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EDITORIAL.

Causes for the Deterioration of Canadian Beef.

We have only to refer to the weekly meat market reports of Great Britain to know, without any possibility of doubt, that Canadian beef stands in second place as compared with the United States product. American beef cattle have for years steadily forged forward, while Canadian stock has retrograded. Argentine cattle, too, which are some 20 days farther away from the world's greatest market, have time and again dropped in one ahead of Canadian beef. These are humiliating facts to face alongside the claim made for Canada, especially Ontario, of being the great breeding ground for high-class live stock, and the claim is well founded, too. We see great numbers of our best beef bulls and females going to United States breeding herds, and during the last three years thousands of Canadian stockers drained away to fill the stables of States feeders.

In a recent discussion of this subject with Mr. John McMillan, M. P., whose agricultural operations are largely conducted along the line of beef production, which he has made a pronounced success, he contended that the growing custom of using almost exclusively immature bulls is largely responsible for the increasing difficulty of being able to secure first-class feeders. The custom complained of, and which is proving ruinous to our beef trade, is that of buying for service a yearling bull, using him excessively till perhaps 3 years old, and then displacing him with another yearling. Mr. McMillan holds, and we believe rightly, that the evil comes first from using a bull at all at so young an age, and second, from the injury done him for his second and third year by the devitalizing effects of the first season's demands. Mr. McMillan contends that to get best results, not only should well-bred, good individuals of beef breeds be used, but he should be allowed to become fairly well matured at least before being put to heavy service. The only grounds on which it seems justifiable to discard a useful 3-year-old is when a lot of his daughters come into a breeding age the following year, but the difficulty is not insurmountable.

The one we have mentioned is no doubt a potent reason for Canadian beef cattle taking a back seat, but there are others which have and are playing a conspicuous part. Chief among them is perhaps the dairying industry, which in itself is all right, but its disastrous effect upon our beef trade is no less real. Whenever the blood of any of the strictly dairy breeds creeps into a herd, that moment the beef quality goes down. Nor is the dairy bull the only offender, but the cheap scrub bull is equally culpable. Too many factory patrons look merely to having the cows fresh for milk, and therefore consider it a saving to patronize a cheap-fee sire. When the calf comes there is considerable indifference felt as to whether it lives or dies, and it is liable to be more or less neglected during the very period when care should be taken to set it going towards a profitable career.

It need not be hoped that for the sake of the general export beef trade that cattle-raisers are going to pay more for bulls and spend more in rearing the calf, but there is hope in a remedy, prompted by every man that grows a steer, in making each steer a more profitable animal. It should not be forgotten that a calf that is worth raising is worth raising well, and those that are not worth raising should not be raised. A month or six weeks of new milk put into a proper skin will realize several times as much when the animal is sold at two or three years old as the milk would realize if sold. After a calf has made a good start, mammary milk wisely supplemented will keep him

growing rapidly, and if well managed, will preserve the flesh and thrift of the youngster. In all stock-rearing, it may be taken as a fact that, pound for pound, the inferior animals cost more than those of better quality, and it is quality that brings the price every time.

Ontario Farmers' Institute Work—Some Suggestions.

Following the big exhibitions and the fall fairs, the next notable public agricultural event in the Province of Ontario will be the Provincial Winter Show at Guelph from December 11th to 15th. Among the events of that week, Prof. Creelman, the Superintendent of Farmers' Institutes, has planned a gathering of his corps of speakers for the coming season's meetings, which will number, regular and supplementary together, some 700. It is felt that if the interest and efficiency of the Ontario Institute system is to be advanced, it is desirable not only to secure competent men for the travelling delegations—competent in that they are a practical success in the particular branches of agriculture upon which they undertake to advise others, but also that they have the necessary gifts and experience to render good service upon the platform. It is also desirable that they enter the campaign with enthusiasm and with certain well-defined plans as to the subjects to be emphasized and methods of presenting them. All this sort of preparatory work should be thoroughly reviewed at the Guelph meeting, and we are pleased to learn that as able an authority on agriculture, especially in the department of live-stock husbandry, as Prof. W. A. Henry, of the Wisconsin State Agricultural College and Experiment Station, has been invited to be present and deliver addresses, for which he is well qualified. He will be able to impart much reliable up-to-date information, based upon his own experimental work, especially in stock feeding, and to throw out many suggestions that the delegations will be able to turn to good account during the winter.

