

Should Our Grain Crop be More Exclusively Wheat, that its Price may be Reduced.

Let us consider this scheme that is put forward: The "effectually closing the market for barley, corn and rye, and thereby lowering the price of wheat, oats and peas." The one is considered as the inevitable result of the other. It is implied that the effectually closing the market for one variety of grain will force the farmer to increase the area of another variety in equal proportion, and thereby lower its price.

What, we would ask, would be the result of closing the market for barley, corn and rye? Would this change in the rotation of grain crops produce the effect of lowering the price of wheat and other grains? Agriculturists have entertained the opinion that the system of farming and the rotation of farm crops which give the farmer fair remuneration for expenditure of capital and labor, was the best for him to pursue, and, inasmuch as agriculture is the basis of our national prosperity, most beneficial to the country. Every one who knows anything of agriculture, whether he be a man of science, or an experienced, practical farmer, knows that as by a rotation of different crops the farmer is enabled to raise more produce from the land, so also a diversity of grain crops enables him to produce more bushels of grain from a given area of ground, than if there were less or no diversity, and that this diversity is not so exhaustive of the productive power of the soil. As one is a different variety of grain from the other, so the food they each take from the soil is not the same. This difference in the exhaustion of plant food is the greater as the roots of one go deep into the earth to procure food, while the other derives its food more from the surface and the atmosphere. Less diversity in grain crops implies a less number of bushels of grain.

Were the area of the wheat crop increased by as many acres as would be sown with barley, if the market for it were not closed, there would, for a time, be a greater aggregate number of bushels of wheat, though there would be a lower average yield, and that at a lower profit, if any. And were the price of wheat lowered as anticipated by this means, is it to be expected that there would be continued an increased area of wheat culture? Would the farmer go on increasing his culture with any expectation of realizing no profit, but entailing on himself an almost certain loss? The farmers must, as well as any other class, expect remuneration for their days of toil and their money invested. The consequence of such a reduction in the price of wheat would be the decreasing the area of the crop. This has been demonstrated more than once. Not longer ago than last year there were dull markets with low prices, and in consequence of this there was less wheat sown in the succeeding fall and spring than usual. Wheat did not pay, and so more acres were given to the culture of other crops. There is no axiom truer than this: To encourage any branch of industry there must be remunerative prices.

The uncertainty of remuneration from one variety of crop is another argument in favor of diversity in grain crops. Is our fall or spring wheat injured or killed by winter or spring frosts, or by rust or weevil?—still our other cereals may be good crops, and the year's labor not be altogether unprofitable. This is a matter of no light moment. The total profits of the farm from all sources form the compensation for a loss in a particular one, and enable the farmer to bear partial losses, and to sell at lower prices—to live and let live. We give one instance showing that on a suitable soil for it, one sort of grain may pay well, when on the same soil a crop of another variety would entail a loss. Last spring Mr. W., near Sarnia, raised 800 bushels of barley from 16 acres of light soil, when on the same lot of ground there would not, in all probability, have been more than 15 bushels per acre.

The amount of capital received by Ontario for the one article is not a sum to be lightly jeopardized. The exports of barley from the Western province, we learn, have risen to an unprecedented volume. The receipts in Oswego this year to close of navigation, were 3,700,000 bushels. The total exports must have been very great when this quantity was sent to one market. The *Montreal Witness* says: "Those who are wont to speak disparagingly of this as a farming country may now ask what condition should we be in if this interest had been as contingent for its prosperity as on human devices as those are which are gone so low—with continued depression in every interest 'save the agricultural.'" Well has it been said that agriculture is the basis of our national prosperity.

Of corn and rye, the other cereals to which the market is to be effectually closed, we need say little. They have not been an important part of our agricultural resources. In the United States corn meal as a substitute for wheat flour has served to keep down its prices, and it feeds hogs beyond number for home consumption and export, but it cannot be said to be one of our staple products. The sum is this: The proposed measure would have the effect of reducing the area of our grain culture, so that instead of more loads of grain in the market, with lower prices, there would be smaller grain markets—there would be less money brought into the country in payment for grain, and the financial condition, not only of the farmers, but of the country at large, paralyzed. We may pronounce this novel method of improving the condition of the country an utter fallacy.

