

### Editorial.

#### Judging at Fairs.

It is about time some amendment was made in judging at our fairs. Every year there is untold dissatisfaction on the part of exhibitors. We know there is an inherent principle in human nature for every person to think his own exhibit the best. This being granted, yet really there is a great deal of bad judging done. Very often judges are selected without any special fitness for the class upon which they are chosen to pass judgment. They should be adepts and have an individual acquaintance and a specific knowledge of the same. A man may have a good idea about stock in general, yet be unable to take in the points of any particular class. Some man in the country is heard of, for instance, who has the name of being a good farmer and keeping several kinds of well-bred stock; but every man has a specialty—something that he takes a pride in, and which he is trying to develop. Judging should be done by every man being in his own order, and also by system. To our knowledge we know men—good men, too, in their line—who have been appointed judges by the Agricultural and Arts Association of this Province on certain kinds of stock, who do not really know the distinctive breeds when they see them. What can result from this but dissatisfaction?

When you get down to the smaller shows—say from the Provincial down to a county fair—the evil is aggravated in a direct ratio, and through bad judging the majority of the small shows break up in a squabble with disappointed exhibitors and the managing committee. Besides the wrong selection of judges, these county societies act penuriously in remunerating proper judges. The secretary sends a card to the effect that a certain individual has been appointed a judge on a certain class. Just as likely as not he has to pay his railway fare, and lose a day for nothing. How can competent judges be expected without remuneration?

Bad judging at fairs has a bad moral effect, and tends more than anything else to break them down and retard the progress of agricultural competition. A man who exhibits an animal or anything else, and is conscious that he has been unfairly dealt with and wronged, is loath to show again, and hence his support, financially and morally, is lost to the society. To remedy the evil of slipshod and hap-hazard judging at our agricultural exhibitions we certainly recommend: First, competent judges in each class, and who have a special knowledge of the different subjects upon which they are called upon to deliberate. Let them be liberally paid; and let the judging be done systematically, and by a scale of points, having the prominent parts of an animal, say, represented by some numeral, and the total, if a model animal were produced, sum up to 100. The American poultry breeders for a long time have adopted this system, with highly satisfactory results. Twelve points, for instance, are given to represent the anatomy of the bird, such as head, comb, earlobes, wattles, neck, breast, wings, tail, legs, and then come in symmetry, size and condition. A numeral standard is given to each of these points, and any man with an eye at all, or has the bumps of size and form at all developed in his cranium, can hardly go astray in setting down the points credited to each part. This way of judging is a guide—a yard stick, as it were—for the judges, and is as much more accurate as weighing an animal on the scales is over guessing his weight. Besides, if judges are aware that they are requested to judge by points, they will post themselves up

in the knowledge necessarily required to act as a competent judge. A poultry man would study the nomenclature of poultry, and a horse and cattle man would grind himself on the anatomy of these; for no judge who valued his reputation would like to show his ignorance before his fellow judges. Thus no one but a well posted man and an adept would attempt to act in the capacity of a judge. It is a notable fact that there were judges in the horse rings of some of our largest exhibitions last year, who were asking for information about what class they were judging. Then, if they did not know the class, what did they know about the points, or the anatomy? In judging by points there is system; by the old way it is merely the rule of thumb; you may be right, you may be wrong. Then there is a definiteness and satisfaction to exhibitors. Score cards are given to the judges, and in doing their work they mark the points of the animal and score; make duplicates, give one to the exhibitor, and retain its counterpart. Then exhibitors can see why they are beaten, and where their animals lack. It would educate breeders and help to put an end to this continual squabbling when every man don't get first prize. At the Provincial at Guelph this year the point system has been adopted, and we hope it will be carried out in all our prominent agricultural exhibitions.

