



The Rejected Sheep at the last Provincial Exhibition.

to the Editor of THE CANADA FARMER.

SIR.—In a letter which appeared in the CANADA FARMER of March 1st, 1866, I called the attention of the Board of Agriculture to their rules respecting the time and manner of shearing sheep intended for exhibition at the Provincial Fair, urging them, if they intended to enforce a by-law for restriction in the matter, to make it known in good time, and to see that their rules were strictly adhered to, and impartially carried out. I concluded that communication by saying: "whether the Board or any Committee is competent to decide with certainty, in September, whether sheep were fairly shorn in April or not, I leave for themselves to say." The Board took early action in the matter, and gave notice, by advertisement in the CANADA FARMER, that sheep must be fairly shorn bare after the 1st of April, and that a committee would be appointed to inspect all sheep presented for competition, to decide whether they were fairly shorn, and "their decision to be final." From this it appeared the Board did think a Committee of their selection would be competent to decide the matter. At the Provincial Exhibition at Toronto, a committee was appointed for this purpose, and the result is well known.

Now, without presuming to question the good intentions of the Board in taking the action they did in the matter, I think the result was anything but satisfactory to themselves, to exhibitors or to the public. You, sir, were right in your remarks upon the late exhibition, when you said the show of longwooled sheep was one of the most "brilliant features of the exhibition." So fine a display of this class of sheep was never before seen on this continent, and I question if the world could beat it. But the treatment which this important interest received at that exhibition made it, as you remarked in the same sentence, "one of the most humiliating features" of the show. I very much doubt if, after such treatment, such a collection of sheep will be seen at another exhibition for many years. You are aware that in entering sheep for exhibition the exhibitor is required to certify to the time his sheep were shorn, and he is supposed to be aware that the rules of the association require that they be fairly shorn bare after the 1st of April, so that he enters the contest with a fair understanding of what is required of him. But the Board is evidently unwilling to accept his word and written certificate in the matter, and accordingly appoints a committee entrusted with the duty of determining whether the exhibitor has certified the truth or not. At the late exhibition, the committee so appointed decided in effect that nearly all the exhibitors in certain classes had certified a falsehood. If their decision was correct, it certainly is a "humiliating" thought. Some of the exhibitors, when the first lots they brought out for inspection were rejected, refused to present any more, feeling that it was an insult to be thus publicly charged with falsehood, and I think they displayed the right spirit.

It is a delicate task to undertake to criticize or find fault with the decisions of gentlemen who consent to serve in the thankless office of judge at these fairs, and I am always willing to allow a wide margin for difference of opinion; but in this case the decisions were of such a sweeping character that I think no one, not even the committee themselves, will attempt to justify them. When the committee commenced their duties there were only two of them present, and they marked with paint such sheep as they intended to reject, and left others unmarked which were to be accepted; but on the arrival of the third member they changed their tactics, and declared

One of the members of that committee stated in my hearing, since that time, that they feared if they threw out some and accepted others the public would be dissatisfied, and that to avoid the charge of partiality they concluded to serve all alike. Another member of that committee, placing his spectacles upon his nose, commenced picking the wool about the thighs of the sheep, which is always somewhat matted from their lying upon it, and declared that the 1st of April was too early to shear sheep, and that they were all too fat. A member of the Board here informed him that those were matters he was not required to decide—he was simply required to say whether they were fairly shorn after the 1st of April. This will serve to show whether such a committee was competent to decide in so important a matter. While I freely admit that some of the sheep shown at Toronto were very unfairly shorn, and richly deserved the fate which all met, yet I do say that on the whole we have not seen as much fair shearing for many years as there was at Toronto.

Since the veracity of sheep breeders seems to be so much suspected, one feels some delicacy in making positive statements; nevertheless, I will say that I know with certainty that many of the sheep thrown out at Toronto, professedly on account of unfair shearing, were fairly shorn bare after the 1st of April, and in two cases at least, after the last of April, and there were respectable men on the ground who had seen them shorn and were prepared to testify to the fact. But the committee seemed determined only to give prizes to the sheep that had grown the least wool since the 1st of April, as if that were a proof of excellence.

This question of shearing is one that has caused much trouble, vexation and dissatisfaction. It is plain that there are good grounds for complaint, and it is our duty to endeavour to find a remedy that can be effectually applied. The remedy that was tried at Toronto was too effectual—it killed the patient.

Reverting to the question whether it is possible to determine with certainty whether sheep were or were not fairly shorn, I have no hesitation in saying it is not possible to determine with certainty, because on some sheep the wool grows more rapidly than upon others, and some staples of wool retain their fresh and glossy appearance when quite old, while others appear dry and matted when not nearly so old.

One who has been a close observer may judge nearly enough for all practical purposes whether the shearing has been fairly performed or not, but the difficulty is, that the men who would be most competent to judge in this matter are those who are exhibitors, and of course their services are not available.

