

# The Farming World

For Farmers and Stockmen

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## The Trade Conference and the Farmer.



THE Boards of Trade Conference, held in Toronto last week, was in many respects a most important gathering. While the direct benefits of such a conference may perhaps not be apparent to all, yet a gathering of representative business men from all parts of the Dominion cannot but have a most wholesome effect in inspiring more confidence in Canada and more assurance as to her future, both commercially and politically. A number of important matters were discussed, the chief of which were preferential trade with Great Britain, or better, perhaps, within the Empire, and the transportation problem, which seems to be always with us. Of these two we are inclined to give the latter the first place. It would certainly be of very great advantage to this country if our food products especially, had a preference in the British markets, and yet there would be little gain in this to the Canadian producer if he were not able to have his goods carried to the consumer as cheaply as his competitors to the south of the line. As things stand at present, it would take a pretty good preference to offset the disadvantage the producer in this country is placed at as compared with his American competitor in so far as transportation rates are concerned. However, if we can get both a preference and also fairer treatment in the way of railway and ocean freight rates so much the better. But the latter should not be sacrificed in order to secure the former.

There are a few features of the conference itself from which farmers as a class might take a lesson. It was a conference called together, not by a central organized body, but by the initiative of the Toronto Board of Trade. The delegates met without any preconceived ideas or opinions antagonistic to the interests of any other class in the community. In fact, the range of subjects discussed affected the agriculturist as much, if not more so than any other citizen. The cattle embargo was considered and the discussion on the preference bore largely upon securing better markets for the products of the farm. And yet there was only one farmer present at this conference, Mr. Andrew Elliott, of Galt, Ont. All this shows a spirit of broadmindedness on the part of our business men, which farmers, as a class, might profit by. We have had

farmers' organizations in the past that placed themselves in antagonistic relations to the other classes in the country, and, consequently, signally failed in the objects they had in view. There should be no antagonism whatsoever between the various classes, which go to make up this country. We could not the farmer join with the business man and the professional man in securing that which will be for the benefit of the country at large? The farmer is the most important factor in Canada to-day, and if he is not consulted as much as he should be on matters affecting the commercial and other interests of the country it is largely because, through such organizations as we have named, he has placed himself in an antagonistic relation to other classes in the country. We believe this Trade conference would have had more influence had our Farmers' Institutes, our Live Stock, Dairy and other agricultural bodies been represented. There are men connected with these organizations who are quite as capable of discussing intelligently, questions affecting our commercial and other interests as were any of the delegates to the conference last week. There is a unity of interest between the business man and the farmer of this young country, and both should work together for the building up of its trade and the development of its resources.

## Selecting Stockers and Feeders.

While the majority of our farmers breed and raise their cattle for fattening purposes there are a great many who buy them either as stockers or as feeders. But whether they are bought or raised by the farmer he should aim to have only such types put up for fattening as will give the best results. If there is one grade of feeders or stockers that is more uniform than another it is the good choice grade that will under proper management develop into prime steers. It is therefore of the greatest importance that only this kind should be selected by the feeder.

It is, comparatively speaking not a difficult task to name the good qualities of a prime steer, but not so with the stocker or feeder. In the former case we have the finished product to deal with, while in the latter case one is obliged to determine whether the animal in finishing will take on that smoothness of outline and that quality which the market demands. And not only this but one must determine whether the steer at the end of the fattening process will return

a profit. In all good to choice stockers or feeders we should secure not only the ability to finish as prime steers but also the ability to make economical gains in flesh and fat.

Stickers and feeders should be low set, deep, broad and compact rather than high up gaunt, narrow and loosely made. Animals of low set build and with short legs are almost invariably good feeders and capable of early maturity. Depth, breadth and compactness indicate a good constitution, a capacity for growth and of ultimately producing a relatively high percentage of the most valuable cuts. The straight top and underlines should be nearly parallel. The stocker or feeder should be low at the flanks and have a roomy barrel though butchers object to an animal that is too paunchy. A low flank also indicates a good constitution and good feeding quality. The stocker or feeder is usually thin in flesh and therefore the natural flesh characteristic of the animal may be more easily determined. As much smoothness of outline as is consistent with low flesh should be secured, being careful to avoid too great prominence in hips, tail, head and shoulders. Avoid rough, open shoulders, sway backs and large coarse heads with small eyes set in the side of the head. Short, broad heads and short thick necks indicate strong tendencies towards beef making. A large prominent and mild eye is to be desired. The mild eye denotes that the animal has a quiet disposition which all feeders know is so desirable in a steer intended for the fed lot. The distance between eye and horn should be short and the horn should be flat and of medium fineness rather than round and coarse. The lower jaw should be heavily coated with muscle; the muzzle, lips and mouth should be large without coarseness, the nostrils should be prominent and the openings large.

The breeding is strongly associated with the general quality of the stocker or feeder. Good quality is seldom found with the plain bred steer while it is generally found in the well bred high grade animal. The desirability of general quality cannot be too strongly emphasized. While it is a characteristic that involves many points and is difficult to describe, its presence or absence is quickly discerned by the trained eye of the intelligent buyer. It is this characteristic in stockers and feeders more than any other that indicates whether the animal has within it the possibility of making a prime steer. Another point that should be well