

One Hundred Cows Dead.

NO DANGER TO THE DOMINION.

SIR,—I have been requested by our Agricultural Society to send you the following memoranda—in some measure a description of a very serious malady that prevails in this vicinity, and not in any other part of the Province that I am aware of, to see if you could from your own knowledge, or from reference to your veterinary surgeon, give us any information respecting it, or any suggestions whereby the ravages of the disease may be stayed. I should think one hundred cows have died from this cause in this county during the past season, and I see plainly it is extending and becoming more widely spread from year to year, and unless in some way checked the results must eventually be very disastrous. I think from a perusal of these statements you can get a pretty good idea of the symptoms, and I don't think it necessary for me to pretend to add anything more, especially as I am not practically familiar with it. Hoping some good may result from this enquiry without giving too much trouble, I remain, etc.,

DAVID MATHESON,
Pres. Pictou Ag'l Society, Nova Scotia.

Statement of Donald Fraser, Esq., of Acadia Farm, near Pictou Town:

In 1860 a cow owned by Capt. Carey strayed from town and died near my farm. In the following week, 29th June, the disease made its appearance in two of my young cows. Symptoms—first, a strong nauseous taste in the milk; a short time afterwards, all at once, this went from their milk; the back rounded up, the tail drawn in between the legs; animal quite feverish; eyes inflamed and nearly covered with yellowish matter; very soon severe looseness in the bowels, which goes on to severe purging; if the animal lives for two or three days this leaves; then becomes hard bound in the bowels and the animal swells up like a drum, during all the time apparently in great pain with head hanging down and inclining to lie down, swinging the head, the nose often to the ground. These two lived three days. From this all my cows, twelve in number, and four heifers, died before the end of the year. Some lived from three days to eight weeks; some went quite mad during the progress of the disease and would run for the brook or nearest water, but would only taste it. Some I killed to put them out of pain, but in no instance have I succeeded in curing one, although I have used every remedy I could think of.

Although steers and young oxen were with the cows, none of mine have become affected.

I have since renewed and enlarged my byres, with good ventilation, and although my neighbor whose farm joins mine during the past summer lost all his cows, five in number, yet I have not had any return of it. The same neighbor says that his horse, which pastured with the cows, also died, showing all the symptoms of the disease. His cows all died within two months from the time the first was affected; he says in every case when he made examination he found the liver much enlarged and the brain quite soft, as if partly melted.

This disease has hung around here ever since it so scourged me, with more or less loss every year, and perhaps more virulence the past year than any other, over forty cows having died within a distance of two miles around the town. It has with in three or four years reached the town of New Glasgow, where many animals have died, and during the past summer it has extended five or six miles in the direction of Merrigomish, and thirty-six cows have died within that distance in that direction. It has prevailed at Fraser's Point (across the harbor from Pictou), Carriboe, Little Harbor, Sutherland's River and Merrigomish, in some places farmers losing all their cows and heifers, and every summer reaching new sections of the country. So far as I know, it is only in the summer season it prevails, after the cows get on the grass, and unless some remedy is procured, it will necessarily result in seriously injuring our farmers, if not in driving them out of the country.

Statement of D. Foote, Pictou:

I append the following as the first symptoms of the disease among the milk cows in our neighborhood, as I have had experience among my own.

1. We detect a strong taste in the milk, as if some of the manure had fallen into it while milking. 2. Extreme purging, but no other apparent trouble. 3. The cow loses her milk suddenly, it may be in one night. 4. The cow becomes languid and heavy, the eyes dull and hazy, and the whole appearance indicating extreme sickness.

With regard to the length of time that cows may live after being taken with the disease, I cannot speak positively, as I have never allowed any of mine to linger very long. I have lost altogether twenty head, and on examination after killing them, have found a large quantity of dropsical fluid around the paunch—sometimes as much as two buckets full, of yellowish color and unpleasant smell. I have found the gall enlarged in every instance and in some cases it contained as much as a gallon of fluid, of natural color but quite thin. My experience leads me to suppose that this increase of fluid commences immediately on the stoppage of the milk. The flow of urine also decreases, and what does come seems hot and inflamed. The last cow that I lost was this past spring, and when I found that she was diseased I killed her for the purpose of ascertaining, if possible, when the trouble commenced. The milk had stopped, but she still passed urine in small quantities of the hot and frothy kind already mentioned. I found but a small quantity of fluid around the paunch and the gall but slightly enlarged, but the contents of the many plies were quite hard and solid almost as a stone, quite hot and inflamed, and the passage into the paunch seemed entirely closed. There was evidently considerable inflammation in the lungs.

My observation with the cattle of others has been that when allowed to live, the disease sometimes induces madness, and I have known cows to beat their heads against a rock till they died, or rush into the water and drown themselves. Mr. Wm. Pope has told me that his experience with cows leads him to suppose that the trouble commences in the tubes leading to the bladder becoming inflamed and obstructed, which seemed to throw the water out of its natural course and all through the system.

Statement of J. H. Lane, Pictou:

Within the last twenty years I have lost five or six cows from the disease which has been so prevalent about Pictou. The following are the symptoms, so far as I have observed in my own and other cattle that I have seen laboring under the disease:

First, loss of appetite and cud, followed by great looseness of the bowels and very frequent purging, the excrement resembling coal-tar—very black in color—for four or five days, when it ceases and the animal commences to swell; no further evacuations take place. The swelling of the stomach increases, and finally the cow dies in great agony, there being great forcing of the bowels before death and the anus being very much distended. Death generally occurs in about ten days or a fortnight from the first symptoms. Very frequently the disease may be foreseen from a strong taste in the milk, perhaps ten days or more before the disease shows itself, as if the cow had been in a strong clover field, or particles of dung had fallen into the milk.

