

The Prince Albert Region as a Stock Country.

EDITOR CANADIAN LIVE-STOCK AND FARM JOURNAL.

SIR,—Presuming that a letter from this part of the Dominion would be of interest to the many readers of your valuable JOURNAL, I venture to give you a sort of general idea of the live-stock interest of the Saskatchewan region. At the last annual exhibit of the Lorne Agricultural Society in the town of Prince Albert, I had the pleasure of witnessing a very creditable exhibit of thoroughbred Shorthorns and Shorthorn grades. In the former class four entries were made, in which Caswell Bros., of Saskatoon, exhibited seven head, and Thomson Bros., four; Snell & Miller, one bull, and W. C. McKay one aged bull, on which he took a prize. The last mentioned gentlemen are of Prince Albert settlement. They also exhibited a nice lot of grades. In connection with both classes I may say that from the inception of the society Thomson Bros. have been awarded most of the best prizes on cattle, sheep and pigs; they also won the challenge cup for the best herd of cattle. They are pushing, energetic young men, and deserve every credit for the manner in which they have increased their stock since coming to Saskatchewan. The physical features of this part of the country, together with the unparalleled salubrity of the climate, and admitted excellence of its grasses and animal herbage, render it peculiarly advantageous to the growing of cattle and sheep. The prairies are rolling and nicely interspersed with lakes of good fresh water, and neat, round, trim bluffs of poplar, which form an agreeable resort for cattle, both in winter and summer. Stock thrive and do very well running out from the first of April, or as soon as the snow allows them to get at the grass, on to the end of November, at which time the snow generally covers the short bunch grass, which remains quite green near the roots all winter. Cattle that are allowed to run out after the first deep snow, have to fall back on the tall dry grasses in the sloughs and marshes, which, owing to the extreme dryness of the atmosphere, retain all the nutritious properties, which, however, does not compensate for the inevitable loss of flesh, by exposure to the extreme frosts. This, together with the fact that an abundance of the very best of hay can be had for the cutting, and good warm stables, run up with logs, and well mudded, for next to nothing, induces most people to stable their cattle.

In conclusion, I may say that I strongly advise all those who wish to make a start in stock-raising with limited means, to try this part of the country. I came out to this country in 1874, travelling along the boundary between Montana and the Bow River country, and since then over all the more fertile northern part of the territories, and have not seen a better place for a beginner than the Saskatchewan country, in the vicinity of Prince Albert. In Montana stockmen allow 20 per cent. for casualties in cattle running wild; here it is a very rare thing to lose even one animal, so the difference is in our favor. This, besides the enhanced value of stabled cattle, will more than compensate one for the cutting of hay and attendance.

J. O. DAVIS.

Long Lake Ranche,
Prince Albert, N. W. T.

Selecting Judges for the Provincial Exhibition.

EDITOR CANADIAN LIVE-STOCK AND FARM JOURNAL.

SIR,—I attended the meeting of the board held at Guelph last fall, where the subject was discussed from two standpoints. The first proposed the expert system, that of judging by one man, and the second the appointment of a committee of the most practical men of the board to choose three judges irrespective of locality, competent in every way for the work.

Along with many others I objected to the first proposal, on the ground that in the stock classes it would require a practical breeder, and, as in Shorthorns we have Bates, Booth and Campbell men, such a judge would naturally favor the strain of his own breeding, and a knowledge of the owner might influence the one judge.

At the Toronto Industrial last fall it was apparent to outsiders that the contest in the Durham class for sweepstakes bull lay between Sir Arthur Ingram, of the Bow Park herd, and Sir Christopher, owned by C. M. Simmons, Ivan, Ont. While the judges consulted long, a prominent breeder and importer passed. A bystander said to him, "How is it going?" His

reply was that "it should not take a minute to decide between them." Bystander said, "Which will get it?" He answered just as readily as before, naming his favorite. I questioned then and do now whether he had ever looked over one of the animals carefully, yet he could tell at a glance which should have the silver medal, when men considered our best judges could only decide after a most rigid examination. When we can get a man with judgment so penetrating that he can tell all about the animals in the ring, although not in it himself, the Shorthorn breeders may be taught a lesson in judging in this nineteenth century by such an one. I re-echo the sentiment of the Guelph meeting when I say that by the one judge system there would be very great danger of some of our animals being slaughtered, although I doubt not that we have some men who would give an unbiased judgment, even in a ring composed of a score of beasts, and composing those of different lines of breeding.

I heartily endorse the second proposition. In the past judges have been selected in many lines that were not practical, while good, reliable judges were left at home in the same localities. It is not to be wondered at, then, that men are found acting as judges on stock at the Provincial who never bred or owned a thoroughbred of any class or breed. This I have observed for twenty-five years, and feel that I do it reluctantly. I could mention the different places where I have been an eye witness, at which the public were pained to see men acting as judges who did not know the different breeds of sheep or pigs, but refrain from doing so. I do not wonder that the people of the province are asking through their representatives a change, and that an effort be made as indicated, to secure thoroughly practical and reliable judges, by means of a committee appointed by the Provincial board, and selected from their number.

BREEDER.

The Style of Hog that is Wanted.

EDITOR CANADIAN LIVE-STOCK AND FARM JOURNAL.

