

CHAPTER X.

Live stock.

Breeding and raising of live stock; large-horned cattle; horses, sheep and pigs; cattle trade, dairy industry, bird-raising, bee culture, meat and wool.

THE raising of live stock constitutes a very important branch of farming in Russia. It is some times intimately related to agriculture, and sometimes it is an independent and exclusive occupation of the peasant. In the western part of European Russia it is especially associated with the different branches of farming. The dense population, the high development of agriculture requiring great quantities of manure, and the ready sale of the animals, cause the peasants of that region to pay great attention to their stock. In respect to the proportion of animals bred and to the amount of feed required per year the western region of European Russia differs very little from the neighbouring countries of Western Europe.

In the north-western governments, in the Baltic provinces and in Finland, the most important branches of the industry is the dairy and the fattening of cattle for slaughter. Less attention is paid to the breeding of horses, sheep and pigs. In the Vistula and western governments dairy and swine breeding are the most profitable branches of the live stock industry. In the south-eastern governments and in Bessarabia, work cattle and horses are of great importance; moreover, dairy, sheep breeding for wool, and swine raising are profitable branches of farming.

On the extensive but not fertile area of north-eastern Russia in Europe, the raising of live stock plays a very prominent role in the fertilization of the fields. The peasants, who form the greater part of the landowners of that region, breed large cattle and keep milch cows for their own family needs. The fattening of cattle for the market, although considerably practised, is not very profitable, as the small northern cattle cannot well repay their fodder with their meat. In the localities of the northern region, rich in meadows, and in some extensive villages, milch cows are raised for the purpose of making high grades of butter and cheese. Horses are bred in the north and north-western governments of European Russia exclusively for work purposes, and in such numbers as the local methods of agriculture require. The breeding of sheep and of pigs is of still less importance in these regions.

In the northern and central governments of the Chernoziom region, herding is closely related to agriculture, as the animals furnish manure for the fields and the oxen and horses serve as labourers. If on the one hand the sowing of cereals on a large scale restrain the herding of cattle to some extent during the pasture time, on the

other hand, the abundance of straw, good harvests of bulbous fruits, grass and maize, and also the quantities of residues from distilleries, refineries and other produce-works, permit the profitable breeding of milch cows and the fattening of fine beeves and hogs. In the same region the raising of good trotters and of large draught horses is much developed.

In the southern and south-eastern steppe governments, and also in the districts of the Don, herding is of great importance, owing to the large amount of pasture lands, and to the abundance of straw and hay for winter fodder. Of all the branches of stock farming the most important is the breeding of fine-wool merino sheep, exclusively centralized on rich estates. The peasants of this region, on the contrary, raise only horned cattle. Horse breeding is also centralised in this region, and more especially in the south-eastern governments of European Russia.

For the nomadic and even for the settled inhabitants of Transcaucasia and of the steppes of Central Asia and western Siberia herding is the principal industry, the object of prime necessity and the source of the riches of that people. For the nomads, herding is the exclusive occupation, furnishing every home requirement, for food and for dress, as they eat nothing except milk and meat. By selling extra cattle they procure money for paying taxes, for buying home utensils as well as objects of luxury. The local inhabitants are not only dressed and fed by the herding industry, but they also procure from it material for handiwork, which occupies both men and women during the long winter seasons.

The abundance of pasture lands and the possibility of keeping the stock on green fields during long periods render steppe-herding especially profitable. If in the southern steppe governments of European Russia cattle raising is visibly supplanted by agriculture, in the steppes of the Caucasus, central Asia and western Siberia herding is still the predominant and, in some parts, the exclusive industry of the peasant, owing to the dry and hot summers and the abundance of steppes unsuited to the cultivation of cereals.

The following table will show the quantity of live stock in European Russia, in the Kirghiz steppes and in Siberia.

	I n t h o u s a n d s.							Total.
	Horses.	Cattle.	Sheep.	Swine.	Camels.	Goats.	Stags.	
In the 59 governments of European Russia and in the Don districts (1888)	20,867	27,922	48,220	10,742	26	1,393	263	109,433
In Finland (1889)	289	1,268	1,032	186	—	16	72	2,863
In Siberia	2,318	2,429	3,017	536	—	117	198	8,615
In Tourgaisk district	705	383	1,922	—	157	146	—	3,313
In the districts of Semirechensk, Semipalatinsk and Akmolinsk, approximately	1,756	882	9,711	—	246	—	—	12,595
Total	25,935	32,884	63,902	11,464	429	1,672	533	136,819

The visible predominance of the village population over that of the town explains the relative richness of Russia in live stock when compared with the number of the inhabitants. On the other hand the low fertility of the soil in many localities of Russia, the considerable area under woodland, bog and marshy plains, the severity of the climate, the necessity of keeping the stock on winter feed during a long period, and many other circumstances which hinder the development of herding, explain why the number of live stock to a given area of land is so small compared to that of other countries of Western Europe, and especially to that of the United States. The same reasons, as also the considerable dimensions of Russian farms, explain the small number of stock relative to the amount of land suitable for herding and tilling.

In the 59 governments and 1 oblast of European Russia the live stock was registered in 1888 as follows:

	Per 100 inhabitants.	Per 100 dessiatines.	Per 100 dessiatines of pasture.	Per 100 dessiatines of ploughed land.
Horses	22.9	5.1	11.7	18.2
Large-horned cattle	30.6	6.9	15.4	23.1
Sheep	52.9	11.9	26.9	44.9
Swine	11.8	2.6	6.0	8.7

The maps, Nos. 1 and 2, show the relation between the total of live stock and that of the population as well as that of the area of land in the different governments.

The small number of cattle relative to the area of ploughed land becomes still more considerable if the small weight of Russian stock be taken into consideration. According to data given by the slaughter houses, tallow boileries and meat markets of the principal towns of Russia, the average weight of different stock slaughtered and alive may be thus represented:

For steppe cattle slaughtered, the average weight, together with the fat, 17 pouds 25 pounds.

For the Great Russian cattle slaughtered, average weight, together with the fat, 7 pouds.

For steppe merino sheep slaughtered, average weight, together with the fat, 2 pouds 20 pounds.

For the north sheep slaughtered, average weight together with the fat, 1 poud 10 pounds.

For swine slaughtered, average weight, together with the fat, 7 poud 27 pounds.

For horses, average live weight, is 18 pouds.

In the 50 governments of European Russia for 100 head of field animals there is 20.1 per cent of horses, 25.1 per cent of cattle, 45.4 per cent of sheep and 9.4 per cent of swine. The relation between the different sorts of farm animals is not the same in the several regions and governments of European Russia. In general, it may be said that in northern Russia principally large cattle and horses are raised, and in some governments of southern Russia, sheep and swine. In the steppe regions of south-eastern Russia in Europe, and in the steppes of Asiatic Russia the raising of sheep and of horses predominates. The relative quantity of horses, cattle, sheep and swine to the total number of stock may be seen in the tables 3, 4, 5 and 6.