

observation, I have come to the conclusion that, not during the last fifteen years, has breeding been conducted in a more haphazard, indiscriminate manner than this season. The volume of breeding done throughout the central and western states has been quite large, equalling, probably, the seasons of 1894, '95 and '96 combined. All sorts of mares have been bred; all kinds and grades of stallions have been liberally patronized, especially those whose owners were accommodating, and whose service fees were low. In hardly any instance within my observation has it been a case of choosing the best stallions in the district. If the terms of such a horse happened to be a few dollars higher than some other horse, no matter how inferior, the cheaper stallion generally got the business. In like manner if the better horse stood for the season at home, or at some central point, and the poorer horses called at the farm houses, the latter was almost invariably the one patronized. In other words, the farmer has not been anxious to secure the best, but rather to get his mares in foal to whatever horse stood at the lowest terms and was most accommodating.

Now, I submit that so long as our farmers pursue this penny-wise policy we never can, as a nation, advance in the science of horse-breeding. The most cursory examination of the Chicago market any day in the year will reveal the fact that a large proportion of the horses sold—perhaps 75 per cent.—are leaving no profit to the breeder, while the remaining 25 per cent.—the cream of the market—are leaving a substantial profit. And how can we obtain this "cream" unless we breed for it? There is no royal road to the production of prize winners except through the avenues of experience, intelligence and determination. We must abandon forever the antiquated notion that one kind of a colt is about as good as another, and take a leaf out of the Old World breeders' book, whose theory and practice unite in declaring that nothing but the best sires will be accepted, let the service fee be what it may.

But I think I hear some of our farmers reply to this that the breeding months are the busiest time on the farm, and that they cannot afford the time to take the mares away any distance to be bred, and that, furthermore, if they raised an extra good colt some horse buyer would come along and pick it up at a low price, and this dealer or some other middleman would reap the benefit, and not the farmers at all. Now there is considerable truth in this, of course, but how is the difficulty to be obviated?

First of all I would suggest co-operation on the part of the farmers. Let a number of them combine to purchase, hire or patronize a certain horse selected by a committee chosen from among themselves, and then arrange that the horse stand in their midst or make a circuit among them. By so doing they have an opportunity to secure the service of a good horse at a minimum waste of time and money, provided they make a judicious selection and hang well together. The co-operative system of hiring stallions, which has been practised in Scotland for over thirty years, has been attended with the most satisfactory results, and has been largely the means whereby the Clydesdale breed has attained its present state of perfection as a draught horse while the Scotch farmers have made money in raising them and maintaining the quality to the highest notch.

The other objection about the dealer or middleman securing the farmer's legitimate profit is a matter which only the farmer himself can remedy. Let each farmer be educated up to the point of being able to determine accurately the merits or true value of his horse, and then he can protect himself. My observation, however, has led me to believe that as a general rule the farmer is not at all liable to sell too cheaply, but on the other hand he frequently overestimates the value of his horses and cannot readily see the inherent defects they possess. He should criticize his own stock as freely as he does that of his neighbor's, and strive constantly in his breeding operations to attain a higher level. Only by so doing can he improve his stock or make horse-breeding pay.

The Exhibition number of FARMING is full of good things. This most excellent farm weekly should be in every farm house in Ontario. —*Simcoe Reformer*.

## CORRESPONDENCE

### Profitable Farming

Pork Production. A Reply to Mr. Heggie's Letter in Sept. 27th Issue

To the Editor of FARMING:

I notice an enquiry from Mr. Geo. Heggie, of British Columbia, in your last issue of FARMING, to which an answer is requested from me.

I beg to state, in reply to same, that I take much pleasure in complying with Mr. Heggie's request, and desire to draw his attention to the fact that the main question is answered in the article referred to, and given in full detail, and which clearly states that the net amount of pork produced on an acre of heavy clover could be made up to 9,000 lbs. The facts given were these, that the pigs weighed 40 lbs. when put on the clover, and came off at 220 lbs., leaving 180 lbs. net for the increased growth of each pig, and there being fifty pigs, thereby making the amount as above stated.

In my previous letter I was endeavoring to demonstrate the comparative results from two acres of clover, treated in different methods, so as to attain the highest possible financial results from each method, and to, if possible, show the cost and value of pork production. After a weight of 40 lbs. is attained in the pig or pigs so treated, my purpose was not to show the cost of the pigs at eight weeks old weighing 40 lbs. This is another problem by itself that has to be solved on the same scientific business principle as the minimum cost and maximum value of pork produced from an acre of clover.

Mr. Heggie throws out the insinuation in his letter as well as attempts to answer his own questions by stating that, while he gets four dollars per head for his pigs at 25 to 30 pound's weight, perhaps mine come to me for nothing, and therefore infers that by my having liberal neighbors I am inclined to give credit to the acre of clover, rather than to my liberal neighbors. This kind of business logic and inference may do in British Columbia but not in Eastern Ontario.

For the information of the readers of FARMING, as well as Mr. H., I beg to say, as I stated in a previous letter, that the cost of a 40-lb. pig at 60 days old is from 50c. to 75c. when purchased by my own capital and labor; but it would cost me from \$2 to \$3 when purchased from my neighbors, which, by the way, is more liberal than Mr. Heggie is to his neighbors as far as the pork question goes.

Mr. Heggie also in his letter makes a personal statement that he sold forty pigs weighing 25 lbs. to 30 lbs. each for \$4 a head, and then observes "that mine must be worth \$5." This seems to me to be a remarkable conclusion, when there is a distance of three thousand miles between us, with entirely different conditions, affecting cost of production, and value of product, etc.

For the sake of making this discussion interesting and instructive, I will ask Mr. Heggie a question or two. Will he kindly give through the columns of FARMING the minute details of the actual cost of his pigs when weighing 25 lbs., and also the cost of production and market value at his farm of the different weights as follows: 100 lbs., 150 lbs., 200 lbs., and 300 lbs.? I would like to have the kind and cost of feed per lb. or ton, labor, capital, care (winter and summer), etc., etc.

Full particulars will be much appreciated.

D. M. MACPHERSON.

Lancaster, Oct. 3, 1898.

That excellent agricultural weekly, FARMING, is resplendent in a new fall jacket—or cover. The Exhibition issue was a grand number. —*Lindsay Post*.

The special Exhibition number of FARMING has been received. It is beautifully illustrated, printed on good paper, and full of interesting reading matter for farmers and all who follow agricultural or horticultural pursuits. —*Essex Free Press*.