

to buy stock and erect buildings. These men will doubtless be found reasonable and easy to deal with, and capitalists can find no safer or more profitable investment than the stocking of one of these ranges.

If Canadians do not move in this matter, outside capitalists will be sure to do so, for such chances are not so often found that they need to go begging. The time is not far distant when the trade in live and slaughtered cattle from Alberta will be one of the most extensive and prosperous industries of Canada, but whether Canadians will reap the benefit of this trade or not rests almost wholly with themselves.

### Correspondence.

For the BREEDER.

#### AGRICULTURAL OUTLOOK IN THE U. S.

OUR STATE FAIR.

CHICAGO, 14th Oct., 1885.

There is, or has been, a large amount of doleful writing about the depressed condition of agriculture generally in the United States and also, I believe, in England and Canada. I have perused several journals from the Old Country—published in England, France, and Italy—and I have found that writers there were bewailing the depressed condition of agriculture. To a certain extent this state of affairs in the United States is general, not only in agriculture, but in all the trades and in all the branches of business. Seeing that there was a depression in agricultural matters, a depression in other branches of business must necessarily have followed, as agriculture is practically the basis of all business. With good business in agricultural products comes a good trade in almost, in fact we might say everything.

But let us look over the list of the various agricultural specialties separately and find out where the trouble lies. By looking over them separately and carefully we find that the cry of hard times and low prices is really a false one at the present time, as it is generally acknowledged by all sensible business men that times have picked up wonderfully within the last month. Iron manufacturers east and west have now more orders than they can fill. Flour men have reported business picking up in good shape. Business men have larger orders than their generally limited stocks can fill, and most manufacturers are running full time.

But to return to agriculture. Let us commence first with horses. The draught horse business has been good for the last two years—in fact one might say ever since the importing of blooded stock and the improvement of the native stock began. Good grade draught horses have sold all the way from \$125 up to \$225, and even higher. I saw three good teams of Percheron geldings, between three and four years old, sell for \$125 for one and \$450 for the other two, for one of our large dry-goods houses. The dealer said that he considered that a low price for them, but still he was very well satisfied.

The enormous amount of capital invested in breeding and importing European blooded stock is in itself a good criterion, and shows conclusively that there is money in the business.

The prices of cattle, certainly, were not low. Good grade steers have sold for six and seven cents a pound—live weight—and the common native range cattle have sold for from five to six cents. Well-fed steers of twenty four to thirty months growth, weighing 150 pounds or thereabouts, have sold for \$100 or so. This very day the sale of 266 Montanas, weighing 1,300 pounds,

was reported at \$5 per 100 pounds. Fair grade steers are selling at \$5.85 per 100 pounds. Does it behove the farmer or stock-breeder to complain at these prices? I think not.

The state of the swine market has remained very good, although it has fluctuated more than the cattle. Still, good hogs weighing from 200 pounds have sold for from seven and a half cents per pound upward, and at times went as high as five and a half and six cents for extras. With corn at from 35 to 55 cents, according to locality, there certainly was no good cause for complaint, as with hogs at five cents—live weight—there would be a very good margin for profit.

Sheep have ranged low, as a general thing, but this is entirely the fault of the raisers, as they crowded the very worst stock on the market. Good well-fed sheep had no trouble in selling at good, fair prices. It is the old, old story told over again. In wool there certainly has been cause for discouragement, as prices have ruled very low. But while this is true, the low price of wool has still been beneficial, as it has removed that mistaken notion that the most profit can be made out of any breed of sheep bred for wool alone. Farmers, if they had been more careful of their breeding operations, and had bred for mutton as well as wool, would not have felt the loss so severely.

Prices for dairy products have ruled low for the past year or so, but this is not likely to continue, as an advance has already begun. While dairy products have been low, they are not as compared with a time not long ago. The difference is that labor is higher now than it formerly was.

To me it seems that the fact of the matter is that the agricultural outlook, taken all together, is certainly as good—if not better—than any other branch of business. The results of sales at the fairs so far are certainly very encouraging, the universal reply being, upon having the question:—"What do you think of the outlook for trade this fall and winter?" propounded to them, "Never better."

