

TO HON. W. S. FIELDING,

Provincial Secretary.

SIR,—For the convenience of Stock Breeders and Farmers a Register has been kept of the pedigrees and ownership of Thoroughbred Cattle, imported into or raised in the Province of Nova Scotia, from the time of organization of the Central Board of Agriculture, in 1864, up to the present date. That this record has proved of practical value, is shown by the numerous applications received at the Office of Agriculture for information which it contains. It has been long felt, however, that its usefulness was restricted by its being available for consultation only at the Office in Halifax. It was repeatedly urged that the Register, or "Herd Book," as it has been commonly called, should be printed, so as to bring it within the reach of all owners of live stock in the Province. Of the desirability of this course, no doubt has ever been entertained, or at least expressed. But several obstacles invariably presented themselves whenever it was proposed to carry out the scheme, and prudence suggested that they should either be removed or overcome before any attempt was made to print the Register. In the first place, many of the records of pedigrees were either imperfect or required verification, registrations having been frequently made hastily, immediately before exhibitions, from copies of pedigrees taken by inexperienced persons from published Herd Books that were not available for comparison at this office, or from official Registers in other countries that had not been published, or from the private notes of Breeders. Secondly, there has been difference of opinion among the leading breeders of the Province as to the "standard" that should be adopted for registration; that is, the extent of pedigree required to entitle an animal to admission. This difference presented an insuperable obstacle to the formulation of any such standard as would be likely to meet with general recognition, and consequently rendered the publication of an official "Herd Book," impracticable.

It has seemed desirable, however, for many reasons, that some means should be taken to make the large amount of accumulated information contained in the Nova Scotia Cattle Register available for general use throughout the country. In order to accomplish this end, the Provincial Government has authorized the preparation and publication of the present Catalogue. It will be seen, from its character, that it does not aim to be a "Herd Book," in the proper meaning and general acceptance of that term, no standard of purity being set up, but that it is simply a record of the animals registered, with such references as are necessary to lead to extended pedigrees and to the fuller information contained in the generally recognized and established authoritative Herd Books of England and America.

The first step toward the preparation of this list was to collate and verify as far as possible, from published and all other available sources, the pedigrees contained in our Register. This has involved a large correspondence, as well as tedious reference work, extending over several years. It cannot be pretended that the information, in the case of every animal, is full and complete. It is hoped, however, that this work, which is simply an elaborate Index to our Register, will prove accurate and valuable as far as it goes. The pedigrees are not printed in full, as this would have required the publication of a large and expensive work, containing the repetition of information already printed in authoritative Herd Books, which are necessarily consulted by owners of the respective Breeds of Cattle.

The present record has been prepared with care by Mr. John MacAloney, Clerk in the Office of Agriculture, during the intervals of leisure from other duties. I have myself taken pains to verify every fact which it contains, as far as practicable. It will no doubt show the blemishes that are inseparable from such literary undertakings, yet it will nevertheless, I trust, prove acceptable and useful to the Stock Raisers and Farmers of Nova Scotia. It is hardly necessary to add that any corrections or additions calculated to increase the usefulness of our Register will be thankfully received.

I have the honor to be, Sir,

Your most obedient servant,

GEORGE LAWSON,
Secretary for Agriculture.

OFFICE FOR AGRICULTURE,
Halifax, N. S., 11th February, 1892.