

stable or put them on grass? To finish them, the feeder must be his own judge of this point. Some years it has been more profitable to finish in the stables; other years more money has been made by finishing them on the grass. We have finished a much larger number on the grass than in the stables. The profits are seldom what they should be. The man who feeds a good large number will make more than the man who feeds only a few head. In conclusion, I would say that the whole question of profit resolves itself and centers around the man who is going to take care of the stock. We have too few men whom we can say are expert feeders. The successful feeder I call an expert in the business, who looks after the comfort of every individual animal under his care, and notices at once if an animal is not doing well. Find out the reason, and, with a little extra kindness or a tonic of some kind, keep them all thriving well. For instance, one farmer may grow just about the same number of acres of grain, hay and corn as another, feed only half as many cattle, and get away with all he grew on the farm, and have his cattle in no better condition than his brother farmer who fed about twice as many on about the same amount of feed. In the end, the man who can feed the largest number of cattle on the smallest amount of feed will make the most profit.

Huron Co., Ont.

R. J. McMILLAN.

Choice of Breeds.

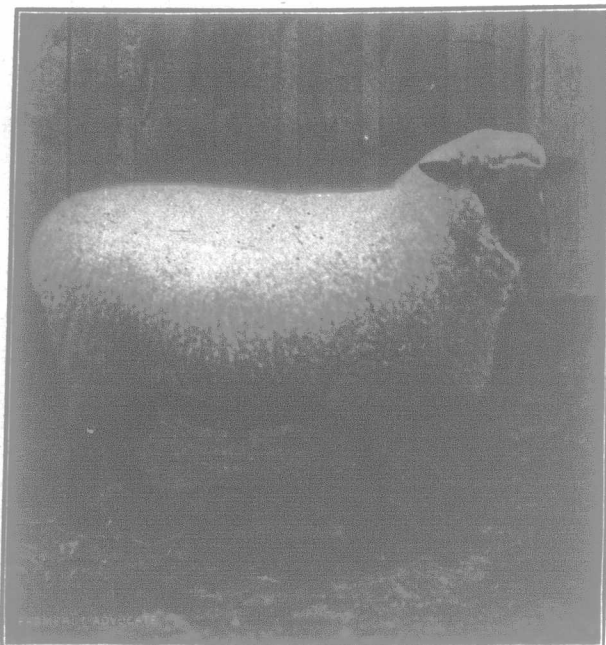
Inquirer writes: I am a young farmer just beginning for myself, and would like to get some pure-bred cattle. Which would be the most profitable to get, the Shorthorns or the Aberdeen-Angus? Please give points of difference and preference between the two breeds. I intend to go into mixed farming.

Both these breeds, as commonly bred at present, are essentially beef breeds, and the preference is largely a question of taste and choice. Good individuals of either breed are well adapted to the profitable production of beef of the best quality, putting on flesh rapidly and smoothly, either while grazing or being stall-fed. The Shorthorns, which were formerly, and are yet, claimed to be a dual-purpose class of cattle—that is, the cows being good milkers, as well as good beef producers—have, as a rule, in the last twenty years at least, been bred mainly for beef-production, though many of the cows are yet good milkers, which may also be truly said of many Aberdeen-Angus cows, although we are not aware that they are claimed to be dual-purpose in the strictest sense of the term. The practice generally followed by breeders of the beef breeds of keeping their animals in high condition from calthood is believed to have a tendency to lessen the milking propensity and to increase the quality of flesh and fat production. For this reason, breeders of the dairy classes avoid feeding their young animals fattening foods, raising the calves on skim milk, and giving them a large proportion of bulky food and plenty of exercise while growing. As to the choice between the two breeds mentioned, it may be said that, judging from the number of herds in this country, Shorthorns are more popular, but the number of breeders keeping this class makes the competition for the sale of surplus stock keen, while the fact that there are comparatively few Aberdeen-Angus herds, their breeding would seem to afford a clearer field for a young man desiring to establish a pure-bred herd. The position taken by Aberdeen-Angus cattle in the show-ring at fat stock shows in Great Britain and at the Chicago stock-yards, and the International Show there where the battle of the breeds is keenly fought, leaves no room to dispute their claim to being first-class beef-producers, as they certainly hold their own against all comers. There is ample room in this country for more good Aberdeen-Angus herds, and an enterprising man, with a fair amount of means and good judgment, may find here a fine field for the exercise of his ambition in founding a first-class herd of this breed.

