

THE FARMER'S ADVOCATE & HOME MAGAZINE

THE LEADING AGRICULTURAL JOURNAL IN THE DOMINION.

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Our Advertisers Well Spoken Of.

MR. CHAS. MACKAY, Thornbury, Ont., writes:—"I think the ADVOCATE is the best farmer's paper I know of. I have purchased from several advertisers, and they all gave good satisfaction. I bought two Jersey heifers and a bull from H. Cooke, Orillia; a pair of Bronze turkeys from J. A. Stewart, Menie P. O.; a young Berkshire boar from Whiteside Bros., Innerkip; White Wyandotte eggs from J. J. Lenton, Oshawa; two turkey-hens from A. Elliot, Pond Mills. All of which are giving good satisfaction. As soon as I have stock to sell, I intend to advertise in the ADVOCATE."

Beginning the New Year in a Hopeful Spirit.

BY PLOWMAN.

I have been thinking of late that we farmers, as a class, feel the present depression less than do the men of other callings. Money is only a measure of values. A dollar bill has no intrinsic value of itself. Its value consists in its purchasing power, or that for which it can be exchanged, and I hold that a dollar will purchase more of either necessities or luxuries of life now than it would, say fifteen years ago. Take for instance farm implements. You can buy a better mower now for \$15 than you could in 1880 for \$75; or you can get a better binder now for \$125 than you could get in 1880 for \$250; or a plow can be bought now for \$10 that used to cost \$15. And housewives well know that they can buy more groceries now for a dollar than in 1880 for \$1.50, and the prices of wearing material have decreased in even greater proportion, so that although the farmers have to sell more stuff now to realize one hundred dollars than in 1880, yet that hundred dollars will go farther in paying his expenses than one hundred and sixty dollars would at that time. But the objection is raised that we cannot pay off our mortgages as fast now as we could then. Well, that may be, but we should be very thankful if we are able to hold our own and make a living. Business men are well satisfied these times, if, on balancing their accounts at the end of the year, their profits are found to equal their household expenses. We farmers have got so accustomed to grumbling that we have educated ourselves to believe that we are the most unfortunate people on the face of the earth. We picture to ourselves the manufacturer and merchant, and even the grocer on the corner, as so many leeches growing fat and plump on the hard-earned profits of the farmer. We imagine ourselves as beasts of burden, and these others as the drivers, and when I come to think of it, men who are so short-sighted as to take that view of the situation are little better than what they call themselves after all.

Statistics prove that ninety out of every hundred of these so-called leeches fail, six or seven of those who succeed only make a living, and the remaining three or four get rich. And if these men did not put more brains and more hard work (mental if not manual) into their business than do some farmers, the proportion of failures would be materially increased. If the contention were true that these men were leeches, making an easy living by overcharging the farmers for their goods and underpaying them for their products, then I hold that is the best argument in favor of farming that I know of, for no other legitimate business could stand so much blood-sucking and live. At any rate I would rather be the horse than the leech.

But as far as my observation goes, the men who do the most complaining about "hard times," and are always howling about the oppression of the "poor farmer" by these "robbers" and "leeches" among business men, are generally to be found spending their wet days around the corner grocery or in Billy Smith's tavern, "discussing the burnin' questions of the day," while the successful men are found at home either fixing up around the barn or mending some broken implement in the shop, or else they are in the house reading the FARMER'S ADVOCATE and similar publications, and thus fitting themselves for more effective labor when the weather will permit.

Amongst the latter class, who conduct their business with prudence and intelligence, you hear very little talk of depression or "hard times." One great cause of the discontent so prevalent among farmers is that they do not give the farm credit for all it produces. They simply credit it for the amount sold off it. But how about the comfortable home it has afforded us, as well as the vegetables and fruit, flour, meat, poultry, eggs, milk, cream, butter, etc., used by the family during the year, to say nothing of a horse and rig at any time it is wanted, and a hundred other little luxuries? But it may be argued that this forms no part of the income. Well, perhaps not, but it would form a serious expenditure if we had it to pay for in hard cash. A man in town could not live in the same kind of a house and set the same table as the ordinary farmer on an income of less than seven or eight hundred dollars a year. So that although we may not be getting rich as fast as we would like, let us be thankful to the Giver of all good, that we are enabled to make a good, comfortable living, and to lay by a little (be it ever so little) for a rainy day.

"Come, Let Us Renew."

GENTLEMEN, Enclosed please find \$1.00, renewal of my subscription for 1895. Your paper is, in my estimation, one of the finest productions ever printed; and the valuable information it contains, for the small sum of one dollar, is a credit to any publisher. F. C. BULMAN, Toronto, Ont.

