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EDITORIAL.

The Upward Turn.

Some time ago we ventured the forecast that the "turn of the tide" had come in the pure-bred cattle business. The premonitory symptoms appeared a year ago. Private sales have been brisk this season. The opening public Shorthorn sale (Jas. S. and H. & W. Smith's) was most encouraging, and now the large dispersion sale of Mr. John I. Hobson, reported elsewhere in this issue, sets a good lively pace for the future. An average of \$102 each on 25 head and over \$80 each on 50 animals, including calves, is a pretty good showing. Mr. Hobson is to be congratulated, and it is pleasing to note that all this pure-bred breeding stock remains in Canada—one valuable contingent going to Manitoba. Fat cattle, too, are selling higher than they were a year ago, with a much brisker demand; pork and cheese, ditto.

Shall We Have a Revival in Horse Breeding?

The demand for first-class horses of the heavy draft class, as well as of the saddle and harness classes, is rapidly increasing, and prices are advancing in the face of a real scarcity of the right sorts, and there is every encouragement to breeders to raise good stock, but the watchword all along the line must be quality, quality, quality! Elsewhere in this issue "Manitoba Breeder" throws out some wholesome, conservative suggestions, while Messrs. Horace N. Crossley and Robt. Miller present respectively able articles on the two great draft breeds of the present day, Shires and Clydesdales, and an interesting sketch is given of the origin of the English Thoroughbred. The coming Canadian Horse Show brings equine topics to the front, and the importance of the whole subject warrants ample discussion in order that future breeding operations be wisely conducted.

Crops for Dairy Cows.

The question of providing sufficient and suitable summer fodder for dairy cows, to supplement the pastures which in most sections of the country fail after the flush of the spring months, is one of special interest to dairy farmers, and should receive timely consideration. "Forewarned is forearmed," and we make no apology for recalling the attention of our readers to this subject. Now is the time to prepare for what is almost certain to be a felt want at some time during the summer or autumn months, a supply of succulent feed to keep up the flow of milk, which should never be allowed to slacken for want of the proper green fodder or its equivalent. A patch of lucerne near the barns may be cut several times during the season. An acre or two of vetches and the same extent of oats and peas to be cut green will be found exceedingly useful in the average season, and a positive boon in a time of drouth. These will fill the bill for the early summer months, and fodder corn will supply the want in the later months. The letters in this issue from a number of dairy farmers will be found full of interest and helpful. And we commend to the consideration of our readers the methods of those who have availed themselves of the means within their reach to keep up the supply of succulence in the bill of fare for the cows.

A Plea for Higher Quality.

The U. S. Dingley tariff placing a duty of 30 per cent. on butchers' and feeding cattle worth more than \$20, or \$6 on cattle one year old or over valued at more than \$20, \$20 on horses valued at \$100 or less, and 25 per cent. on those worth over \$100, will probably have the effect of curtailing business transactions in these lines in that direction to such an extent that for the present Canadians will count but little on that trade and will turn their attention

more fully to the British market, where we shall meet our competitors from the United States on common ground, and where merit or quality is the sole standard of values. The bill has passed the House of Representatives, but may be materially altered in the Senate. Complaints are made that it confers favors on the manufacturer altogether out of proportion to what agriculture receives. Mr. Joseph E. Wing, of Ohio, writing to a Western paper, protests loudly against the prohibitory tariff against Canadian cattle, which are badly needed for feeding purposes. He states that dairy cattle have largely supplanted beefers in the East, and everywhere in the West sheep are overrunning the ranges. Mr. Wing foresees that it will stimulate finishing beef cattle in Canada and increase the ultimate competition for the U. S. farmer. The recent opening of the Buffalo market under the new quarantine regulations provided for a short period a convenient outlet for some second-rate Western Ontario grade cattle which were unfit for the British market. The temporary increase of business was, no doubt, mutually beneficial to the people engaged in the trade on both sides of the line, as our neighbors were quite as anxious to get our cattle to consume their surplus cheap corn as Canadians were to dispose of them, and the probability is that the buyers in this case will reap as much or more benefit from these cattle than did the Canadian farmers who raised them—though this might not be saying a great deal.

One of the most interesting and important lessons to be learned from the recent drift of inferior cattle to Buffalo is the fact that there is far too large a proportion of that sort raised, and this in spite of all the repeated reminders that a higher quality of production is the essential to success in the race for supremacy in the great markets of the world.

