

Breeds of Farm Livestock in Canada

Shorthorns are by far the most numerous represented cattle in Canada

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The recently issued Report on the Census of the Prairie Provinces in 1916 gives at the end of the volume a table of considerable interest to owners of pure-bred live stock and to all engaged in the trade in these animals between the United Kingdom, the United States and Canada. This table shows the numbers of pure-bred farm animals in the three Prairie Provinces, and by comparing it with similar data which appeared for the first time in the Report on the Census of 1911 we are able to measure with exactness an increase during the five years which is known to have been considerable.

Few people who enjoy prime joints of beef and mutton, wear garments of lustrous wools, consume their breakfast bacon and derive pleasure or profit from equine performances, have any conception of the enterprise, capital and skill that for many generations have been employed in producing and perfecting our famous breeds of farm live stock. The United Kingdom, possessing a moist atmosphere, fine pastures and an equable and moderate climate is the breeding ground par excellence of fine animals; but these natural advantages have been made the most of by the discovery and successful application of correct principles of selection, breeding and feeding, as well as by constant care in the maintenance of pure strains and pedigree records.

HORSES.

The Englishman's love of a horse is proverbial, and nowhere has this noble animal received greater attention than in British countries. A traveller on the continent of Europe is often struck with the comparatively poor specimens of horses on the streets and farms, whilst in British countries the horses are as a general rule useful animals, well adapted to the purposes for which they are employed. British horses are divisible roughly into light breeds, used for racing, hunting, riding and driving, and heavy breeds for draught purposes. Amongst the former stands pre-eminent the English thoroughbreds, descended through a long line of pure stock from the old native horses of England, and in time long past, occasionally improved by the use of Arabian sires. The breed, matchless for courage, speed and endurance, is kept up to the market by annual races, the most famous of which is the "Derby," annually run at Epsom in June. To win this race has long been the distinction most coveted by owners of race horses from the King downwards. The hunters, for which England and Ireland are famous, are largely bred by crossing thoroughbred sires with half-bred mares. In Canada, according to the census of 1911, there were, in 1910, 753 thoroughbred horses, of which 232 were in the three Prairie Provinces. In 1916 the number in the Prairie Provinces had increased to 386. The most numerous represented horses in the Prairie Provinces are, however, the American standard-bred, of which in 1916 there were 1,162, as against 969 in 1911. Of the Hackney breed there are 478. This breed, famous for its "action" and value in the production of riding and carriage horses, traces back to a horse named "Shields," foaled about 1755. During recent years, the breed has owed much to the late Sir Walter Gilbey, who bred several famous Hackney sires, amongst them "Danegelt 174," the number representing the Stud-Book entry. Descendants of this famous animal may frequently be recognized, sometimes even in Canada from the dark chestnut color and white "socks" of all four legs. Amongst heavy draught horses the outstanding British breeds are the Shire, the Clydesdale and the Suffolk Punch. Of these the heaviest and most powerful is the Shire, so-called because originally the produce of the "Shire" counties in the heart of England. The breed is descended from the old English war horse, when knights rode to battle in heavy armor. The breed combines great strength with docility and intelligence. The sires are used largely for the production of the ordinary farm horse, and also for the type of horse employed in towns and cities for the drawing of heavy merchandise. Their massive size is somewhat against them, except for purposes where great strength is required. The writer remembers a fine young mare of the breed, which was exhibited at the Paris International Exhibition of 1900. She was carried through by rail with considerable difficulty, railway trucks breaking down with her weight; and when arrived and seeking rest after the long journey

she crashed through the wooden partition in her stable, notwithstanding the fact that it was of considerable solidity. Of this breed there were 643 in the Prairie Provinces in 1916, as against 308 in 1911. The Clydesdale is the Scottish draught horse; it is also the chief draught horse of the Canadian farmer. In the Prairie Provinces not only have the numbers of this breed nearly doubled during the five years ended 1916, but the total number, 14,772, is far ahead of any other pure-bred horse. It is smaller than the Shire, the average height being about 16 hands 2 inches, as against 17 hands, the height of the Shire. The preponderance in Eastern Canada of the Scottish settler doubtless accounts largely for the preference shown for the Clydesdale; but its smaller size, combined with its generally useful qualities, is also a practical recommendation, and in Canada the medium or smaller type of Clydesdale is preferred. The Suffolk Punch, of which there were 187 in the Prairie Provinces, both in 1916 and in 1911, stands on shorter legs. It is an old breed of the county in England from which it takes its name. Its exact origin is unknown, but the breed was mentioned as existing in Suffolk so long ago as 1536 in Camden's "Britannia." The animal is a resolute and unwearying worker, possessing excellent qualities. Two other heavy breeds of horses are making their way in Canada, viz., the Percheron and the Belgian. The former, usually a dappled grey, is an exceedingly useful French breed, of which there were in the Prairie Provinces 4,097 in 1916, as compared with 2,094 in 1911. Of recent years the great merits of this breed have become widely recognized in England, and latterly an English Stud-Book Society has been formed for the registration of English-bred Percherons. On British soil and in the hands of skilled English breeders the race is not likely to suffer from transplantation and may even be improved. Belgian horses have increased from 166 in 1911 to 581 in 1916. The Germans, it is said, have removed to Germany all the valuable specimens of the breed which they found in Belgium. In the final reckoning these animals must in justice be restored to their native land and real owners. Of ponies there are numbers in Canada, especially for the use of children in towns; but the census has no record of the breeds that are kept pure. Probably they come within the category "not specified," of which there were 2,494 in 1916 and "All other," of which the number was 383. But of British ponies there are seven recognized breeds, viz., the English Dartmoor, Exmoor, New Forest Welsh, Shetland and Highland. The Moor and Forest ponies are noted for their hardiness, a characteristic of other pony breeds accustomed to rough it on moor and hill. The Shetland pony is employed largely in the mines, but also for the pleasurable use of children. It is of very diminutive size, and the Royal Agricultural Society of England, a serious body, at whose annual shows—now intermitted, for the war—are exhibited the finest specimens of all the breeds, yet allows itself an annual joke, the parade side by side of the largest shire and the tiniest Shetland, the effect being ludicrous by contrast.