#### Dog Shows and Agricultural Fairs.

There is an eternal fitness of things, so the saying goes, but how a dog show can be fitted into an exhibition purely agricultural is difficult of solution. Do the managers of our shows know that the very class of dogs which they are countenancing, and for which space is given on our fair grounds, and for which valuable prizes are offered for competition, are the very breeds which are the most destructive to the farmer's flocks? Indeed, the cry is every day increasing, that farmers will not keep sheep on account of the ravages of dogs. The cost of \$1,230 to the township of London to one individual for sheep worried by dogs, is a case in point. This amount of damage was done by a lot of sporting dogs owned in the neighborhood of the slaughter, for which prizes are offered at the coming Western Fair. What special attraction, may it be asked, does a bench of yelping and howling dogs add to an agricultural exhibition? Everything in its own order. Dog shows may be well enough for "fancy." Let them enjoy their pet dogs to their hearts' content, but keep them separate from agriculture. We consider these dog shows on fair grounds a mere intrusion, and that they have the tendency to lower the tone of our shows. The parties who run these "Bench" or dog shows, and get them up, are mere adventurers and speculators, who go around the country getting up these dog shows to make money, and to benefit—whom? Not the farmer—(although he has to pay for it), but a few speculating dog-fanciers. However desirable a dog show may be in its proper place, one thing is certain, a menagerie of howling hounds and yelping curs should never be associated on the same ground with sheep and cattle. A sheep, for instance, is startled by the baying of a hound even half a mile away, and the racket made by two or three hundred dogs has a tendency to disturb the animals and make them restless, especially at night and in a strange place. The din and noise at a dog show destroys the whole harmony of an exhibition, and is not in keeping with what agricultural shows were intended for. These are supposed to be exhibitions of skill and industry, and to be in a fit state to take in the various exhibits, the mind wants to be quiet and contemplative, and not to be disturbed by the howling of dogs and the bedlamite confusion of a horse ring.

We think it an insult to the intelligence of the thinking part of the farming community to introduce the frivolities often met with at our shows. The managers must have a low estimate of the intelligence of the average farmer, and they must set him down as a half-witted country lout, portrayed so often by old writers, such as "Farmer Hodge and the Vicar," and such poems as the "Farmer's Blunder," and Tennyson's "Northern Farmer." What a set down these are to the intelligence of a farmer, and it appears the city managers of our fairs are so far behind the age as to think that our Canadian farmers have the traditional stupidity of an Old Country lout of half a century ago. There never was a greater mistake. Ontario farmers as a class are further advanced than people in cities, and if dog shows and Merry Andrews are the measure of city tastes, it can be assured that our intelligent farmers aim higher than this, and want their exhibitions to be for the encouragement of the agricultural and manufacturing industries of the country, and not for the patronage of dog menageries and circus clowns.

#### Foot and Mouth Disease.

For the last few days there has been quite a flutter in cattle circles about the breaking out of a virulent form of the Foot and Mouth Disease in England. The first rumor was that it had broken out and had been communicated by Canadian cattle, the result of which would be to debar any of our stock from landing in Great Britain. It appears that some Canadian cattle that arrived at Liverpool perfectly sound, came in contact with a shipment of stock from the infected districts in Ireland, and thus contracted the disease. The Canadian cattle were shipped on to Bristol, and in the course of a few days the disease developed and made rapid progress. The Canadian cattle, along with those from any other country, caught the contagion alike, but the origin was from Ireland, and not Canada.

We have always advocated rigid regulations with regard to this virulent disease, and we again urge upon our authorities to be on the alert and adopt speedy measures to prevent it from coming to our shores. It is certain it exists in different parts of Great Britain and the United States. We are free from it in Canada at the present time, and there is nothing to fear from the ravages of this dread disease if proper precautions be taken to keep a strict watch upon the introduction of foreign cattle from infected districts. If the Foot and Mouth Disease gets a hold in this country, it will do an incalculable injury to the export cattle trade of Canada. However, we opine that the so-called outbreak of this disease has been exaggerated, and rumors got up by designing parties to injure Canadian stock and put them on a par with the Americans'; this accomplished, these interested parties at once have a monopoly of the cattle trade in Great Britain. We hope the Privy Council of England will give this subject a thorough investigation, and not allow one of her most treasured and loyal colonies to be debarred from supplying her millions with our surplus cattle. We have no Foot and Mouth Disease in Canada, and we do a large import trade in stock of all kinds from the mother country; and if our stock are to be debarred from entrance into Great Britain, retaliatory measures should be used in admitting cattle from there. Excluding Canadian cattle from England and doing the same thing in Canada, would act disastrously to both countries, and it may soon become necessary to exclude the importation of cattle altogether from Great Britain. There are just as good strains for breeding purposes to be had in Canada and the United States as in the Old Country. And it is