We had a very successful fair here, and stock breeders generally reported good sales also. Canada was well represented in the horse department by the same breeder who exhibited here at the Fat Stock Show last winter—Mr. Fischer, of Goderich, Ont. Among the most notable exhibits in the cattle department was that of F. C. Stevens, of Attica, N.Y., who had a grand delegation from his fine herd, headed by that prince of Holstein bulls, Constantyne, who is a massive animal. He took quite a number of prizes. Messrs. Geo. S. Brown & Co., of Aurora, Ill., also had a fine exhibit of Holsteins, together with Cleveland Bay and English draught horses. They, also, took quite a number of ribbons of various lines. Messrs. Fowler & Van Natta, of Fowler, Ind., had a very fine lot of Herefords on exhibition. They were headed by the magnificent bull, Fowler, one of the grandest and best specimens of his breed. They also had a number of young animals, and captured quite a few ribbons. The Shorthorns, contrary to the usual rule, were very poorly represented in regard to numbers, but there were some very fine individuals present from the herd of Messrs. S. S. Brown's Sons, Galena, Ill. Messrs. Dillon Bros., of Normal, Ill., had a very fine exhibit of Norman horses.

The swine department was well represented as was also the sheep department. Messrs. Geo. T. Davis & Co., of Dwyer, Ind., had an excellent exhibit of swine. The next live stock meeting of importance will be the Fat Stock and Dairy Shows, to be held next month. There are already indications sufficient to warrant us in saying this will be the grandest exhibition ever held here. Many breeders have signified their intention of exhibiting in the dairy show. Among them are Messrs. J. W. Stillwell & Co., extensive breeders of Holsteins at Troy, O.

### FIRST PRINCIPLES OF HORSE-BREEDING.

Alban Wye, in Country Gentleman.

By many men horse-breeding is deemed a lottery, and so in great measure it is, but not so much for any inherent difficulties which itself presents for solution, as for the haphazard fashion with which it is pursued too frequently. Some farmer has a particularly good mare, which has endeared herself to her owner because of the traits which she possessed, and he, seeing some stallion which attracts his eye, or which has some repute, sets immediately about breeding the two together, and his mind formulates a distinct animal which shall result from the union. Perhaps the mare has shown some speed, and perhaps the horse has done so, and therefore the breeder concludes he is to derive a fast colt. The attempt is made, and the offspring is dropped, but the breeder finds an entirely different result arrived at from that which he desired and anticipated. So he denounces horse-breeding as a thing of chance.

Now he himself is to blame for his own disappointment. He did not breed with due knowledge and consideration of the means which he employed. It has been stated by the most expert and careful breeders of horses that the prepotency of parentage—meaning by that word the chief ability to affect the character of the offspring—depends upon the greater or less vigor of the nervous system in each of the parents, and that the influence of the stallion upon the get, which is deemed greater, on the average, than that of the mare, is dependent upon the effect which he exerts upon the nervous system of the mare at the time of service; and this effect will be found—has been found—to be more clearly within control of the animal most cleanly bred than within that of the one whose breeding is the less pure.

Besides, the fixed traits, not those which appear, but those which are determined, are transmitted both from sire and dam, whether such traits be acquired or be inherent in the strain of blood. This transmission of trait—by writers termed heredity—is not confined in its operation to any class, but includes the bodily as well as the mental traits, the bad as well as the good. More than this, too, as long experience has taught, the good points and the bad points of the ancestry, even as regards color, of the sire and of the dam are likely—almost certain—to disclose themselves in the character of the offspring, and hence the maxim in breeding has been expressed, and found its way into the ordinary speech of the people: "Like produces like, or the likeness of some ancestor." As has been remarked, the more purely bred of the parents will be prepotent in marking the get, and the real reason why it is so generally accepted that the male's prepotency is the greater, is that ordinarily he is the better bred; when that is not the fact, the dam will cast the features and the character of the yield, and when both are thoroughly well bred—perfect specimens of their class, whatever that may be, racer, trotter, roadster, carriage or draught—the breeder may reasonably expect to realize just what his desire has led him to seek.

In view of these suggestions the farmer whom I have imagined as being chagrined by his failure to bring into his breeding paddock a facsimile of his favorite mare, or of his admired stallion, cannot blame the logic of breeding. Every breed has its distinguishing characteristics, and therefore, when a mare of a line is served by a horse of a different line, the result is, not a modification of both, but an exaggeration of the strong points of both, which (differing as they do from each other) leaves the offspring of the unequal union unreliable, and by no means a desirable possession, especially if it be desired for use upon the turf.

Breeding is not a lottery, however irregular it may be in carrying out the designs of men. What it can do has been proved, when undergone with