

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

Mixed Farming in Alberta.

(Glasgow Scottish Farmer, September 9, 1898.)

Sir,—This is making a living by stock and produce. The produce may be partly wheat, rye, oats, or barley, and partly potatoes and turnips; and the stock may be sheep and work horses, and a cow or two for milk, or work horses and cattle, with almost invariably pigs and poultry. Some farmers have small bands of from ten to twenty horses, and their ordinary work horses and cattle. If the farmer sends his milk to a creamery, he is particular about getting his milking cows home night and morning, and this is also necessary if he is milking a number of cows and sending his butter and eggs to the stores. Yearlings and two-year-olds are turned out about the middle of April. Of course, they have been out very likely all winter, but at that time they are put outside the farm of 160 acres if it is fenced in, and left to forage for themselves till November; and with them any cows suckling calves, which cows have calved early and have settled to the bull. These will stay out till November. I was at a sale of cattle lately in Innisfail. There were about 160 all ages, and, on the whole, they were a very poor lot. The best cow made \$44; others, including two-year-old heifers, from \$22 up. The steers made from \$25 to \$31; the oldest would be rising three. Railway land, unless in exceptional circumstances, can be bought for \$3 an acre, one-tenth of the purchase price being paid at purchase; the balance, at 6 per cent. interest, in nine annual instalments. These terms are considered very liberal, and, if the land is suitable for hay, wood, or cropping, is taken advantage of, and farmers who are able buy a quarter section adjoining their farm for a run for stock. Further, government land can be bought at \$3 an acre. They stand at \$4 an acre, and I have known their land, with no improvements, standing at \$14 an acre. The only advantage is that the longer their land remains unsold the more pasture there is for stock. Now, I must explain that all the odd-numbered sections unsold are free for pasturing stock.

I came here in 1891, and have not been asked for any taxes yet; but other districts are not so favored. (1) The land is taxed at the government selling price per acre; (2) the improvements are valued, houses, fences, well, and number of acres plowed; (3) the stock are valued, and the ratepayer can appeal to the school trustees if the assessor has valued him too high. I believe the school tax runs from \$5 to \$8 annually. The difficulties which I particularized before may be added to by the three follow-