

### French Fat Stock Shows—Nevers and Paris.

Fat Stock Shows are annually held all over France. This year they commenced in February. According to the English Agricultural Gazette, the Canadian farmer would find little to interest him except at Nevers and Paris. And at these shows it will be interesting to notice the prominent place held by the various English breeds of cattle, sheep and swine, which are also common with us. At Nevers there are almost as many animals of the Shorthorns, Southdowns and Leicesters as of the native breeds. At this show there are 170 entries of fat cattle, sheep and pigs, and several hundred pens of poultry. Breeding stock and implements are also shown; the present exhibit is quite as good as that of any preceding year. The Charolais-Neversais breed has some magnificent representatives among the fat stock, the best of all being a four-year-old ox which won the gold medal given by the Societe des Agriculteurs de France for the best beast in the show. (This animal also won first in his class at Paris the following week.)

The Shorthorns were not well represented, though they are much liked in this vicinity, and seem to do better here than anywhere else in France.

In the section of breeding stock the great feature was the display of Charolais-Neversais bulls of all ages—240 in all—and it is worthy of note that this collection of bulls is not got together so much with a view of prize winning as of enabling buyers and sellers to come together and transact business. Before the show closes nearly all these bulls will have changed hands, and the best specimens will, no doubt, bring good prices. There is a tendency to create, as in the case of the Devons in England, two separate breeds, one with smaller bone as butchers' animals before everything else, the other with bigger bone as workers first and then fattened.

In the sheep department there were only twenty-one pens, made up of Southdowns and Leicesters; the Southdowns won all the pen prizes. The sheep shown, though of fair quality, would not have been considered first class in England.

The pigs, of which there were thirty-seven pens, were very good. Among those winning the principle prizes are many having a strong dash of English blood.

One of the most beneficial effects of the Nevers Agricultural Society's efforts has been to stimulate the breeding of cart horses, and every year there is an exhibition of animals bred in the department from stallions and mares which have been purchased by the Society. Some fifty or sixty of these horses were exhibited, and old residents in the district say that the improvement in their horses since this experiment was tried has been very marked. This is very satisfactory, and there does not seem to be any reason why a like experiment should not succeed in other countries. I believe that it has been tried with the best results by Mr. Walter Gilbey and others in Essex, England.

At Paris the display of cattle and pigs was thought better than that of any previous year. All live stock classes were never better filled; there were upwards of 300 entries of cattle, 117 of pigs, and 45 pens of sheep.

Among the cattle the champion prize for the best male in the show was won by a dun-colored Charolais steer, 47 months old. This beast is described as very massive with great depth throughout. He weighed 2,100 lbs. and was considered much better than any of the competing ones. The first prize in the class for animals under 3 years of age was taken by a cross between a Shorthorn and a Charolais. In this class, as in all older classes,

the prizes (there are eight in each) go to either Shorthorns or Charolais or a cross between these breeds. The other French breeds are more esteemed for their working qualities than as beef producers, though of late years they have been much improved in the latter respect. In the class for foreign breeds there were only four entries, all Shorthorns. None of them were of any great merit. The prize for the best female on the ground was won by a well fattened Shorthorn cow. She was not as large as the steer which won the champion prize as best male, but very much superior to him in form and quality; but as there was no prize offered for best beast irrespective of sex, the judges were not called on to decide between the two. It is a custom at most French shows to give prizes for groups of cattle and sheep; in the class for four steers or oxen there was a very large entry. The prize in this instance went to four 3-year-old Shorthorns.

The forty-five entries of sheep are, in the majority of cases, either Southdown or Leicester, and it would almost appear as if the old native breed of Merinos was dying out since the importation of so much wool from Australia, French breeders declaring that they cannot compete with the New World. The Southdown is now the favorite sheep in France, and these sheep seem to do well in most districts, and to make excellent crosses with the native short-wool breeds.

The prize for best pen of any breed was won by three wethers, the result of a cross between the Leicester and Cauchois breeds. They were very fine and possessed much quality, but were not equal to the pen of fifteen Southdowns which won the champion plate for best lot of fifteen belonging to one exhibitor.

Among the pigs the honors for single pigs and for pens were taken by animals of the Yorkshire breed.