One of my cows suffered so much pain that she ran round and round the field, driving her horns into the ground, until she fell down completely exhausted, and died in a few hours after. I keep my cows in a pasture by themselves, with plenty of the best of water from a running stream. They all died during the summer season or early fall.

[We have made enquiries of our veterinary advisers, Messrs. Rudd & Tennent, of this city, and they inform us that this is a Blood Poison of an Enzootic nature, that is, not contagious. It is found in low, wet lands, especially after a luxuriant growth, and more particularly when the grass begins to rot or decay from floods or over-growth on salty or springy lands, and on lands that favor the development of miasma. Cattle are only attacked by it when running on pasture. Our informants have seen the disease existing on low lands in England, and also in the County of Lambton, Ontario. It may be found on flat, clay, undrained lands; sometimes deposits of lead from mountainous regions after heavy rains have been known to affect cattle in the same way on rich pasture lands. The butting or kicking by the cattle is caused by the grass becoming compact and hard in the manfolds of the paunch. The preventives are these: When the pastures are rank, too succulent or decaying, allow the cattle to have only a partial meal at a time. Give them some other food, some grain, oats, bran or hay, or a run on higher and drier pastures. Boiled flax-seed or aperient medicine may be of service if danger is feared. Cows are more liable to be affected than other stock. Great care is required to ward off the danger when the pastures are rank after rampant growth and after floods.]

Opinions Differ.

SIR,—I do not approve of your suggestion that the duty should be taken off corn from the States. Let the N. P. alone for at least a couple of years so that it may have a fair trial. The country is just emerging from a financial crisis, and the duties are pretty fairly distributed over the whole. Let well enough alone.

I. W., Markham, Ont.

SIR,—I am well pleased with the manner in which you are advocating the farmers' interests. You were quite right in trying to induce the Hon. S. L. Tilley to remove the duty on corn. If the Government would give us corn free of duty we would be greatly benefited.

I am well pleased with the way in which you have been handling the affairs of the Provincial Board of Agriculture. Your remarks anent that body should tend to bring about a reformation. I live in the southwestern part of the county of Wellington. I follow mixed farming. The crops here have been considerably above the average the past season. I had three varieties of fall wheat, viz.:—Clawson, Silver Chaff and Scott. Each variety averaged thirty-five bushels per acre.

I had seventy pounds of a new variety of spring wheat shipped to me by a friend last spring. I sowed it on one half-acre of good rich land. It stood up well until cut, very bright in straw, and scarcely any midge. Yield, when threshed, eleven bushels. I will mail you a sample of the wheat.

R. A., Dorking.

SIR,—I do not wish to discontinue the ADVO-CATE. It is too good a work to give up. I was glad you represented us to Mr. Tilley. We want the duty off corn very much. I am going to sow salt with my wheat next spring. How much should I sow to the acre? I drill my wheat. Should I sow salt broadcast and harrow it? Is salt any use to sow on winter wheat next spring? Will it help winter wheat to harrow it next spring? What kind of oats is most productive?

A. N., Campbell's Cross.

[See articles in paper. Harrowing in spring is beneficial.]

SIR,—I was very much surprised when I saw by the November number of the ADVO-CATE that you were in favor of having the duty removed from American corn, and more so when I saw what you had been saying to the Hon. S. L. Tilley. For want of a market for our oats, rye and corn we have been obliged to sow wheat, wheat, till our farmers have become sick of it. Now there is a demand for oats, rye and corn we can grow these coarse grains, and in that way restore our farms, and at the same time have a fair return for our labors. I am feeding 10 head of cattle, a neighbor is feeding 15 head; we have grown our own corn, and find a demand for what we have to spare. He had 500 bushels of unshelled corn on 6 acres. Distillers would not buy our rye and corn when they could get American corn; nor would lumbermen and other large employers of horses buy our oats when they could get corn free of duty. But for the fuss those parties kicked up the duty on corn would not have been less than 10 cts. a bushel. The farmers in those parts will depend so much on those coarse grains for some time to come, as the bugs are destroying the peas and the weevil the wheat; from all appearance by another season the weevil will be as bad as ever it was. You should do all you can to have the duty raised to 10 cts. on corn; if you do and succeed, eight farmers out of ten will have cause to thank you.

Allow me to say that one reason why the loss on the steers sold at the Model Farm appeared so great was that the turnips and mangolds were valued too high. People would grow nothing but turnips and mangolds if they were worth 8 cts. to 10 cts. a bushel, for that means \$60 to \$80 an acre, as there is no trouble in growing from 600 to 800 bushels of those roots to an acre. I value mine at 4 cts., which, at the least, would be \$24 an acre, and that is too high, for if our farms would average \$20 an acre we would soon all be rich. Those steers had been fed grain at the rate of 15 lbs. a day. When cattle are getting plenty of turnips and hay 10 lbs. of grain is sufficient, and it will not pay to feed more when cattle are selling for what they were sold for. Such cattle as those must have been sold readily at 5 cts. a lb. in this neighborhood last May.

D. S. D., Brooklin, Ont.