

The Farmer's Advocate

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EDITORIAL.

Expansion of Canadian Milling.

Evidences are not wanting that the milling and railway interests of the Western States are now regarding with more than a mere spectacular concern the development of wheat production in Manitoba and the Northwest Territories. In the course of a plea for a supply of Canadian hard wheat for the Western States millers, a Minneapolis paper urges that if they wait till Canada has largely added to her facilities for handling this grain, the task of diverting it to the United States mills will not be so easy. Last year Canada exported \$6,871,939 worth of wheat, but only \$4,015,226 worth of flour.

By reference to the latest trade returns at hand, we find that Great Britain imported in 1900, \$113,616,834 worth of wheat, of which Canada sent \$10,740,139 worth, and of flour, \$49,165,713, Canada contributing toward that amount but \$2,777,309, the United States sending \$40,715,779 worth of the latter. We also notice by a recent report from the Department of Agriculture at Ottawa, that there is a splendid market in South Africa for Canadian flour, which is one of the few things there admitted free of duty. In 1898 the United States supplied the bulk of flour imported, and Australia the remainder. The first consignment of Canadian flour arriving at Durban proved satisfactory in every way, dealers being very much pleased with the quality, and repeating their orders. Other things being equal, Canadian flour will there get the preference. In view of these and other similar facts that might be mentioned, the desirability of expanding Canadian milling industries to keep pace with Canadian wheat production forces itself upon the attention. There are substantial reasons for having our wheat milled at home. In the first place, it affords employment for Canadian labor by adding to the industries of the country. In the next place, it means the exportation of the more refined product—flour—and leaves in Canada the offal, bran and shorts, so imperatively needed and so valuable for feeding purposes.

A given quantity of flour brings as much or more money than the wheat from which it is produced, leaving the bran and shorts in the country to the good. Feeding these helps to sustain the fertility of the soil, while selling the whole wheat depletes it seriously.

As our Western farm lands become more completely taken up and thickly populated, and as our cities and towns grow, the demand for meat and other animal products will enormously increase. The wisdom of a system of agriculture in which live stock plays a leading part is apparent. So far as practicable, the "Farmer's Advocate" believes in the grinding of Canadian wheat into Canadian flour in Canadian mills, and the feeding of the by-products on Canadian soil.

The Battle of Breeds.

The bloodless battle for supremacy of the various breeds of live stock in public favor is by no means a regrettable or undesirable state of affairs in the interest of improvement of our domestic animals, though some people appear to regard it as such, and even to deplore its existence. The question which is the best breed is one that naturally, from lack of experience and knowledge, arises in the mind and is expressed by the tongue of the novice in stock-raising, and is a question to which the veteran in this interesting field of work can give but a qualified answer, as its solution depends largely upon circumstances and the purpose for which the animal is required, the work it is expected to perform, or the kind and quality of product it is to be turned into in the final analysis. Much also depends upon the location of the farm or ranch, the nature of the soil, the natural supply of suitable foods, and the demands of the best paying markets; and very much depends upon the tastes and preferences, the likes and dislikes, of the man. To be a really successful breeder of any class of pure-bred stock, the man must be a firm believer in the superiority, at least for him and his surroundings, of the breed he espouses, and to make the most of it he must be an enthusiast from conviction in his preference for the breed of his choice. He must make a study of the general principles of breeding, and by observation and experiment endeavor by intelligent methods of breeding, feeding and management, to conform his stock to the type that meets the requirements of the times and the markets. If he succeeds in accomplishing this end while maintaining the constitutional vigor and healthfulness of his animals, and in producing them at a profit, he has proved himself a genius and worthy of the appellation of a breeder. It has been said, with a good deal of truth, that there are ten men fit to fill the position of premier where there is one fit to make a successful breeder, and yet history and observation will justify the statement that wealth or high class education in the schools are not essentials to success in the field of stock-breeding, however helpful or desirable they may be, for many men of limited means and education have made, and are making, a success of the work, in nearly all the breeds, of modifying and improving the types of their animals, while maintaining intact their utility and profitableness as well as their beauty and attractiveness. The securing of this trinity of virtues is an accomplishment which brings with it genuine satisfaction and pleasure. But this end is not attained by sudden flight nor by blindly following the fads and fancies of visionary theorists or self-constituted oracles who are ever ready to tender advice on lines of breeding to men who in the school of experience have learned more on the subject than their advisors will ever know. Indeed, it is not too much to say that incalculable damage has been done the live-stock industry by the vaporings of these officious theorists, who also usually have an itch for scribbling and can generally secure space for their productions in the columns of publications conducted by people who know as little about the subject as themselves and accept them as the ultimatum of an oracle.

The object of this article, as will be seen, is twofold—to relieve from undue anxiety the minds

of those in doubt as to the choice of a breed, and to encourage the faith of those having made a choice in accordance with their own intuitions or natural preferences. It is, after all, not so much a question of the best breed in the abstract, as of its suitability to the circumstances and surroundings. There is good in all the breeds, and a place where they fulfil a good purpose as well as and perhaps better than any other breed, if intelligently managed. In the second place, it is well, having made choice of a breed, to be on guard, and, indeed, on the defensive against officious, blind theorizing or self-interested teachers, who assume to instruct practical men, recommending untested formulas of breeding and even presuming, in so far as their influence extends, to read whole breeds out of existence. The "Farmer's Advocate" has always pleaded for the improvement of all the breeds, rather than for the extinction of any, contending that the remedy for defects in type or utility lay in the selection, as breeders, of the fittest animals or those conforming most nearly to the desired or required type, and thus, by proper exercise, feeding and treatment, modifying the breed to the requirement, and, from close observation, we are satisfied that by these means substantial improvement has been made in nearly if not quite all the breeds in this country in the last few years, and our advice to breeders, if it is worth anything, is to stand by their guns and maintain their breeds intact, improving them steadily in the best direction, for we would regard as a national calamity the depositing of some of the breeds that have recently, evidently for selfish ends, been attempted to be discounted in official quarters. Let improvement, and not extinction, be the motto of all breeders, and the breeds will abide when fads and faddists are forgotten.

Rural Mail Delivery.

The free rural mail-delivery system has now spread to nearly every part of the United States. Though only six years since the first experiment was tried, there are now reported nearly 10,000 routes in operation, bringing probably 1,000,000 families in more direct contact with the business or town world. The time that is wasted and the discomforts to which farmers are subjected in many districts, going miles over bad roads and through inclement weather to secure their daily or tri-weekly mail, can hardly be realized by the city man who has his mail deposited at his front door twice a day if he does not care to walk a few blocks to the post office on a well-lighted sidewalk. Thus far in Canada little, if anything, has been done in that direction by the postal authorities, but it is a boon that would certainly be appreciated. In many localities there is a daily service by stage or train to post offices that are short distances apart, but in many others the situation is lamentably different. A prompt and regular free delivery would encourage correspondence and promote the business interests of farmers. The country telephone and rural mail delivery put the farmer and stockman on a very fair basis, compared with the townsman, as far as business communications are concerned. Seeing that it has been so generally and successfully established for the benefit of the U. S. farmers, the time is surely ripe in these progressive days in Canada for the introduction of the system here. The carriers should collect as well as deliver mail. What say our readers?