All the live stock, with the exception of some of the poultry and the pigeons, were in the body of the hall, the galleries and side rooms above being filled with a fine collection of butter, cheese, vegetables, fruits, and other miscellaneous produce, and if space permitted I should like to say something about the 806 entries of butter and cheese, comprising as they do some splendid specimens of French dairy work. So, again, with regard to the 2,500 exhibits of implements and machinery which were on view outside the palace, among them being a great many of the best machines of English makers, but also some very creditable samples of what the native manufacturers can turn out. Here, too, the French are rapidly improving.

### Success in Cheese Making.

Mr. W. Harris, of Mount Elgin, paid us a visit on the 21st of March, and said he had beat all Canada in the manufacture of cheese this year. He informed us that he took first prizes at Ingersoll, Hamilton, Toronto and London, and at every place where he exhibited; also that his May cheese sold at 10½c., June and July at 12c., August at 13c., September 14c., and the balance of the season at 15c; that after all the other factories had closed he bought milk and paid 12c. per 10 pounds, continuing to manufacture until the 13th of January. If any one can beat this we would like to hear of it. He says he had not one cull cheese this season. Besides wintering 80 heifers and cows, he raises considerable grain, and keeps 12 horses and 35 sheep, and has sold 130 tons of hay this winter. Mr. Harris contemplates trying a silo next season, as he wishes to have some green feed for his cows during the winter. The following is the plan he purposes to adopt:—To lighten part of a mow in his barn, put in a second cut of clover, then cover with planks covered with straw and weighted with pressed hay. If it succeeds we shall let you know.

### The Culture of Onions.

Onions will grow, and, with proper culture, will yield a good crop on almost any soil. A light loam, however, is the most suitable for its growth. On such soil it is cultivated with less labor and produces heavier crops. It is necessary that the soil, whatever may be its quality, be made very rich. On poor soil without a heavy application of manure a good crop of onions cannot be obtained. The most profitable onions for the gardener to raise are those grown from seed. The ground chosen for the onion plot must be put into a thorough state of cultivation by ploughing and harrowing if in field culture, or by the spade and rake if in the garden. The manure applied should be well composted and rotted, and should be kept near the surface. The onion does not strike its roots deep into the soil. It grows on the surface, and the manure should be so placed that the rootlets of plants will get the full benefit from the plant food.

If sown on a large scale the seed is sown by a machine, which opens shallow drills and in them drops the seed, which is then covered by the roller. In garden culture the drills are opened by a hoe or long dibbler, and the seed is sown by the finger and thumb about three or four inches apart and the drills a foot apart. It may be covered with the back of a garden rake and "firmed" with a garden roller or pressed well with a plank. This is especially necessary on a light, sandy soil to prevent the rapid evaporation of moisture.

Do not let weeds take possession of the soil and so rob the growing crop of its required food. This prevention of weeds can be easily done by frequently cultivating between the rows with the scuffling hoe.

The onions mostly grown from seed are the Strasburg, a dark colored onion that grows large and is a good market variety, and the Yellow Danver, a prolific cropper and hardy. The Yellow Danver is the best keeping onion. The white or silver skinned grows to a large size, and is the mildest flavored of the family, but not so hardy as the others. It is much used for pickling.

Onions are always harvested in August. They are lifted by digging lightly under the row with a light fork; left on the ground till quite dry, and are then placed on shelves to complete their drying before being put into barrels. The produce is generally from 150 to 200 bushels per acre.

Potato onions are the best of all for family use. They are grown by planting bulbs in the spring in rows a foot apart and five or six inches apart in the row. The increase is formed by the bulb splitting and dividing into six or eight bulbs.

The Top, or Tree, Onion is propagated from small bulbs that grow in a cluster on the stalk in place of flowers. They are planted and cultivated as other onions, and yield well, but do not keep late in the season. They come into use earlier than any other.

As good a way as any to utilize bone dust, and have it prepared for immediate plant food, is to mix it with barnyard manure. Heat is soon generated, and decomposition of the bone dust and the manure takes place. Barnyard manure generally lacks phosphoric acid, while bones contain a large quantity. A ton of pure bone dust contains as much nitrogen as eight and a half tons of fresh stable manure of an average quality. The quantity of phosphoric acid contained in the manure depends upon the kind of food consumed by the animals, though the ton of bone dust contains as much phosphoric acid as 110 tons of stable manure, but one ton of the latter contains more potash than five tons of bone dust.