[NOTE.—We are determined to make the FARMER'S ADVOCATE of more practical value to our readers than ever before; and letters of approval are reaching us every day from all parts of the country. We can confidently bespeak the support of the farmers of this country. Though expense is not spared in getting out a paper twice a month that earns such unsolicited approbation as that printed above, the price remains at the old figure \$1.00 per year. None are authorized to take subscriptions at a less rate, but exceedingly liberal commissions and valuable premiums are allowed agents.]

STOCK.

Our Scottish Letter.

The year is dying, and with it a season marked by many strange features. It is going out in storms, reminding one rather of blustering February than dark, hard December. Not for many years have there been storms and gales such as have swept over the land during the past week. Trees have been uprooted, corn-stacks overturned, roofs stripped and rivers swollen. Straw-stacks have in some cases been scattered to the four corners of the pole, and much good fodder wasted. Apart from this, the winter of 1894 has been memorable for its singularly open character. Frost and snow have, up to this date (29th Dec.), been practically unknown in most parts of the Scottish lowlands, and fodder and turnips for the cattle and sheep are likely to last well. In the feeding districts the topic of conversation is the collapse of the London dead meat trade. The Monday following the Smithfield Show is the great day in the London market for the sale of fat cattle of the best quality, or what is generally known as prime Scots, and this year the demand was as miserable as it could well be. An improvement may take place before the close of January, but the present experience has been that dealers who buy up prime cattle in Aberdeen and the north of Scotland generally, have in some cases lost £5 per head on them in London, and large numbers have been brought back to Aberdeen. The market has been styled Black Monday, and the title is well bestowed. It will be a black day in the calendar for many of those engaged in the cattle trade. You Canadians have had something to do with the glutting of the market. Such immense quantities of foreign-fed meat are being sent in to our markets that the home feeder has no chance at all, especially when the unscrupulous London butcher has no compunction about selling Deptford and Birkenhead killed meat as prime Scotch. The evidence which the recent Parliamentary Committee collected on this point was conclusive. Some prominent butchers, calling themselves by high-sounding titles, were found, who had not a piece of Scottish-fed meat in their premises. This is a most unsatisfactory state of affairs. The proof that prime Scotch is a brand of recognized merit is found in the fact that these shops trading only in foreign meat find it convenient to call themselves by distinctively Scottish titles, The Aberdeen Meat Store, The Scottish House, and so on. Men do not counterfeit base coin. It is the genuine article which alone attracts imitators, and unless the Scottish-fed beef were most favored the vendors of foreign meat would not call themselves by that title.

After the great fat stock shows, one naturally wishes to learn how it has fared with the leading cattle at the block—in the hands of the butcher. For some years, Mr. George T. Turner, one of the correspondents of the Live Stock Journal, has made it his special business to follow the prize animals and find out how they killed. It cannot be said that the results are ever as favorable as could be wished, to the patrons of champion animals. So far, the only animal whose performance when brought to the final test has been reported, is Benton Bride, the Aberdeen-Angus heifer, which proved champion at Smithfield. The butcher's report is not altogether satisfactory. She was wastefully fat, and slight of lean meat. When hung up she formed a very pretty carcass; indeed, Mr. Turner says she was as pretty when dead as when alive. He is of opinion that of the three great fat heifers of the A.A. breed,—Luxury, Pride of the Highlands, and Benton Bride,—the best, when killed, was the first, both the second and third having too much fat and too little lean meat to be profitable. This raises a much larger question than we have leisure to discuss at the present time, but no one will question that, whatever else may be learned from it, it forms a strong argument in favor of a butcher's block test at Smithfield. After all is said and done, the really important question is, What class of animal pays the butcher best? That is the class which it will pay the farmer to feed.

The horse trade is demoralized. While big, heavy, cart geldings are in demand, and at five years old, weighing 1,800 pounds, can be sold easily for £80 and £90, the market is being flooded with cheap horses of a much lighter grade, from Canada and the United States. We have lately made some investigations regarding these, and find that they are not growing in popularity. Breeders here have grasped the character of the home demand, and it is long since so many first-rate horses of weight and substance were under hire for one season at this early period. The trade is good enough for big, strong horses, with good feet and legs, but for medium and second-class animals, it is dull and not too healthy. Now that the foreign demand is *nil*, the point to be aimed at is a more scientific and determined effort to breed geldings for the home market. It will pay to do so; and farmers will be very foolish if they allow a chance of this sort to escape them. It is useless to grumble about depressed agriculture, if no effort is made to raise the class of animal wanted for commerce. The ruin of all classes of breeding is that men who have not the material will devote themselves to the raising of stock for breeding, as distinguished from commercial purposes. He is a wise man who recognizes the measure of his own powers, and does not exceed them.

Wishing my readers a Happy New Year, it is as heretofore with this writer, "SCOTLAND YEE."