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## EDITORIAL.

Persons contemplating the erection or equipment of creameries should devote careful study to the illustrated article on this subject by Mr. Sleight-holm in our Dairy department.

The annual consumption of wheat in Great Britain now amounts to 240,000,000 bushels per year, and is increasing at the rate of 2,000,000 bushels per year. Only 25 per cent. of the supply is grown at home, the rest being imported.

A Manitoba reader, referring to the article on breeds of poultry for the farm, by Mr. A. G. Gilbert, in our Sept. 1st issue, writes: "I think the illustrated article on poultry very good indeed, and it reads like good common sense. I trust you can get some equally good matter from the same source."

The humble hen is coming to the front, and it will soon be a tussle between "Biddy" and the bacon pig for first place in the esteem of a good many Canadian farmers. Mr. Benj. Higgins, the Canadian representative at London, Ont., of the well-known English importing house, Thos. Robinson & Co., told the FARMER'S ADVOCATE a few days ago that their exports of Canadian eggs to England this year would be four or five times greater than last year, when they sent over 350,000 dozens, as against 50,000 dozens in 1896, when they started business. "The fact of the matter is," he said, "we cannot get enough eggs, and farmers and farmers' wives will have to pay more attention to that branch of their business. Money in it! There certainly should be when small birds like these," said he, pointing to a pair of grade Plymouth Rock broilers that would weigh only about 3½ pounds each, "sell readily here at 50 cents, and 4-pound pairs at 65 cents, while eggs are bringing 15 cents per dozen."

We have good reason for believing that the Western Ontario Fair Board are anxious to introduce any real advance that they recognize, and which falls within their power. As we have pointed out on previous occasions, some provision should be made to have the judging of horses on the line done where visitors can witness it while in operation. It cannot but be considered a much-behind-the-times method to prevent all except attendants and a few who wear badges from coming near the animals in competition. What we would suggest is that two or more judging rings be constructed within the large ring if the space northward from the carriage building cannot be used. Have these numbered or marked in some way to indicate the class of horses to be shown in them. And just here a leaf might well be taken from the Ottawa Fair management's book, by stopping all judging before 1 o'clock. Up to this time the gates should be thrown open to all who wish to enter, who could follow the judges in their work, and thus reap one of the greatest advantages for which live stock exhibitions are intended.

### Export Trade and the Stock-raiser.

The Dominion Minister of Agriculture, Hon. Mr. Fisher, through his statement to a representative of the FARMER'S ADVOCATE, extends a most encouraging message to Canadian farmers as a result of his late visit to Great Britain. He found that Canadian agricultural products are growing in popularity all over the British Isles, and it is satisfactory to know that this favor is grounded upon intrinsic merit. There is practically no limit to the possible expansion of our butter and bacon trade, and there is a fine opening for a profitable poultry business. Mr. Fisher is disposed to en-

courage some experimental work in fattening poultry by the plan quite common at points in England and on the Continent, of confining and crowding the birds with feed for a few weeks—finishing them at high pressure, as it were. He found no prospect of an early removal of the British embargo against Canadian cattle, but confirms the view which the ADVOCATE has steadily taken, that even under existing conditions the trade in live fat cattle can be successfully prosecuted, and it would be folly either to neglect any measures in regard to transportation, etc., that will tend to improve it, or for the Government to rush into the dressed-meat trade on its own account. The latter is growing up now through private enterprise, and, as the Minister points out, will undoubtedly utilize a large class of fattened animals in the near future. The Government will make a mistake if it does not see that such transportation facilities are provided and maintained as will preserve both strings for the bow of the Canadian stockman. We would also throw out a word of caution to the Government on behalf of the individual feeders who go across the Atlantic with their own stock. These men must have fair play in regard to space and rates and not be frozen out by the big dealers.

### Our Wheat and Flour in Britain.

The following is an extract from an interview with Prof. Robertson while in great Britain recently: "Canadian wheat has an excellent reputation; but I fear that there is a good deal of truth in the allegation made by farmers, particularly in Manitoba and the Northwest Territories, that the best qualities of Canadian wheat are degraded in transit through the United States, and are used to grade up inferior wheat before it is delivered to the British millers. It would be of undoubted advantage to Canadian wheat growers if the bulk of the wheat crop could be handled through Canadian channels. Not only would the profits which arise from transportation be a direct source of revenue to Canadians, but the matchless quality of our wheat for breadmaking, if kept unmixed with lower grades, would soon win a more decided preference and a relative advance in price. "I found Canadian flour steadily gaining ground as flour from which bakers can make not only the best quality of bread but, also the largest quantity per barrel. The flour milling interest in Canada is intimately connected with agriculture and is a very important one. There are not less than 2,500 mills, employing over 6,000 men, and the yearly output from them is estimated at over \$50,000,000. Of course, that depends a great deal upon the value of wheat per bushel and of the flour per barrel. If the largest part of the wheat available for export could be ground into flour before it is exported from Canada there would be decided advantage in leaving the bran and shorts in our country to be fed to herds of cattle and pigs. In that case also there would be less liability of any mixing which would lower the grade and prevent the Canadian product from receiving credit for its own quality."