If the gratuitous advice of one who feels deeply interested in this matter, both from selfish motives and from a desire for the welfare of that eminently useful institution the Provincial Association, will be accepted by the Board, I would advise that the rule requiring fair shearing after the 1st of April be continued, and that it be left to the discretion of the judges to throw out such as they believe to have been unfairly shorn, and let it be impressed upon the judges as a duty in every case where they are satisfied there has been fraud to frown down, or "stamp out," if you please, this contemptible and dishonest practice of making up by art for the deficiencies of nature.

I will only add my humble opinion that, unless the Board can give to the sheep breeders of Canada some assurance that they shall not again be humbugged as they were last fall, many of them will be found absenting themselves from the Provincial Fair, and seeking another market, where Agricultural Associations give greater encouragement to the important interest they represent, and where more liberal provision is made for their transit and accommodation.

AN EXHIBITOR.

PEEL, 15th Feb, 1867.

Beet-Root Sugar.

To the Editor of THE CANADA FARMER:

SIR,—I perceive that the feasibility of the manufacture of sugar from beet-root, in Canada is thought impracticable by one of your correspondents, and I was astonished to read the expression of an opinion that this most valuable branch of industry could not be introduced in this country on account of the severe winters, which would make the storage of the beets impossible.

If the writer of that article had informed himself how they store beets in Russia and Sweden, (countries infinitely colder than the Canadas, and manufacturing

some 150,000,000 pounds of sugar per annum,) or how they deal with the article of potatoes for the manufacture of starch in the northern portions of the United States, he would have rendered a greater service to his country than by dissuading parties from an undertaking which would lessen the price of sugar for consumers some 30 per cent., give occupation to thousands of labourers, and add a lucrative crop to the farming community.

Any parties who are desirous of information concerning the manufacture of sugar from beet-root may communicate with me, and I will be most happy to furnish them with all necessary particulars, and do all in my power to have at least one or two factories started in Upper and Lower Canada.

CARL BECHERER.

P. O. Drawer 290.

MONTREAL.

NOTE BY ED. C. F.—If, as we infer our correspondent is practically acquainted with the manufacture of beet-root sugar, we shall be happy to receive from him a detailed account of the matter for the information of our readers.

COST OF DRAIN TILE MACHINE.—Messrs. Runciman and Randolph, of Bridgetown, Nova Scotia, enquire the price of a machine for manufacturing drain tiles. A machine for this purpose is made by W. Lindsay Newcastle, C. W. Price \$130.

DOMESTIC SPINNER. In reply to an enquiry respecting the Domestic Spinner, figured in our last number, we refer "a subscriber" to Mr. John Lazier, Belleville, C.W., who is the manufacturer, and would probably be able to furnish the information desired, respecting the Hand Carding Machine also.

MATHEMATICS.—We have received from "T. R. W.," Collingwood, a communication containing mathematical and engineering problems, which, however ingenious and interesting, are scarcely adapted for an agricultural journal. We shall be happy to hear from our correspondent on any subject within the province of the CANADA FARMER, but such a communication as that referred to is more appropriate to the columns of an educational than an agricultural journal.

A MEDLEY.—"James Greig," of Peterboro, sends us a communication in which physiology, political economy, prophecy and theology, are strangely blended, forming a most singular medley. If it were a less disjointed and mixed-up affair, it would hardly be suitable for our columns, as there is nothing agricultural, horticultural, or rural about it. Mr. G. should train his mind to more connected and logical habits of thought.

LICE ON HORSES AND CATTLE.—Jno. G. K., Laurel, asks "what is a good cure for lice in horses and cattle? and are there different kinds on the two varieties of stock?"

ANS.—One of the best remedies for this troublesome pest is a wash of tobacco water, made by infusing 1 lb. of tobacco in 2 gallons of water. It should be applied frequently, and little at a time. The species that infest the horse and ox are distinct.

RAPE SEED.—"W. F.," writing from Wolverson, enquires whether there are two kinds of rape seed, and where he can procure the kind for summer seed, and at what price.

ANS.—We believe that, as regards the season, there is but one sort suitable for this climate, though there are varieties of what we presume is meant by summer rape, each fitted for spring and summer sowing. The winter rape is not adapted to the climate, and is not imported. Such as are adapted for Canada, can be procured of Mr. Fleming, Agricultural Buildings, Toronto, or from other seedsmen; the price is \$6 per bushel. For small quantities the price will be about 15 cents per lb.

CANADIAN OIL CAKE.—William Gowanlock, writing from Cedar Hall, Saugeen, enquires if there is any oil-cake manufactured in our neighbourhood, and what it would cost per ton delivered at Guelph or Goderich.

ANS.—The Linseed Oil Company, Toronto, manufacture oil cake, which they sell at their factory for \$26 whole, or \$29 crushed, per ton. The cost of freight can be ascertained from the Grand Trunk Agents; or perhaps our correspondent could have that matter arranged for him by the party who supplies the oil cake, viz., either the manufacturers, or some of the respectable seed merchants in Toronto, all of whom, we believe, supply the article both in wholesale and retail quantities.