The Shortage of Wool.

The only explanation of the continued rise in wool values, in the face of indifferent trade, is the shrinkage of supplies. Everywhere the number of sheep has been declining. In the United Kingdom there has been a considerable decline in our flocks, and home-grown wools have in many cases about doubled in value during the last two years. On the Continent of Europe the falling-off has been much more marked, for in the German Empire alone the number of sheep during the last thirty years has fallen from 25,000,000 to 10,000,000. Now statistics are coming to hand which show that in the United States and Canada also, the same process is going on. But, of course, the chief factor in the present position has been the terrible havoc caused amongst the flocks by the late seven consecutive years of drought in Australia. Out of 106,000,000 sheep more than half succumbed, and shipments of wool fell away from about 1,600,000 bales, at which they stood in

1894, to about 1,000,000 bales during the wool year which ended on June 30th last. The effects have been very serious. Scores of thousands of English work-people have been badly hit by this short supply of wool. In Australia, not only have thousands of pastoralists been ruined, but it is estimated that shearers and other station hands last year earned less by half a million sterling than they did ten years ago.—[Manchester Guardian.



A Typical Oxford Down Ram.

Oxford Down Sheep.

The principal recognized breeds of sheep that have been imported to and bred in any considerable numbers in America may be classed as fine-woolled, medium-woolled and coarse-woolled. The first named, including the American Merino, the Delaine Merino and the Rambouillet, are kept mainly on account of the value of their wool for special manufacturing purposes, and have not been at any time popular in Canada, though extensively raised in the United States. The medium or middle woolled breeds are the Southdown, Shropshire, Suffolk, Hampshire and Oxford Downs, and the Dorset. Those coming under the head of coarse-woolled breeds are the Leicester, Lincoln and Cotswold. These, and the middle-woolled breeds, are classed as mutton breeds, as distinguished from the Merinos, which, as stated, are kept principally on account of their fine wool, though when crossed with the mutton breeds the progeny make fairly good mutton-producing animals, while their wool in that case must be listed in a different class from that of the pure-bred Merino. It is but just to state that there are degrees of fineness and coarseness in the fleeces of the middle-woolled and the so-called coarse-woolled breeds, and that in the most carefully bred and managed flocks, fineness and evenness of the quality of the fleece over all parts of the body has, in late years, received much attention and improvement, and that now a fleece showing coarse, hairylike wool on thighs and hips is considered a disqualification, and, in the estimation of a competent judge, discounts the value of the animal for showing and for breeding purposes very considerably.

THE OXFORD DOWNS, though not among the oldest breeds, have been bred sufficiently long to thoroughly fix their type as distinct from all other breeds. The most reliable history of the breed available states that they originated in the County of Oxford, England, in 1833, seventy years ago, in a cross of the finest, neatest Cotswold rams with Hampshire ewes of the type existing in the early part of last century, which were a large, loosely-made class of sheep, that has been greatly improved since that time. In 1859, forty-five years ago, they were first recognized as a pure breed by the Royal Agricultural Society of England, and given a place in the prize list of their shows. By careful selection, and the mating of those conforming most nearly to the ideal, a breed was evolved that has gained much popularity, both in England and America, and the Oxford is now found in nearly every state and kingdom in Europe, in South Africa, Australia, South America, and in every Province in Canada. More than twenty-five thousand Oxford Downs have been recorded in the American pedigree register, the number of breeders numbering over seven hundred, of which more than two hundred are in Canada. The Oxfords are, as a rule, the largest of the middle-woolled breeds, rams weighing at maturity, in good condition, from two hundred and seventy-five to three hundred and fifty pounds, while highly-fitted sheep have weighed as high as four hundred pounds or over. Ewes