Disease Among the Hogs.

The fall of 1875 and the winter so far have been very fatal to all domestic animals throughout America. There have been great losses among horned stock and horses, and much greater losses among the hogs. It is estimated that 12,000 hogs have died of cholera in one county in Illinois during the past year, and the disease still rages. From all parts of the Western States we have reports of great losses among them, numbers of them in many instances dying suddenly. The lungs seem to be the seat of disease in some, and others are attacked with looseness of the bowels and an affection of the eyes, resulting sometimes in blindness. From a communication in the *Western Farm Journal*, dated at Canton, Missouri, we learn that several of the largest hog raisers in that vicinity lost nearly their whole stock in a few days. One farmer lost seventy, another lost forty-two out of a flock of fifty. It has been thought by some who have been investigating the matter that nearly half the hogs in that part of the country were dead at that date. The disease makes its appearance by a slight cough, which increases rapidly, and the victims die in a few hours, as if from strangulation. The nature of the disease is as yet unknown, and whatever remedies were applied have been of no effect.

THE HOG CHOLERA.

This disease is killing off nearly all the hogs in the vicinity of Pittsburgh, Ohio. The *Ohio Farmer* writing of this disease, says: "No specific for genuine hog cholera has yet been discovered. Numerous remedies have been proposed, some of which succeed in some cases and fail in others. As a preventive let hog owners in localities where disease has appeared disinfect the pens daily with carbolic acid and keep them perfectly clean.

"Feed clean slop made of bran, boiled potatoes and other vegetables, and give water to drink."

In genuine hog cholera the following symptoms are always present: Indisposition to move; extreme pain, manifested by drawing the animal up in a heap; dull eyes, sunken in the head and discharging in the inner corners; hair and bristles rough; dull, heavy cough, and diarrhoea after the disease has advanced. The following has been recommended as a remedy:

Keep the following mixture in an open trough, accessible to the hogs all the time: One bushel charcoal, pulverized; three bushels wood ashes; half bushel slaked lime; one peck of salt; two pounds Spanish brown; five pounds sulphur; four ounces saltpetre; half pound copperas.

Oil of peppermint mixed with slop has also been recommended.

When the herd is first affected use carbolic acid—one ounce in enough swill for twenty-five animals.

Soak corn in strong lime water and feed it; or dissolve lime and copperas in water, and keep the solution in open troughs.

The American Shorthorn Convention.

The annual meeting took place in Toronto on the 2nd of December and two following days. The meeting was well attended by the principal Shorthorn breeders of the United States and Canada. The greatest ability and knowledge of the subject under consideration were displayed in the addresses delivered. The question of in-and-in, or line breeding, was very ably treated. (This was the first Convention of the kind we had attended, and of course your humble servant went there rather green, and as we are expected to give information to those who could not attend, we must be excused if all do not see through our spectacles.)

Our impression was that this Association was what we have heard many farmers term it—a close compact. We have not changed our view on the question, but find in that compact there are two parties. One party advances a principle which we and nearly all other farmers had been believing was erroneous—that is, close breeding. We had, up to the time of attending this meeting, always advocated crosses or change. They contend that from in-and-in breeding the finest show animals have been attained; that finer bone and more flesh, more handsome animals, will be produced, and that such animals will duplicate themselves, or, in other words, reproduce their like with greater certainty than any others.

They instance facts and prices and results of exhibitions to establish these facts. Instances are shown of close breeding for five generations, and the prices that such animals bring would tend to show that for breeding purposes these are the best.

A second party is composed of breeders of Shorthorns that are raised from out breeding. They contend that in-and-in, or line breeding, tends to weaken the constitution of the animal, causes sterility or barrenness, and that they will not fatten as well. They bring numerous arguments to prove their assertions. There was no vote taken on the question, but it could be clearly seen that the two parties could not agree, as both are convinced of the correctness of their tenets.

There are more breeders whose herds are not in-bred than those that are, therefore the second party might carry the point in vote; but the following astonishing fact must cause all outside of either party to consider: The day after the close of the Convention a sale of Shorthorns took place. As we passed by the cattle that were to be sold, in company with one of the best and wealthiest farm-

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