

REPORT

ON

THE HERDS AND FLOCKS OF ONTARIO.

To the President and Members of the Council of the Agricultural and Arts Association of Ontario.

GENTLEMEN,—In July last I had the honour of a communication from Mr. Drury, asking if I would undertake to act as Live Stock Reporter to your Association. I took the offer as a high complement to our College and an honour to myself, and accordingly agreed to report upon the cattle and sheep shown at the Exhibition held at Kingston, in September last. In addition to these, it was suggested that I should also undertake a description of the breeds of horses; but, having doubts of my own exact knowledge—at least such a knowledge as should alone be presented to our Province—I declined their representation meantime, and would rather do better if possible to a smaller area in one year.

I proceeded to Kingston, and was occupied four days in examining, criticising comparing, and in every sense judging the several breeds of cattle and sheep then present. I did so alone, asking nobody's opinion—not even that of the owners—and thus what is advanced in these pages is chargeable for or against myself alone. I am prepared for any form of criticism as, occupying the position I do, I am untied to any breed or influence, and can give opinion fearlessly. I took no note of the decision of the regular judges, and had no communication with them whatsoever. I understood my work to be an independent report upon the characteristics and standing of what I found within your grounds on that occasion.

Shortly after receipt of this commission, and on taking in the bearings of the whole subject, it occurred to me that much greater interest and value would accompany my report were it, in some respects, made applicable to the whole Province. Your exhibition cannot possibly represent all sections, though possibly all the breeds, and in order therefore to give the work a truly Provincial ring, I obtained from Mr. Wade, your secretary, the names and addresses of over one thousand and eight hundred breeders of cattle and sheep—obtained by him, I have no doubt, from the oldest as well as the most recent reliable records. I wished to know as exactly as possible the number of herds and flocks in our Province, when they were established, in what manner they were established, or rather from whom each received its start, thus checking its genuineness as regards purity of source, for many would give a return as possessing so many head of, say, Cotswold Sheep and Shorthorn Cattle without reference to pure breeding; indeed, not a few of those received by me have not given this required reference, and consequently cannot get a place in this report. Still further to obtain the greatest possible exactness on the important point of breeders of pure breeds of cattle, I required the registered name and number of the bull in use with each of the herds; the same could not so well apply to sheep, but the breeder of the stock ram then in use for the flock, having been received, should help us to check purity.

In this manner I think we have obtained material of a valuable character such as, if properly handled, should stand of some national reference in future,