

THE DAIRYING INDUSTRY IN CANADA.

THE FIRST DOMESTIC CATTLE.

Sable island, that bleak inhospitable sandbank off the coast of Nova Scotia, was in all probability the scene of the first introduction of domestic cattle on this side of the Atlantic. History tells us that Baron de Lery, who sailed from France in 1518 with the object of founding a colony in the new world, became discouraged after searching in vain for a favourable location, landed his live stock, consisting of cattle and horses, on Sable island, and then returned home. As a somewhat interesting sequel to this story, it is said that the Marquis de La Roche made another attempt to found a colony in 1598, with a number of convicts whom he had been allowed to take from the jails in France. He marooned these people on the island while he searched for a suitable location for his settlement, but stormy weather drove his ships so far to the eastward that he decided to return to France, leaving his wretched colonists to shift for themselves. They were on the island seven years before they were rescued, subsisting largely on the flesh of the animals and clothing themselves in their skins. The cattle were finally exterminated about 1630 by expeditions organized for the purpose among the Puritans of Massachusetts, but the ponies are there to this day.

Cartier brought some cattle with him on his third and last voyage in 1541, but as he made no permanent settlement the cattle were probably killed for food or taken back to France.

The next attempt to introduce domestic cattle into what is now British dominions on this continent, was in 1606, when Poutrincourt brought some cows to the settlement founded by De Monts at Port Royal (now Annapolis, N.S.) in 1604. It is not at all likely, however, that this was a permanent introduction, because the settlement was destroyed in 1613 by an expedition from Virginia, under Argall, and if these pirates spared any of the cattle, the Indians would certainly not have overlooked such easy game.

The first permanent introduction of cows into Canada was undoubtedly made by Champlain, at Quebec, in 1608 or 1610. In the record of his voyages, he makes mention of the cutting of hay for the cattle in 1610, and in a map of Quebec, published in 1613, a place is shown where 'hay was grown for the cattle.' Champlain's colony had a farm at Cap Tourmente with 60 or 70 head of cattle in 1629. Some of these were killed by Kirke on his predatory expedition to the St. Lawrence in that year.

In 1660 the great minister Colbert, under Louis XIV began sending representatives of 'the best dairy cows of Normandy and Brittany' to New France.

De Tracey also brought some cattle from France in 1665 along with the famous Carignan-Salières regiment.

All authorities agree that the French Canadian breed of the present day is descended from the stock thus imported from Normandy and Brittany in the 17th century.

After 1632, when the Acadian settlements began to acquire a permanent character, more cattle as well as sheep were procured and 'fruit trees were planted.' Fur trading and fishing were to some extent abandoned for agricultural pursuits. In 1671 there were reported to be 866 head of 'horned cattle' in all Acadia. A census in 1693 showed 878 horned cattle at Port Royal, 461 at Minas, 309 at Chignecto and 38 on the River St. John (New Brunswick), probably at Jemseg.