

THE FARMER'S ADVOCATE

AND HOME MAGAZINE.

THE LEADING AGRICULTURAL JOURNAL IN
THE DOMINION.

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value. The largest number of returns received in one year was 48,635. From these, the annual estimate on farming operations is made up. (7) Special dairy returns are obtained from butter and cheese factories.

In Manitoba the Provincial Department of Agriculture has a corps of some 250 correspondents, or about one per township (six miles square), who furnish information as to condition of the great wheat and other crops, stock, poultry, etc. The number of stock is reported through municipal assessors, but in some cases these are only made once in three years. British Columbia has a staff of district correspondents, who report to the Department of Agriculture, but the system and returns are not yet very complete. In the Northwest Territories the newly-organized Department of Agriculture is arranging a plan for the gathering of statistics for the first time. In the Maritime Provinces and in the Province of Quebec this work has also been neglected. Even were every Province gathering statistics, it would still be incumbent upon the Dominion Government to deal with the matter from a national standpoint.

The United States has a most elaborate system, engaging a corps of 56,700 regular correspondents, reporting monthly, and 140,500 special correspondents, reporting at particular seasons of the year. There are also 21 salaried State agents. The present head of the Department at Washington (Mr. John Hyde), however, reports the system too cumbersome, and has recommended instead, as more efficient, a select corps of experienced correspondents in the 25 principal agricultural States, who would be paid \$2 for each of nine reports and \$1 for each of two reports, making \$20 per annum; thus obtaining a much more certain and valuable class of information than where the compensation is simply, as he puts it, "an occasional bulletin or a few packets of garden seeds." In the minor agricultural States the returns of the salaried State agents would be relied upon. The information collected from all sources, including that dealing with the productions of foreign countries, is carefully compiled and promptly and speedily distributed, through the press and otherwise, to the people.

STOCK.

Shires --- Past, Present, and Future.

The extraordinary prices that have recently been paid in England for Shire breeding stock indicates that the best animals in that popular draft breed of horses are very highly appreciated in their native home. Now, the English farmer is not a faddist, nor is he particularly a sentimentalist, but rather a practical business man possessed of keen, hard sense. If this be true, it must be admitted that the Shire horse of to-day is full of good quality and particularly suited to the class of labor he is called upon to perform. Some two decades or more ago the best animals of the breed were not so popular for their all-round excellence as they are to-day. It is claimed by English horsemen that those present at the recent London Shire Horse Show, who visited the same exhibition twenty years ago, were ready to admit a great change for the better in the animals present on this latter occasion. While there are still a number of indifferent specimens that find their way to the Show, they come chiefly from remote corners of the country where no branch of agriculture, let alone horse breeding, has been taken up in a spirited manner either by landlord or tenant. It is remarked by "Argus" in the *Live Stock Journal*, "that a number of the Shires exhibited at the exhibition of Shires twenty years ago, considered only from knees and hocks to ground, were lacking in length and slope of fore pastern; a proportion of them had scarcely any perceptible hind pasterns at all. The thin, shelly hoofs of a good many outside the prize and commended list had the hair so combed down over the top of them that it really took some little inspection with hand and eye to detect feet at all. Then there were in many a very perceptible roundness of leg, which was invariably accompanied with a coarseness of the exterior skin and feather. This gradually gave way to flatter bones and hair of a more silky texture."

From that time forward an improvement set in, and ten years later the fore pasterns had lengthened down into good, broad-set, deep, ample hoofs, such as are necessary for wear-and-tear work on city streets. More attention was also paid to shoulders, the up-and-down flat fore ends giving way to those with powerful, well-set collar sockets, which allowed of good free pulling. As time went on the hind pasterns became lengthened out. With all this the indispensable properties of weight and size were preserved, while symmetry was maintained to the extent of filling the eye of the knowing spectator, who was also satisfied with what he saw. Besides a well-developed and desirable form of limbs, a better sort of action was in time secured, until the winning specimens in England to-day leave little to be desired in a draft horse, and if we are to judge of the demand for the best stock animals by the prices paid at the present day, we have a right to expect to see within the next decade or two the rank and file of Shire horses well up to the level of the present top standards.

The Ideal Shorthorn.

A writer in the *London Live Stock Journal*, over the *nom de plume* of Javelin, contributes to that journal, by request, the following description of a model Shorthorn, which we apprehend is so nearly in accordance with the views of advanced judges of that class of stock as to be worthy of reproduction in the FARMER'S ADVOCATE, and may be studied with profit by all young breeders and students of Shorthorn lore:

"An ideal Shorthorn should, I think, combine the good points for which several of the leading strains are remarkable. The head of a bull is a feature of the highest importance. The forehead is very wide between the eyes, and a little dished. Under it the face tapers gradually to the muzzle, where it becomes slightly wider round the nostrils, which are prominent and full. The nose is of a rich flesh color tint, and any blueness or spots are to be condemned. Curling hair on the scarp is becoming to a bull. The eyes are bright, prominent, and bold looking, showing high blood and spirited character. The ears are rather long, thin, erect, and well covered with hair. The horns, which are of a creamy or waxlike color, and sometimes inclined to be flat, spring well from the coronet, are short and thick, and with age bent rather inward towards the face. Upward growing horns are very objectionable, and destroy the contour of a head which may otherwise be well formed. There is always much grandeur displayed in the head of a high-class Shorthorn bull."