It would seem from the above that the Professor, while investigating the wheat question right on the ground, finds good reason for the commonly entertained opinion of Western producers that our high grades of superior hard wheat are degraded before reaching the British markets. The Professor infers that the degrading is done while the wheat is in transit through United States territory, and on that score argues in favor of an all-Canadian route. It is not necessary to look to American sources for the cause of the degrading of our wheat; some of our own dealers are just as capable to make the most out of their opportunities as are the smartest of our American cousins. Under our Western grading system wheat is constantly undergoing mixing from the time it leaves the threshing machine. Each successive owner endeavors to make the grade carry all it will of inferior wheat. A hundred bushels of No. 1 hard may be enough above grade to carry fifty bushels of No. 2 hard and still stand grade. Every grade being skimmed down as low as possible so long as it passes

inspection, always being degraded. Doctoring the grades is as much a science with the grain dealer as the blending of teas with the tea merchant.

The Canadian High Commissioner in England recently sent out samples to the leading millers there and requested opinions as to the milling qualities of the various samples. One hundred and seventy-one replies were received, and the general tenor of these replies goes to show Manitoba No. 1 hard is very highly thought of, being especially useful for mixing with other wheats to add strength to the flour. Some replies claim it is indispensable for this purpose. Some hint at the difficulty of obtaining deliveries equal to sample. The following extract from a recent issue of the Toronto Globe is of interest, showing that Canadian wheat equals the best imported into Britain, but it also alleges that our wheat contains slightly more "impurities" than Duluth wheat. This seems strange in view of the high standard of our grades and our elaborate system of cleaning elevators. Are our cleaners not as good as those handling Duluth wheat, or is it the mixing and degrading process getting in its work? The extract reads:

"One of the appendices to the British Parliamentary report on national wheat stores is a table prepared by Mr. Thomas Birks, and originally published in *Milling*, on the distinctive qualities of various kinds of wheat. Mr. Birks is a miller, a registered teacher of flour milling to the City of London Guilds, and chief milling expert to the firm of Thomas Robinson & Son, Rochdale, and this table is the result of twenty years' experience of handling and milling all kinds of wheat. Before giving his valuation of Canadian wheat we ought to refer to his standard of comparison. He believes that the best English wheat is superior to all others, at least in flavor. It is described in this way: Color, very fine; strength, moderate; flavor, excellent; 'the finest whites in good seasons yield flour of unequalled color and texture.' Then he says of white Canadian (winter) wheat that it is 'similar to fine white English in yield of flour and bread'; color, good; strength, medium; flavor, sweet. The impurities, which consist of buckwheat, cockle and round seeds, are quoted two to four, those of the best English wheat being one to two. "Manitoba wheat is described as 'similar to Duluth, good when free from frost.' Duluth is described as 'the most valuable red wheat imported; yields a fine white flour and a strong high loaf of exceptional texture and quality.' Manitoba and Duluth possess the following qualities in common: Color, good; strength, high; flavor, sweet. The yield of Duluth is given as 70 to 74, white Canadian the same, Manitoba 66 to 72. Impurities: Manitoba, 3 to 6; Duluth, 2 to 4."

### Meddling with Private Enterprise.

As this journal has always contended, the less governments meddle with private enterprise the better. This seems particularly true in agricultural matters. It may suit officials who are fattening at the public crib, or contract hunters, but the taxpayer is bled, and ten chances to one his interests are sacrificed. Last year the New Brunswick Government had an unfortunate experience, importing for the people a lot of inferior breeding stock, and our Maritime correspondent, "Agricola," shows elsewhere that they have disastrously repeated the blunder by going into the free distribution of seed wheat, the ill results of which will likely last for some years. His letter is well worth perusal, though it is not the first government seed grain bungling we have seen in Canada. The feverish anxiety to be "doing something for the farmer" has simply become a political fad, used as a "pull" on the public chest. Men of independent spirit resent this pap-feeding process, and the sooner governments and officials in other Provinces realize it and take warning, the better for them. The farmers of Canada are neither children nor meddants.

By direction of the Dominion Minister of Agriculture, Hon. Mr. Fisher, some investigations are to be made into the cause of "soft bacon," reported by several of the packers this season.