

FARMER'S ADVOCATE

AND HOME MAGAZINE

* AGRICULTURE, STOCK, DAIRY, POULTRY, HORTICULTURE, VETERINARY, HOME CIRCLE. *

VOL. XXXIII.

LONDON, ONT., AND WINNIPEG, MAN., JUNE 15, 1898.

No. 456.

EDITORIAL.

The British Board of Agriculture issued an order, taking effect on June 3rd, prohibiting the importation of swine from the United States.

Letters were recently read in the Canadian Parliament, asking, on behalf of several hedge-fence companies, that honey locust plants be allowed to come into Canada upon previous inspection in the United States, which cannot be done under the San José Scale Act. The application was not entertained, the Minister of Agriculture stating that the honey locust plant was peculiarly susceptible to the scale. If, after a year's experience, he found that anything could be done in the direction suggested, he would be glad to consider the matter.

The Veterinary Department of the British Board of Agriculture reports a very great improvement in respect to the losses of cattle and sheep shipped from the United States during 1897 compared with 1896. "It has been observed that almost all the cattle now sent from the United States are dehorned, and the recent improvement in the condition in which these animals have arrived in this country is probably in no small measure due to the removal of this power of injuring each other during transit." In the South American trade the losses amounted to the serious total of 81 per 1,000 cattle shipped and 36 per 1,000 sheep. The Canadian losses amounted to about 8 cattle in the 1,000, and this occurred mainly on two voyages, due to circumstances of an exceptional and accidental nature. There was no diminution in the efficiency of arrangements for the Canadian trade.

The Sheep Industry in Canada.

It is unaccountable, in a country so admirably adapted to sheep husbandry as is this Dominion, that so few sheep are found on its farms. We believe it is absolutely safe to say that in no other country are sheep liable to so few diseases or disabilities of any kind. The climate is as near an ideal one for the successful raising of this class of stock as can be found anywhere in the world. The soil also, in almost every section of the Dominion, is suitable to the healthful growth and development of sheep and their volunteer crop of wool. All the leading breeds do well with us. There is no class of stock the raising and care of which requires so little labor or expense as this inoffensive and unpretentious money-maker. They need very little grain at any season, and where roots are grown and fed the breeding flock may be successfully carried through without any grain, though they will pay well for a light ration in the winter season, and for shelter from storms, but cheap sheds are sufficient and may, if well managed, answer the purpose as well or better than fine and expensive structures. Sheep will eat and will thrive upon many of the weeds which infest the pastures, and in this way help to clean a farm and keep it clean. They will live in summer largely upon pickings in the lanes and by-places of the farm, which would otherwise be wasted. The fleece of wool, a product which no other farm stock yields, and which is perennial during the life of the animal, amply pays for the winter's keep, even when liberally fed, and anywhere from fifty to a hundred per cent. of an annual increase from the breeding ewes may reasonably be expected, and with a little care and good management may be realized. There is generally a good demand for mutton sheep and lambs at all seasons of the year at fair paying prices in the meat market, while the demand for breeding stock of all the breeds for replenishing and improving the flocks in the range territories both in Canada and the United States, at prices far above those of the butcher, is such as to make it decidedly profitable to

cater to that trade, and Canada is peculiarly well situated for taking advantage of the increasing trade in this line which seems bound to come our way. United States flockmasters look to Canada for rams, knowing from experience that sheep bred and raised on our soil have the requisite stamina and quality to improve the stock they are brought into contact with, and will continue to come here for fresh blood. If we excel in any one class of stock more than another it is in our sheep, as was amply evidenced by the great success of our flocks at the World's Fair in 1893, at the Madison Garden Show, and the magnificent displays made at our leading exhibitions. While it is true that the quality of our best breeding flocks has been well maintained, thanks to the skill and pluck of the breeders of our pure-bred flocks, who have held the fort without adventitious aid from outside sources, and notwithstanding the fact that sheep have been systematically ignored at the Dominion Experimental Farms, while kindred industries have been boomed by Government commissioners and aided by special favors at the public expense, yet it is also true that sheep are being neglected by a very large proportion of farmers and that the aggregate number of sheep in the Dominion has been steadily decreasing for the last ten years or more, a fact which, as stated in the first sentence of this article, is unaccountable when all the good things which can be truthfully said in their favor are enumerated. If any words we have written shall lead to a more general recognition and active appreciation of the claims of this class of stock by our farmers we shall feel that we have done good work in penning them, being fully persuaded that no more profitable branch of farming is within the reach of our people.

The Elevator Monopoly--Reply by Dr. Rutherford, M. P.