Most of the old workers who acquitted themselves creditably in the past will, no doubt, be continued on the Superintendent's staff, with new ones as needed, who have been developed in the first place as home talent at local Institute meetings. The Superintendent of Institutes has been employing part of his time during the past summer in visiting as many of the speakers as possible at their own farms, in order to see that they are able to practice as well as to preach.

We presume the bacon-hog question, in its various important phases, will again be to the fore, the business being a paying one during the past year, packing-houses and the exportation of bacon and hams being still on the increase.

The feeding, dressing and marketing of poultry will naturally demand attention, and we believe there will be practical demonstrations in preparing fowls for export or market by experts wherever practicable.

Another matter which should, and doubtless will, receive special attention this winter is that of refrigeration on the farm, touching first the construction of ice houses on a simple plan, putting up and preserving ice, preserving milk, meat, butter, fruit, etc., in summer time for domestic use and holding some of these products for market.

The care and pruning of orchards, particularly the latter, deserve a great deal of attention, and we understand that an effort will be made to give actual examples of apple-tree pruning, during the afternoons, in orchards adjacent to where the meetings are being held. Many orchards are in a most deplorable condition for want of pruning.

In the latter connection the FARMER'S ADVOCATE would like to see a considerable share of

attention at Farmers' Institute meetings to the improvement of rural homes. Someone may say, Oh, what we want to hear about at these gatherings is how to raise more corn and feed more hogs—something practical—and he will growl that our suggestions of improvements about the homestead cost money, and he "aint got no money for fol-de-rols." Our observation is, that men who talk like that very seldom make much progress, even in money-making, and if they do their hoardings do them and their families but little good, and very often is left for heirs to wrangle over and the cream of it is raked off by lawyers. The man who gives no thought to the improvement of his house and grounds and his home life, by cultivating the intellectual and the social, is living on too low and sordid a level ever to amount to much in the community in which he exists. Besides this, most of the improvements about which we are speaking do not require any great financial outlay. A little time and thought and labor was about all that was needed to make many of the prettiest homesteads we know of in Canada. Trees and grass and flowers are not costly commodities. Once given a start, with a little training at the right time, nature will do the rest and do it cheaply, and no investment will give more enduring, more certain or better returns. The delegations should include men who are enthusiasts in horticulture, entomology, tree planting and home improvement. Such subjects can be made very popular, and, rightly directed, every Institute may be made an incentive and a boon to the district in which it is held.

The Registration of Nova Scotia Live Stock.

During the Provincial Exhibition, Halifax, an interesting meeting was held, at which the Nova Scotia breeders conferred with Mr. Henry Wade, Secretary of the Dominion Shorthorn Breeders' Association and Live Stock Registrar, and Mr. John I. Hobson, President of the Dominion Shorthorn and the Ontario Winter Fair Associations. What the latter proposed was that the stock breeders of Nova Scotia, particularly the Shorthorn breeders, should drop their Nova Scotia registry and adopt that of the Dominion Shorthorn Association. This would give their animals a standing they do not now possess, and would be a great boon for the future. The Shorthorn Association has a very large membership, and has a cash surplus of \$12,000. Membership costs \$2 annually, and the fee to members for registration and certificate of animals under 24 months old is 75 cents. It was stated that the annual registration book, furnished free to members, costs \$2.75, but the great advantage of the proposed change is the improved standing that the greater body would give to the thoroughbred stock of the Maritime Shorthorn breeders. As regards other thoroughbred stock, it should be enumerated in the registry only of the best organizations—organizations recognized everywhere. Mr. Wade and Mr. Hobson made speeches in support of this idea, and among all local speakers who followed there was perfect unanimity in the same line. B. W. Chipman, Secretary for Agriculture, was in the chair, and he also favored the idea. So did Hon. T. R. Black, whose motto was, "It is easier to start right than to get right after having been wrong." C. A. Archibald, J. Rufus Starr, and half a dozen other local men favored the change. Prof. Day, of Guelph; Major Sheppard, of Toronto; David Gregg, and other visitors added their testimony in its favor. There is no doubt, from the tone of this meeting, that the scheme will be carried into effect—that the local register will be dropped in favor of the Dominion one.