

# FARMER'S ADVOCATE

AND HOME MAGAZINE

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

REGISTERED IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE COPYRIGHT ACT OF 1875.

VOL. XXXV.

LONDON, ONT., AND WINNIPEG, MAN., MARCH 1, 1900.

No. 497

## EDITORIAL.

### Canadian Live Stock Associations --- Amalgamation of Stud Books --- Government Stock Sales.

The unusually large attendance at the annual meetings of the Stock Breeders' Associations in Toronto last month, the increasing number of registrations in the stud and herd books, and the improved financial statements of the various breed associations reported in our last issue, show a healthy state of business and an encouraging outlook for trade in these lines. It is gratifying to know that this applies not only to one or two branches of the live-stock business, but to many, if not to all. The horse trade has greatly improved as a result of the short supply of good ones and the active demand for the best in several classes. Fresh importations of breeding animals are being made and satisfactory sales of these effected, while good heavy draft stock, as well as saddle and harness horses, both in the home market and for the export trade, are eagerly sought for and command good prices. In both beef and dairy cattle, the demand, the prices and the prospects are very encouraging, while the improved tone of the wool market has given fresh stimulus to the sheep trade, and the prices for hogs have recently been steadily advancing.

Among the topics which came up for discussion at the Stock Breeders' meetings was the question of amalgamation of the Canadian and American Clydesdale stud books, which, it is claimed, would facilitate trade with our neighbors across the line, since their customs regulations require the presentation of certificates of registry in the American book in order to admission free of duty. This is a question that will bear discussion, and the proposition is one that is not without some claims to favorable consideration, and finds support in the satisfactory and successful working of a number of pedigree records of cattle, sheep and swine which are kept in the United States, being the only public records of those breeds of stock in America. Canadians have been given representation on the directorate of these Associations, and in several cases have been elected to their highest offices. There may, however, be other phases of the question which, if brought before our people for consideration, may show that it is wise to hold what we have and maintain an independent registry. It may be well to reflect that the difficulty regarding the recognition of our registrations by the American customs applies to many other classes of stock besides Clydesdales, and the arguments in favor of surrender in one case apply equally to most of the other herd books we have, and the principle, if followed to its logical conclusion, would leave us without Canadian records. This may be all right in times of peace, but there is always the possible contingency of international difficulties to be considered, and it may be the part of wisdom to provide against such. The present is an opportune time for the discussion of the subject, as a committee has the matter under consideration and will probably report to the next meeting of the Association.

Another proposition that was brought before one or more of the Cattle Breeders' Associations was that of the establishment of combination auction sales of stock under Government supervision and the direction of the various Breeders' Associations. It was intimated that there was a possibility that Government grants would be given towards the expenses of holding these sales, and that they would be held in different sections of the Provinces. Whether this system of sales is likely to prove an advantage to breeders is a question for their own consideration, as they are

the parties mainly interested. If we could see reasonable grounds to believe it is likely to be an improvement on present methods of doing business, we should gladly give it all the assistance in our power, but we confess it comes to us as a surprise that such methods should be deemed necessary to facilitate business at the present time, and, from a pretty thorough acquaintance with breeders in this country, we are of the opinion that they had failed to realize their need of such a system of doing business. Our surprise is the greater that the Shorthorn Breeders' Association—the most prosperous of them all, having a cash balance on hand of over \$3,500, and a class of stock selling very readily at buoyant prices—should pass a resolution approving the scheme. The fact that sales of this character repeatedly tried in different sections of Canada have been short-lived, and, in almost every case, have ended in dismal failure, is not, we know, a conclusive argument that they cannot be made a success, but we confess that, from our experience and observation of past efforts in this line, we are far from being sanguine of the prospect. If the directors of the Breeders' Associations feel confident that they can induce breeders to put good stock into such sales, and if they feel sure they can frame and secure the observance of rules which will bind contributors to take the prices the public are willing to pay for the stock offered, they may feel justified in making another experiment in this line.