To the Editor FARMER'S ADVOCATE:

SIR,—I observe in your issue of June 1st an article on the Elevator Monopoly, which is somewhat misleading as to the position taken by the Western members in their efforts to abolish this grievance. Western Liberal members, with one notable exception, are unfortunate, inasmuch as, under existing journalistic circumstances, they have no widely circulating medium through which to inform their constituents of what they are doing or endeavoring to do on their behalf. As a consequence, they suffer from constant misrepresentation, due sometimes to self-interested vainglory and sometimes to the indiscriminating antagonism of writers politically opposed to them. I trust you will allow me to explain to your readers as briefly as possible the facts relating to this vexed question. The elevator grievance, shortly stated, lies in the fact that the farmer, who should unquestionably have the privilege of shipping his own grain, when, how, and to whom he pleases, is at present compelled to pass it through elevators which may or may not be honestly and fairly conducted. As a result, he is largely in the hands and at the mercy of the elevator owners, who, by the recent union of their forces, have deprived him of the competition which formerly to some extent served as a protection to his interests. Different men hold different views, and the Western members, while all desirous of remedying the existing state of affairs, were not of one mind as to the best manner of bringing about the needed reform. Speaking for myself, I long ago came to the conclusion that there was no need for new legislation, as I considered that the case was already fully provided for by Sub-section 2 of Section 240 of the General Railway Act, which you might publish for the benefit of such of your readers as are not familiar with it. Acting on this belief, and after consultation with several high legal authorities, I represented to the Government the desirability of compelling the railway companies to live up to the existing law, and obtained assurances that the matter would receive the attention it deserved. I presented my views as above to the public in the *Manitoba Liberal* of February 24th, and to the House of Commons as forcibly as I could on March 14th, in seconding Mr. Jameson's ably advocated resolution in favor of the establishment of a Railway Com-

mission. Meanwhile, however, Dr. Douglas had introduced his Bill to regulate the transit of grain, and after perusing it carefully I came to the conclusion that as a supplement to the section of the General Railway Act, above referred to, it would strengthen the position of the producer, and I therefore gave it an ungrudging and hearty support. The Bill was read a second time on March 17th, was referred to the Railway Committee, and came up for discussion on April 30th. It was strongly opposed by leading Conservative members and by the elevator owners, as also by Judge Clark on behalf of the C. P. R., and occupied the Committee for a whole session, without any progress being made. After the Committee adjourned, Dr. Douglas was informed by the railway people that they had no interest in the matter save that of getting the grain loaded quickly, so as to enable them to keep their cars in motion during the short season between harvest and the close of navigation. Dr. Douglas, on this understanding, agreed to certain slight alterations in his Bill, and Judge Clark undertook to draft a new clause to be submitted before the next meeting of the Committee. When the Committee met, however, on May 3rd, the newly drafted clause was handed to the Doctor just as his Bill was called, and he, dreading the risk of losing the chance of getting his Bill through this year, and taking it for granted that the new section was drawn in accordance with his verbal agreement, explained it on that basis, and asked that the Bill be reported to the House. Having the most implicit confidence, as has every decent man who knows him, in Dr. Douglas' integrity and honesty of purpose, the Western members, anxious to advance the Bill a stage, endorsed his position, and no amendment being offered, the Bill was reported by a unanimous vote. When the new clause was printed, however, Dr. Douglas discovered that it was not at all what he expected it to be, and it was promptly repudiated by him and by all who were supporting him in his original Bill. The so-called Farmers' Institute and independent grain dealers' delegates, who, as far as we could learn, represented themselves and their own interests only, had absolutely nothing to do with our action in this matter. As it then appeared too late in the session to introduce another bill, it was resolved by the representatives from the West to follow the plan which I had advocated from the first, viz., to ask the Government to compel the railway companies to live up to the provisions of the existing law. We accordingly drew up the following memorial, which was placed in the hands of the Prime Minister by Dr. Douglas himself:

"Whereas, owing to the pressure of other business it has been found impossible to enact such legislation during the present session as will remove the grievances in respect to the shipment of grain under which the producers of Manitoba and the Northwest Territories at present labor; therefore, we, the undersigned members of Parliament, request you to take such steps under the Railway Act as will secure to the producers the right to ship grain under the following conditions:

"1. The producer may load cars directly from his vehicles by means of a suitable platform or otherwise, and shall be allowed reasonable time to do so.

"2. Where flat warehouses now exist or may hereafter be erected, grain may be shipped through the same and no discrimination shall be made against such warehouses in favor of standard elevators.

"4. Where grain is shipped directly from vehicles no charge shall be made by any other elevator owner or other person for such privilege, and where grain is shipped through flat warehouses no person other than the owner of the warehouse shall be entitled to make any charge for said privilege.

"3. Where the supply of cars is insufficient, such cars as are furnished shall be divided equally among the applicants until each has received one car, and after that the cars shall be distributed in proportion to the amount of business transacted.

"(Signed)

JAMES DOUGLAS.
" J. G. RUTHERFORD.
" R. W. JAMESON.
" J. A. McDONNELL.
" T. O. DAVIS.
" FRANK OLIVER.
" R. L. RICHARDSON."

The memorial which you publish did not emanate from the Western members, and you are entirely in error when you state that it was prepared or presented to the Government by them. A