. I have bred from both the South and Hampshire Downs, with a Welsh Ewe, (a similar sheep to yours,) and found the Hampshire produce the best lambs. The Leicester I do not consider suited to your country;—they are

far from hardy, and the mutton is coarse in the grain, and they make too much fat to produce a first class meat. It is true that many breeds have been much indebted, indeed, owe their improvement entirely, to crossing with the Leicester; but the success much depends on the position and climate of the locality where the experiment is made; they have decidedly failed as a cross with the Cheviots. A farmer in the *Lammermuirs*, speaking of his own experience, says: "Our coarse and lean pastures were unequal to the task of supporting such heavy-bodied sheep, and they gradually dwindled away to less and less bulk; each generation was, if possible, inferior to the preceding one, and when the spring was severe, seldom more than two-thirds of the lambs survived the ravages of the storm." With the English farmer, as an animal of the long-wooled breed for crossing, the Leicesters are fast giving place to the Cotswold,—themselves an improved breed by crossing with the Leicesters. Possessing all the good qualities of the Leicester, with the greater hardiness of the original breed, a cross between the Cotswold and the sheep of this Province, may prove successful in some of the most highly favored counties of your Province; but the Hampshire Down would certainly stand the general climate best."

PIGS.

"Twelve or fourteen years ago, I should have fully agreed with your correspondent as to the superiority of the Berkshire over every other as a pure breed of pigs; but subsequent experience has led me to give a decided preference to the Sussex breed; but as a cross with the pigs I have seen in this country, I should prefer the Chinese. Your pigs are coarse, large boned animals, and, as I should judge from appearances, producing coarse-grained meat. Both these defects would be wonderfully improved by the cross I mention: indeed all our improved breeds in England have been the result of judicious crossing of the Chinese breeds.—I prefer the black. Should, however, size be preferred to quality, then I would recommend the Sussex, as I have found by experience they make a greater weight in less time and on less food, than the Berkshire, the meat being quite equal, if not superior, and they are rather finer in the bone."

NEW RIFLE RANGE.—During the past month workmen have been busy clearing and burning the Lister Flat, at Bedford, for the new rifle range, which has been surveyed by J. B. Young, Esq., Civil Engineer. His Excellency the Governor, has paid several visits to the grounds, and the improvements are now nearly completed.