"Mr. Thomas Bates, and indeed all great breeders, attached great weight to the head of a sire, being assured that it indicated more than anything else his value as a stockgetter. It is recorded of Mr. Bates that, when he was seeking a bull to cross upon his Duchesses, he went to search for one in the herd of Mr. Stephenson. Passing through the farmyard, he was attracted by seeing the head of a bull protruded from a loose-box. He was immediately struck with its excellence, and concluded that this was the stamp he required. He accordingly purchased Belvedere, for that was the bull's name, and used him with extraordinary success, although, in respect to his shape, he was called by some a shabby-looking animal. The double cross of Belvedere produced Duke of Northumberland, the premier bull at the first show of the Royal Agricultural Society, which was held at Oxford in 1839. The late Mr. Bowly, of Siddington, described this bull to me

in terms of the highest praise. His head and crest, his surprisingly prominent eyes, and the general grandeur of his appearance and gait, Mr. Bowly said he could never forget. Mr. David McIntosh and Mr. Wm. Torr considered that the Duke was the grandest bull they had ever seen. This is a proof of the value of a head such as Belvedere possessed as an index to the quality and powers of a sire. It must never be forgotten that the head should distinctly indicate high breeding, and be full of masculine character, yet still be handsome. An eminent critic, who attended Mr. S. E. Bolden's sale at Springfield Hall, in referring to Grand Duke 3rd, spoke of the 'noble expression of his countenance.' The Rev. John Storer wrote that this fine sire had a 'beautiful yet quite masculine head.' The ideal head must be, so to speak, well chiselled, yet displaying all the strength and vigor which go to make up a thoroughly masculine appearance and expression.

"The head is pleasingly set on to the neck, which is wide, of good length, deep and muscular, with a strong development of crest, which adds immensely to the appearance of a bull. The neck vein is well filled out so as to carry the neck back into the shoulders without any appearance of hollowness at their junction. The breast is wide, full, prominent, and deep, so that the dewlap is not far from the ground. I owned a bull, bred at Warlaby, whose dewlap reached within 15 in. of the ground. Mr. Richard Booth used to say that a bull should stand with his forelegs well outside him."

"The shoulder is a point of primary importance in symmetry, and if bad shoulders exist in a herd it may take a lifetime to breed them out. A bull's shoulders should be wide and strong, yet not coarse. They need not be too fine at the points, for this is heifer-like; but they must be oblique or sloping back, and wide on top where they should melt, as it were, into the crops, which must also be wide and well fleshed. From the crops to the forearm, that is the girth, there must be no depression or slackness, but the forelegs should come out equally wide as the shoulders. The animal is then thick through the heart and wide of chest, an essential to good constitution. The fore legs are short, the arm being very stout and wide, and the bone is fine below the knee."

"From the shoulder to the tail the line is straight, the back is wide and level, the ribs growing out roundly from it, and extending well back towards the hips, the loins very strong and nearly as broad as the hips, which must not be too wide in a bull, otherwise he would be spoken of as cow-hipped. The ribs are deep and the flank thick, heavy, and well let down, so that the underline from behind the forearm to the junction of the flank with the hind leg should be straight. Thus there are even lines over and under. The hind quarters are long and wide, the rumps, so valuable as meat, being well filled, and almost concealing the prominence of the hips. The tail is set on neatly and well covered at its root, no lumpiness being seen. The twist is wide and deep, and the thighs heavily fleshed down to the hocks, an essential point in a sire, but seldom seen at its best. The hocks and hind legs are straight and wide apart, the legs being short and set firmly on the ground."

"The hair is abundant, of fine texture, soft and mossy. There is sometimes found an under or second coat of very velvet-like feel, which it is pleasant to touch."

"Color in great variety is one of the charming features which distinguish the Shorthorn above other breeds. There is the rich creamy-white, of which color some of the best Shorthorns were. Different shades of red are to be found, the deep color being most liked. The roans of many hues can be had, from the pale or cool roan which merges towards white, to the deep and splendid plum color, which is so grateful to the eye and so much admired. The late Mr. Fawkes, of Farnley, was very partial to the rich roan, and his experience was that the use of a white bull upon red cows was the most effectual way to get such a color."

"Deep flesh is one of the great essentials in a Shorthorn. There is nothing like the roast beef of Old England. There must be abundance of heavy flesh of fine quality distinguishing the fat Shorthorn, but when milk is wanting that can be also had. The mention of beef leads one to speak of that 'handling,' that fine mellow hide so pleasant to the touch, and so indicative of that 'quality' which is a clear index of thrift and first-rate beef-making propensities. The skin must not be thin; it should be rather thick and soft, and there is felt underneath it a peculiar softness, even in lean animals, which at once evidences thriftiness and a faculty to produce beef with a moderate expenditure of food, or, in other words, to make beef economically."

"The female Shorthorn has, of course, most of the characteristics which belong to males of the same breed, but there are, however, some leading points of difference. For example, the head of the female is finer, longer, smaller, and more tapering. It is full of gentleness and beautiful feminine character. The eyes are more placid, and the horns are much smaller and gracefully curled. There is, in fact, a great general sweetness of expression. Again, the neck is thinner and much finer at its junction with the head, and there can be no thickness or clumsiness at the jole. The brisket is not so deep as it becomes the bull to have it. A heifer's shoulders are very neat and not at all so strong or wide as those of the male; they are also thinner at the top where they join the crops. Mr. Carr, in