It is a fact sincerely deplored by all who have given consideration to the subject that the average of young cattle in many sections of the class suitable for feeding for beef is not equal to that of ten or fifteen years ago, and that one of the greatest hindrances in the way of many feeders who would go more largely into the business of fattening cattle is the difficulty in getting the class of animals which will make satisfactory returns. What is wanted is well-bred, high-grade steers and heifers of the beefing breeds, bred from blocky, thick-fleshed sires, which will produce quick-feeding and early-maturing animals, which, with good care, will be ready for the export trade at from two and a half to three years old. The difference between the market value of this class and the class of cattle going to Buffalo last month makes all the difference between a very satisfactory and a very unsatisfactory return for feed and labor.

It is gratifying to know that the prices being paid for first-class shipping cattle this spring are a substantial improvement on what was realized last year, and the prospect is encouraging for those who are engaged in the industry. The present is an opportune time to resolve on a higher standard of excellence, and in order to do this every one engaged in the business should make it a point to breed only from sires of the desired type. These can now be bought at moderate prices or their services be had for reasonable fees.

These observations apply not only to cattle, but also to horses and other classes of stock designed for the export trade. The best class of stock is the class that pays the seller as well as the buyer the most profit, being more sought after and more readily salable. An instance of this has recently come to our notice in the case of a carload of horses bought in an Ontario town a couple of months ago for export to England. The bulk of the shipment were good average draft horses, bought at about \$70, and considered cheap at that price, while an extra good team of the same class was included which cost \$350 (the pair). Yet we are assured

that when the horses were sold in England the only ones that made any money for the shipper was the pair which cost the highest price, and these brought a good profit to the exporter, and we may presume a fair return to the man who raised them also.

What is true of horses and cattle is also true of other stock, dairy products, fruit, poultry, eggs, etc. The consumptive demand may be largely on the increase the world over, but the competition of producers grows keener and consumers more discriminating. The moral is therefore obvious. The heading of this article—"A plea for higher quality"—is its expression.

Interference with Private Enterprise.

Mr. J. E. Richardson, a well-known and successful grain grower of Brant Co., Ont., while conceding the useful work conducted at experimental farms, evidently foresees that the free seed distribution may yet, if not checked, grow into a great abuse, as it has, for example, in the United States. Originally, the U. S. scheme was to disseminate "rare seeds, plants, and bulbs" for experimental or testing purposes, but it has now grown till 20,000,000 lots of seed are scattered promiscuously all over the country. Farmers in Canada have seen some misdirected efforts in pushing out at public expense a multiplicity of new varieties, some of them no better, if as good, as old ones introduced in the ordinary course by private effort. New varieties become necessary and advantageous from time to time, but we are inclined to agree to a certain extent with Prof. Shuttleworth, of the O. A. C., who last year wrote the *ADVOCATE* combating the old "changing seed" notion. In fact, we believe it would be of greater advantage to farmers to devote more attention to seed selection and cleaning rather than to be continually scanning the experimental horizon for new sorts. The report elsewhere in this issue of Mr. Forney, of Ohio, who grew a prize-winning crop (146 bushels of shelled corn on an acre) from seed grown eleven years on the same farm, but improved by careful selection each year, increasing its yield from 10 to 20 per cent., is strong evidence on that very point.

Mr. Jas. Wood, a New York State farmer, concludes a vigorous letter in the *Country Gentleman* on the free seed business as follows:

"This wasteful Government distribution of seeds works great injustice to the seed dealers. No private industry can compete with the Government. But this letter is written from the farmers' standpoint, and I suppose the seedsmen will speak for themselves. It is to be hoped the farmers of the country will protest against the continuation of this abuse."

The *Country Gentleman*, which stands foremost among the representative agricultural journals of the United States, concurs in every word of Mr. Wood's letter regarding the useless free seed humbug, but points out that "the publication by the Government of periodicals and books that compete directly with private enterprise is just as much an outrage as the Government seed shop." The *Country Gentleman* goes on to say:

"Absurd as this feature (free seed) is, by the way—and nobody condemns it too forcibly for us to agree with him—we desire to suggest to those who are so vigorously attacking it, that if they wish to be in any way consistent they should protest just as earnestly against many of the features of the free publication schemes of the department as against its distribution of free seeds. It is just as much an outrage for the Government to issue what are practically periodicals, and especially elaborate veterinary treatises, like the 'Special Report' (!) on Diseases of the Horse, published under Mr. Rusk, and give them away by the thousand, as to buy and scatter seeds. There is no earthly reason why publishers, any more than seedsmen, should be subjected to the gross injustice of competition by the Government at public expense."

We notice that the U. S. Government has been endeavoring to correct a good deal of wasteful distribution by putting a fixed price upon certain