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EDITORIAL.

**National Stock-breeders' Convention.**

This is an age of organization, associations, and conventions. Canada is fairly well furnished with live-stock organizations, but to fittingly round out the list, the call comes from Ottawa for the "First annual meeting of the National Association of Canadian Stock-breeders," to be held in the City Hall of the capital on March 7th to 12th next. It is designed to be national in aims and membership. The object stated is to unite the strength of the live-stock interests in the various Provinces, and thus give Canadian stock-breeders a prestige and influence not now possessed. Such a gathering should be advantageous as a means of settling in some measure the policy of trade between the various Provinces, and of Canada with foreign countries, though with regard to the former, the natural law of "supply and demand" is perhaps the safest regulator.

Our Manitoba and Northwest breeders should not be subjected to any unfair or needless competition by reason of Eastern organizations heavily aided by government grants.

Properly representative, it is obvious that such an organization of men from all the Provinces would be of very great assistance to the Dominion Live-stock Commissioner, and would do good, if nothing more were accomplished at the meeting next month, by getting men of various Provinces, West and East, together to discuss in a friendly way their diverse interests, and to find common ground, by a little give and take, upon which all might stand. The Chief of the Dairy Division (Mr. Ruddick) finds need for such a conference, and he annually calls together at Ottawa a meeting of dairy experts, leading manufacturers, exporters, heads of dairy schools and instructors, to formulate plans for the coming year's work. This seems to be more workable than the "National Dairymen's Association," organized a few years ago at Ottawa with great expectations, but which never held a second meeting. To organize the association was found comparatively easy, but its direction to the accomplishment of useful work was not so simple, nor would busy men, without very tangible objects in view, and possibly the payment of their expenses, see their way clear to pay a week's visit to the capital annually, or even every two years.

We have already published the long list of subjects proposed to be discussed at the coming convention.

With regard to securing improved transportation facilities and freight rates, and the extension of interprovincial and foreign trade (including the West Indies, South America and South Africa) in breeding and commercial live-stock and its products, there will doubtless be unanimity of opinion, and the deliverances of a national association touching these matters should give weight and influence to its representations. It will be well to prepare to afford our stockmen and exporters every advantage to be secured through the instrumentality of the new Railway Commission.

The question of protection to our wool-growers from the competition of shoddy goods is of vital importance to one of the most worthy industries of our country, and, incidentally, to a very large section of the purchasing public, now being deceived and defrauded by the sale of inferior products under specious names.

The regulation of the importation of live stock from foreign countries for breeding or commercial purposes is a critical question, into which international customs and fiscal consideration enter,

as well as of immigration, and which must be carefully handled by government, but breeders will be practically unanimous in the demand for the levying of higher duties on inferior horses, and protection for the people from the introduction of entire male animals of doubtful breeding. On these points strong representations to the Dominion Government will doubtless be made, and with good reason, for an improvement on present conditions, which are painfully discouraging to the enterprising breeders of our own country.

The discussion of the latter subject will naturally bring up the question of pedigree records, which occupies a large place in the convention programme, and this will be one of the most intricate questions with which the meeting will have to deal.

With existing records, indeed, it will have no power to deal, and without consent of the associations now controlling them the convention will be powerless to effect any change in their management or direction. The public pedigree records of pure-bred stock in this country are more rationally managed than in any other country we know of, being controlled by representatives of the breeders of each class. They are the people most intimately interested and most conversant with the requirements of such records, and only by the will of the majority can any change in their character or control be effected. The unnecessary multiplication of records is to be deprecated. It is exceedingly desirable that there should be but one register for one breed in Canada, but this being a free country, can we constitutionally proceed to prevent any man, or number of men, from opening a record if he or they so elect?

The records controlled by the Dominion Breed Associations are acknowledged to be of as high standard as those in any other country, and in all respects as reliable and creditable. It is a question, then, for the breeders composing these associations to decide whether they shall continue to control, as at present, the records they have established and sustained, or whether it would be wise to hand them over to a department of the Central Government, to be kept by its officials. If the latter course be adopted, it would be subject to regulations laid down by the breed associations interested, which would still have to be retained in existence, as well as the National Association. An important point for consideration right here is the effect that this might have upon the existing breed associations and their annual meetings. Under the new conditions could the Dominion Shorthorn Breeders' Association continue to render the same generous aid as at present to the leading exhibitions of the country, from Atlantic to Pacific, and wind up the year's business with over \$5,000 in the treasury?

We have no records for certain breeds of stock that are being imported from the United States, and for these, as indeed for all registered stock admitted free of duty for breeding purposes from that country, the Canadian customs officials recognize certificates of registration in United States records, while the American customs regulations ignore our records and accept only certificates of registry in their own. Calling our records by whatever name we may, will not alter the American policy. If it be decided that we should adopt the narrow, increasingly vexatious and restrictive policy of our neighbors, we must either open registers for the classes of stock for which we have none, or impose the ad valorem duty on animals of these classes imported from the States. If there is not enough breeders of these classes in

this country to form a society and formulate a constitution, then the Government, we presume, would be expected to open a register for them, and in that event we should have two classes of records, one under the direction of the breeders, the other run by the Government alone.

It is said that the arrangements for reduced freight rates secured by the breeders' associations from the railway companies for the carrying of registered stock are endangered by the issuance of certificates of registry by record associations not recognized by the Dominion organizations. We know not to what extent this practice prevails or the extent of the danger, but it would seem to be quite practicable to specify to the agents of carrying companies the records whose certificates are endorsed by the breeders' associations to which this privilege has been granted. In such cases as this, and for international arrangements, re crossing "the lines," as well as a safeguard to the general farmer who is not posted on the record question, it would certainly be desirable, if breeders are not disposed to surrender their records and run the hazards which some fear of political complications arising, to have an arrangement made whereby the Dominion Department of Agriculture could in some way authorize or recognize certain records. Such a list of Canadian records was, we understand, furnished the St. Louis Fair authorities by the Dominion Department of Agriculture not long ago, and included those conducted by Mr. Hy. Wade, Mr. Geo. W. Clemons, and a couple of those kept in Quebec. A leading Canadian Holstein-Friesian breeder believes the plan of their association to elect their own registrar or secretary, and keep entire control of their own funds, to be far the best; but suggests for the sake of a government guarantee of record of purity, that these officers might be under general supervision of a supervisor appointed and paid by the Dominion Government. He believes that each breed should have its own recorder interested and posted in the breed.

Changes in the management of our records, it will thus be seen, is a complicated question, of far-reaching importance to breeders, who will be disposed to hasten deliberately in considering proposed changes in the present system. There is a fascination to enthusiastic breeders in the pedigree records of the breed they espouse, and this is a strong factor in arousing interest and binding them together in a fraternity prepared to propagate, and, if need be, fight for their favorites in the keen competition of the period.

Of course, the new National Association cannot deal finally with many of these questions, but the opinions of the live-stock men assembled will be secured, and steps taken to urge the adoption of the association's recommendations.

We trust the convention will be largely attended, and that its deliberations and the association formed will make for the continued advancement of the live-stock interests of the Dominion.

**A Request.**

The policy of the "Farmer's Advocate" is to treat all its readers and patrons fairly and frankly, and to give them the most efficient service in our power. Publishing the paper weekly has practically doubled the correspondence and number of enquiries received. Half a dozen communications during the past fortnight compel us to remind the writers that they have neglected to comply with our rule, that the **CORRECT NAME AND POST-OFFICE ADDRESS MUST IN EVERY CASE BE GIVEN.** We cannot undertake to deal with anonymous enquiries. Comply with this condition, good friends, and we will do our best.