CATTLE.

Equally famous are the British breeds of cattle. They are divisible into meat-producing and milk-producing breeds, vary greatly in colour and other characteristics and include polled or hornless varieties. As the thoroughbred stands out amongst horses, so does the Shorthorn amongst cattle. The breed is noted for its great adaptability to soil and climate; so that there are few countries where it is not known and appreciated. Moreover, there are Shorthorns for meat and Shorthorns for milk,

whilst in recent years the aim of the breeder has been directed successfully to the production of the dual purpose animal, combining both meat and milk qualities. Two famous Yorkshire breeders have left their mark permanently upon the breed, viz., Thomas Booth, of Killybeg and Warlaby, and Thomas Bates, of Kirkclevington; and pure-bred Shorthorns consist therefore of the Bates and Booth strains, each of which has enthusiastic admirers amongst the Shorthorn breeders of the Old Country, usually large landowners with facilities in park and homestead for the raising of the choicest specimens, many of which are exported at highly remunerative prices. Shorthorns are by far the most numerous represented cattle in Canada, and there were in the Prairie Provinces in 1916 26,235 of the Shorthorn breed, out of 49,115, the total of pure-bred cattle. Another famous beef-producing breed is the Hereford, the original home of which is Herefordshire and the adjoining counties. In color they are usually full red with white faces, white chest and abdomen. Quiet and docile they fatten readily, produce beef of excellent quality and are of great value for grazing purposes. Of Herefords the number in the Prairie Provinces in 1916 was 7,695, this being a large increase over the previous census of 1911. The two breeds next most numerous in the West are the Aberdeen Angus and the Holstein; the former, a Scotch breed, attains great size and weight and yields excellent beef. The animals are polled or hornless and are of a glossy black colour. The Holsteins are a black and white dairy breed of Dutch origin, celebrated for abundance of milk. They have greatly increased in numbers during the last five years, and there were 14,034 of the breed in the Western Provinces in 1916. They have also improved in quality as the result of care in the hands of British breeders. The Guernsey and Jersey cows are noted for the richness of their milk and for their excellent butter-producing qualities, whilst the Ayrshire is a fine Scottish dairy animal whose milk is specially adapted for cheese-making.

SHEEP.

Sheep have, usually been reckoned as the sheet-anchor of British farming; but in Canada this description of live stock has for many years been decreasing in numbers. As a result of the war, causing a great rise in the prices of meat and wool, there is at present a decided revival of the sheep-raising industry, and great efforts are being made by the Department of Agriculture to encourage it. The census of the Prairie Provinces of 1916 showed that since 1911 the numbers of pure-bred sheep have increased from 3,280 to 11,396. The favorite British breed in Canada is the Shropshire, which numbered in 1916 4,789, as compared with 1,344 in 1911. It is an old breed of the Shropshire hills, which has been improved by Southdown blood. It has made very rapid progress of late years. The Oxford Down, too, which is next in popularity, is a comparatively new breed, having been formed by crossing the long-woolled Cotswold with the short-woolled Hampshires or Southdowns. The Leicester is another popular breed in the West. It was improved by the skill and judgment of Robert Bakewell, of Dishley, and in France the breed is known by the name of "Dishleys." There were in the Prairie Provinces 1,134 of the breed in 1916, the number having nearly doubled since 1911. Other breeds in the West are the Cotswold (296), and Southdown (166), the Suffolk (799), the Hampshire (211) and the Dorset (105).

SWINE.

Of pure-bred pigs the number in the three Prairie Provinces, according to the census of 1916, was 32,034, an increase since 1911 of 19,035. The most popular breeds are the Berkshires, of which there were 13,152; the Yorkshires, 6,406, and the Duroc Jersey 7,068; the Poland China 2,135, and the Tamworth 1,183. In England the breed known as Yorkshires have lost this appellation, being usually classified as Large White, Middle White and Small White. The Berkshires are a black breed and the Tamworth, one of the oldest breeds, is red.

GENERAL CASTELNAU, who commanded part of the French troops in the attack in the Champagne district, is one of France's most noted Generals. As a matter of fact, he divides first place with Joffre and Foch. The General won a notable victory over the Crown Prince in the early part of the war, defeating the heir to the German throne at Grand Couronne. Castelnau lost three of his five sons in the war.

ARCHBISHOP IRELAND, who died a few days ago at St. Paul, Minn., in his 80th year, was one of the outstanding figures in the Roman Catholic Church in the United States. The late Archbishop was born in Ireland, but came to the United States as a young man, served through the American Civil War as a chaplain, then made a big name for himself as an orator, organizer and a progressive churchman.