One of the difficulties in the past has been the tendency to make such sales the dumping-ground for inferior stock or animals that are doubtful breeders. The prices reported as made at such sales are liable to be regarded by the public as the market value of pure-bred stock, and if they are low they reflect on values of stock in the hands of breeders. It is intimated that to meet this difficulty, inspectors will be appointed to examine the stock entered as to quality and health, and it is presumed that in a sale conducted under Government supervision the tuberculin test will be applied, as it is their policy to purchase no stock for the Experimental Farms except they are tested. It is expected that American buyers will be attracted to the sales, and as their purchases cannot pass the lines unless subjected to that test, it will be required either before or after the sale, and there may be difficulty in getting breeders to pay freight and other expenses of the sale, and to take chances of having animals left on their hands with the option of freighting them home again or disposing of them otherwise. These are details which may possibly be satisfactorily provided for. The principal question to be considered is the general effect which such sales, if adopted, may have upon business. Will buyers wait for and postpone their search for stock till the date of the sales? Will sellers enter and hold their best stock for the sales and be content to take what they will bring under the hammer, abiding loyally by the rules of the sale.

Our observation is that the upset price or the reserve bid is not popular in Canadian sales, and yet we can conceive of no other legitimate means of protecting valuable stock from slaughter prices in case of the absence of appreciative bidders, a contingency which from various causes is liable to occur. Our own opinion is that private sales are usually the most satisfactory to both buyer and seller, and that the fewer public sales there are, the better for both, though there are special circumstances in which the public sale is a convenient means of disposal and its adoption perfectly legitimate. The question is, will Government sales tend to unsettle and demoralize private business, or will they be helpful and healthful? Discussion is in order, and we invite breeders and others to give their opinions and judgment on the question through our columns.

In conclusion, one cannot but refer to the unprecedented position attained, both in numbers

and quality, by the pure-bred herds of Great Britain, whose live stock still sets the standard for the world. The system of public sales being well suited to the conditions there, has long since naturally grown into great favor, though a vast amount of business is still transacted by private treaty. The point to be noted, however, is that the government of the day has never undertaken to promote the industry by taking hold of the disposal of stock, and its success without has certainly had no parallel elsewhere in the world as the result of the application of private enterprise and intelligence. While we are desirous to see the industry in Canada advanced in every rightful and permanent way, it is just a question if it would not be better to keep stock sales entirely clear of politics.

### "Canada's Ideal."

The great live-stock premium picture designated "Canada's Ideal," reproduced from photographs and specially prepared for the FARMER'S ADVOCATE, is now ready for distribution. It is a magnificent photogravure from "wash" drawings, finely engraved, representing a round dozen choice specimens of the highest type of Shorthorn cattle of the most approved modern stamp, including first-prize and championship winners at leading Provincial exhibitions, and other noteworthy individuals of the breed in prominent Canadian herds. The picture, measuring 25x36 inches, with proportionate margins, has been produced at very great expense. Its execution as a work of art in animal portraiture, it is safe to say, has never been equalled on this continent, and it will be found to be such as to commend itself to all good judges and all lovers of high-class stock into whose hands it may come. It is a companion picture to three others previously issued from this office representing other classes of stock, and is in line with the fixed policy of the FARMER'S ADVOCATE in keeping before its readers high ideals of farm animals with the hope that as object lessons they will have an educational value, particularly to young farmers and stockmen throughout the wide constituency of the paper, extending from the Atlantic to the Pacific Ocean. The closing year of the nineteenth century has been deemed an opportune time for the issue of a high-class pictorial representation of the favorite type of beef cattle of the day, which will be of permanent value in stimulating the production of a uniform standard of excellence in Canadian live stock. The price of the picture has been fixed at one dollar, and to place it easily within the reach of our readers desirous of securing it, we propose to present a copy of it to every present subscriber who sends us the names of two new subscribers and two dollars. We have already booked a large number of orders from a wide field of territory, including every Province and most of the States, and we bespeak the active co-operation of our friends everywhere in giving it a mammoth circulation.

As a rule, the man who makes the most of his dairy cows is he who regards them as so many machines for the purpose of converting food into milk and butter, and who treats them as he would an engine out of which he expects to obtain the best mechanical results. In the absence of proper material wherewith to develop the necessary motive power, no machine, no matter how perfect, can be expected to produce satisfactory results; and so it is in the case of the cows. In order to get them to produce the best results, every care must be taken in order to ensure that they are properly fed and looked after, in order to maintain them at the highest possible rate of milk production. The engine, in order to do its work, must be regularly supplied with suitable fuel; dairy cows, in order to produce good results, must be liberally provided with suitable foods.