in good breeding condition, at maturity, weigh two hundred to two hundred and seventy-five pounds. Among their strongest claims to public favor is their hardiness, vigor of constitution and good grazing qualities. They are prolific, regular breeders, and the ewes good milkers, while their flesh ranks high in quality, being abundant in quantity, of medium fineness of grain, and well intermixed. Their wool is coarser than that of any of the other Down breeds, but is also considerably heavier. In well-kept flocks, the average fleece should weigh ten to twelve pounds, unwashed. In general appearance, the Oxford Down is a large, stately looking sheep, moderately low-set, and covered with a heavy fleece of dense wool, standing out at right angles from the body. They have strong bone, good legs and feet, and all the appearance of ruggedness and thrift. The head is of moderate length and width between the ears and between the eyes, well covered with wool over the poll and forehead. The color of the face and legs is generally a little darker than brown. They were called, in 1854, the glory of the county in which they originated, and after half a century has passed they still hold their proud position.

Prospective Situation in Wool.

The September auctions of colonial wools opened in London on September 20th, with net available offerings of only 85,000 bales, as compared with 140,000 bales at the corresponding sales of last year. Of these 85,000 bales, it is estimated that not more than ten per cent. are suitable for America, and as the orders which have already been sent across the water from the United States are sufficient to more than absorb that percentage, it is evident that America's wants are not likely to be satisfied, and that for such wools as we do secure high prices will be paid. The character of the opening indicated that prices are to remain on a high level, for although offerings were not of the best, there was good competition, and, as compared with the closing rates at the July auctions, prices for Merino were quoted at from par to five per cent. advance.

The firm tone which the market in London shows, after the steady advance of the past year, is indicative of the strength of the wool situation generally, and is likely to be reflected in increased confidence on the part of holders of wool here at home. As to our local markets, the demand for wool has continued active and prices are strong. During the past months some large lines of territorial wools have been moved, and there is evidence of some speculation among dealers themselves, especially in scoured wools. The rapidity with which consumers have taken the new wools has resulted in such a material reduction in available supplies that a number of the houses are actually sold out on many kinds and varieties, notably staple Montanas, Oregons, Idahos, and others, and with the large consumption of wool now in progress, and with evidence of a good heavy-weight season, indications are that all desirable wools will be absorbed before the next clip comes on the market. Reports from the goods market was generally satisfactory, and, taken all together, the present situation is considered as being a very strong and sound one, with the outlook encouraging.—[Live-stock World.

The Export Bacon Trade.

What a wide field there is for the extension of our export bacon trade may be gleaned from the last official returns of the importations of bacon into the United Kingdom during the past nine months ending September 30th, which amounted to 4,069,412 cwt. as compared with 3,931,314 cwt. for the same period last year, and 3,872,247 cwt. in 1902. Of this enormous quantity Canada only contributed 621,605 cwt., although the increase of 124,000 cwt. over the shipments of 1903 are very encouraging, and still more so over 1902, the increase being 271,000 cwt. Owing to the large home production in the United Kingdom, and the heavy imports from the United States and Denmark, there have been periods of depression in the market along with declines in values, but these periods have been comparatively of short duration. Regarding these setbacks, London advices say: "That these at times have been trying enough cannot be denied, especially when excessively hot weather awakening suspicions of taint has prevailed; or when the consignments from Denmark have been chiefly made up of thin, half-fed, ill-matured 'sequibby' meats, which have had to be got rid of at a great sacrifice to clear the way for the coming forward of sound, wholesome and desirable parcels, that would be more sure of meeting with a good reception, and so be likely to promote an extended consumption."

There can be no doubt that in the next few years Canadian bacon will occupy a much more extended field in the English market than it does to-day, as it is now well known throughout Great Britain, and as our exports of bacon have almost doubled during the past two years, still greater progress may be looked for in the coming years.—[The Trade Bulletin.

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