SIR,—You are perhaps aware that the appetite of almost everyone in this luxurious age has become fastidious, and is yearly becoming more so. The foregoing fact makes our customers, both in Canada and in England, insist on having lean bacon and ham. The imperative necessity for long, fleshy hogs has led the bacon curers in England and Ireland to supply to farmers boars of the Improved Yorkshire breed, also the Tamworth, the latter said to be the oldest native breed in England, and probably the only one which has remained pure, and in which no trace of the Chinese and Neapolitan blood can be found.

Both the above breeds are long and fleshy, qualities which are very valuable to the pork packer, and becoming increasingly so. So necessary is it that we have hogs of this character that we purpose from this time forward to pay a premium on such weighing from 160 to 200 lbs., alive. Of the Tamworth we have no personal knowledge, but we are acquainted with the Improved Yorkshire and have lately seen some, imp. and prize winners, at the farm of Mr. Ormsby, Ontario Lodge, Oakville, that appear to be exactly what is required, and we hear he is selling them very freely, a fine litter only a few days old being all sold.

For mess pork undoubtedly the Berkshires are very suitable, but this article is only in limited demand and practically the whole used in Canada is imported from the West. We would strongly urge farmers and feeders to discard the large fat breeds and adopt such as we have described; to feed liberally and sell them at six to nine months old, when they should weigh about what we have named as the fancy weights.

WM. DAVIES & CO.

Toronto, April 13th, 1887

"Please send me the JOURNAL for one year. A friend sent me a copy, the first I ever saw, and I think I could hardly afford to do without so valuable a farm paper."—Jno W Staples, Bobaygeon, Ont.

"Of the thirteen different papers which arrive at Hillsdale Farm, none are more welcome than yours, which contains information indispensable to every enterprising farmer."—L. Burnett, Greenbank, Ont.

"Although I retired from farming three years ago, I still want the JOURNAL (as I have been a subscriber from its commencement). I think it the best farm paper now published in Canada."—A. Martin, Jordan Station, Ont.

The Folly of Selling off our Young Stock.

EDITOR CANADIAN LIVE-STOCK AND FARM JOURNAL.

SIR,—Much as has been said and written regarding the mistake of selling of our young, immature stock, the practice is still followed up by many of our farmers. These same farmers complain that their gains are so small after all their hard toil and care, both in live-stock and grain-growing! How is this, in a country like ours, where so many seem to prosper and accumulate wealth as fast as they can take care of it? And still the average farmer finds it difficult to make ends meet, to say nothing of accumulating for the bank or investment society? We have only to observe their course of management. They have a farm of fairly good soil. They keep just enough teams to perform the work in a "kind of a go over" plan. They never could afford to buy the improved labor-saving implements for use in agriculture; they keep a "scraw" of scrub cattle and sheep, and pigs that can turn over sod as fast as an average Irishman with a spade; and they will tell you how "hardy" those animals are.

Now these farmers do not realize much profit from this kind of stock. To keep an animal until it was fit for export is something they don't know anything about; and indeed, it would be folly to attempt to feed up those sharks so as to be fit for export. They must begin first to improve their common stock by the use of good thoroughbred males, and follow up with a more liberal system of feeding; and as young stock take all their frame-forming material from the food they eat, consequently the farm on which they are fed soon becomes exhausted of the requisite materials, unless an equivalent can be returned in some way.

Now by raising stock of any kind till near maturity, and selling at a low figure when in a lean condition, must soon impoverish the land and the pocket. You cannot take out what is not in; therefore, if our average farmers of Canada would grow good crops of grain or other produce, they must keep the stock on the farm and feed them the greater portion of the coarse grains and other bulky produce producing a first class quality of manure, which, when properly applied, together with good tillage, cannot fail to produce paying results.

To my brother farmers I would say, feed your live stock till fully matured and well fattened, then you will realize a good sum for the animals and a good rich quality of manure to turn into the hungry land.

WM. G. RITCHIE.

Greenock, Ont.

Thoroughbreds vs. Poor-Breds.

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SIR,—I am much pleased with the JOURNAL, and especially with the manner in which you are trying to bring fine stock to the front. The amount of information that you are giving to your readers on the subject is worth many times the cost of the year's subscription, as it keeps us posted in regard to the best in the land. You have stated that the sire of a herd or flock is one half of the herd or flock, which in a majority of cases must be true. And perhaps the only exception to the rule would be in having an inferior sire with first-class females, in which case the sire would prove much more than half—yes, nearly the whole, when the result is that the herd or flock goes backward, thus bringing disappointment to one who doubtless has bestowed much care and paid much money for thoroughbreds that he might have something first-class.

I wish to give you a little of my own experience in stock-breeding, hoping that it may benefit some one. Having started a flock of thoroughbred sheep, and having procured high-priced ewes, some imported from the best flocks in England, for the foundation, I had anticipated much from them, as they were my pets. I have been greatly disappointed, and have suffered much loss from the use of an inferior sire. I sent to a well known breeder (and in the Dominion) for a first-class ram, which was received in good order, but was far from the style of sheep that I would have selected myself. He came, however, with a good pedigree, so I concluded to use him, as I did not know that I could do any better at the time. He was used two years in the flock and proved a sad failure. The lambs seemed all right when young, but as they came to maturity turned out very inferior,