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EDITORIAL.

Reports of the Ontario Dairy and Poultry Associations' annual meetings form an interesting and useful feature of the present number of the FARMER'S ADVOCATE. They will bear careful perusal.

The worst cow in the dairy herd at the Ontario Agricultural College is reported by Prof. Dean to have been fed at a loss of \$26 per year; the best at a profit of \$47.30. The latter produced butter at a cost of 8.8 cents per pound, the herd average being nearly 14 cents (taking account of the time they were dry). Dairy farmers, what are the cows in your herd doing?

All the indications now point to a revival in the live stock interests of the Dominion, and we trust the annual meetings of the various horse and cattle breeders' associations in Toronto this week will be largely attended. These organizations do much to promote the industry, and it is all-important to give it enthusiastic aid and a proper trend at the present time.

Butter from the Ballantyne and Avonbank winter creameries sold recently in England for 105s. per cwt., netting in Canada something over 20 cents per pound. Canadian butter is steadily creeping up on the British quotation lists. Mr. J. B. Muir, whose series of articles on winter buttermaking have been running through the FARMER'S ADVOCATE, is maker at Avonbank. Referring to one of these articles, the buttermaker at the O. A. C. pronounced it the best on the subject he had ever seen in print.

The United States customs regulations require veterinary certificates of the freedom from contagious diseases affecting live stock in the district from which animals are exported. The Dominion Minister of Agriculture some time ago appointed veterinary inspectors in many towns and cities, empowered to grant such certificates for a uniform fee of two dollars for each certificate, to be paid by the exporter. This was felt by shippers to be a heavy tax, especially in the case of shipments of single animals or small numbers. Representations to this effect were made by a number of breeders to Hon. Mr. Fisher, who saw at once the reasonableness of the complaint, and has promptly taken action to grant the relief required. The charge for such certificates will now be for single animals, or for any number up to eight, 25 cents for each certificate, and for that number and upwards, in one shipment, not to exceed \$2. This, we presume, will be satisfactory to shippers, and is a good illustration of the wisdom of having for Minister of Agriculture a practical farmer and one who is in touch with the men engaged in the business.

Transportation of Live Stock.

In these times of prevailing low prices for most of the products of the farm, the question of reducing the cost of production to a minimum is one of special importance to farmers and stock breeders. To secure a living profit on his outlay in money, feed, and labor, the question of reasonable freight rates in the shipment of his stock or crops to market is one which requires close consideration. Farmers in the Northwest particularly, and stock raisers throughout the Dominion generally, have for years been complaining, and not without cause, of the excessive rates charged by the railroad companies for the carriage of breeding animals in less than carloads. About a year ago an attempt was made by the railway managers to impose upon this class of freight terms even more unjust and oppressive than those which had formerly prevailed. This threatened to be the last straw, which breaks the camel's back, and caused a vigorous protest from the stockmen, which had some effect. The matter was at that time freely discussed in

these columns and in other papers of influence, as well as by the stock breeders in their various association meetings, and a committee appointed by the latter made representations to the railway magnates in such an effective manner as to demonstrate that if corporations have no souls they are at least susceptible to public criticism. A compromise was effected and was accepted by the committee as the best terms which could, for the time being, be secured, but which was by no means satisfactory as a settlement of the difficulty, and the agitation for better terms has recently been renewed, with, we believe, the determination to persevere till the needed relief is granted or assured.

The minimum weights for cattle of different ages, singly, as fixed by the general freight agents in the revised schedule last July, are as follows:—

Bulls under one year.....	1,000 lbs. each.
Bulls one year and under two.....	3,000 " "
Bulls over two years.....	4,000 " "
Calves under six months.....	500 " "

The minimum weights suggested by the Dominion Cattle Breeders' Association and adopted as satisfactory are as follows: Bulls over six months and under one year, 1,000 lbs.; one year and under two, 2,000 lbs., instead of 3,000 lbs.; bulls over two years, 3,000, instead of 4,000 lbs. Calves under six months should read bulls or heifers. Live stock in less than car lots is placed in the first class, while live stock in car lots is in ninth class, which certainly appears to be an excessive difference, and we think that a reasonable classification would place animals in less than car lots at about third class. The excessive rates imposed here, we believe, defeated their own ends by driving shippers in many cases to avail themselves of express rates, which for certain distances are found to be cheaper than freight rates and much more satisfactory in regard to despatch.

The regulation requiring, in the case of animals shipped singly or in small numbers, where the distance is over one hundred miles, that the shipper or his agent shall accompany the shipment and shall pay one half ordinary first-class fare for one trip, is certainly unreasonable and oppressive. Long years of experience has demonstrated that for distances of one hundred to five hundred miles animals singly or in small lots have gone safely without an attendant, and there was no reasonable excuse for imposing this burdensome tax upon shippers.

One of our contributors, Mr. Mackay, Superintendent of the Indian Head Experimental Farm, in our issue for Dec. 15 last, took strong ground in favor of the C. P. R. carrying pure-bred stock free to the Northwest, showing that the increase in the number and quality of stock there which that railroad would in a few years carry back would more than compensate them for the first loss. This is by no means a visionary proposition, though it is, perhaps, more than we may expect to realize; but one thing is certain and must be insisted upon, that is that farmers and stockmen are entitled to better terms and must have them.

Presuming that within a couple of months, at least, Parliament will again be in session, it will be in order for farmers to press their claims for just treatment, and they should not be backward in demanding a redress of their grievances, first from the railway managers, and failing there, to invoke the assistance of the Government in securing their rights. Considering the vast amount of money and lands which the Government has placed in the hands of the great carrying corporations, it certainly seems reasonable that the people engaged in the greatest industry in the country, that on which all others are so largely dependent, should at least be so much under control of Parliament as to be induced to make transportation rates such as the industry can bear without being burdensome, and we submit that farmers everywhere in the Dominion should prompt their representatives to use their influence in as effective a manner as possible in this direction.

The Score Card System of Judging.

At the annual meeting of the Ontario Poultry Association (reported elsewhere in this issue) recently held at Guelph, the question of the usefulness of the score card in judging poultry was freely discussed, and a resolution in favor of discontinuing its use was carried by a large majority. The method was very severely condemned by most of the poultry-men who spoke.

If the system has ever been a success in judging any class of stock it has been in the department of poultry. Here it has had its most careful trial, and we had supposed was tolerably satisfactory. The fact that it has been condemned by the poultry-men probably sounds the death knell of the system in Canada, so far as its practical application in the public show-ring is concerned. The few cases in which it has been used in this country in judging stock other than poultry have served to demonstrate its utter failure to give anything like satisfaction to exhibitors. The latest illustration of its failure we have heard of with other stock was at the Montreal Exhibition last fall, where a judge commenced his duties in the sheep classes by the use of the score card and in the very first section made such an absurd decision as to call out audible dissent from bystanders, which so "rattled" him that he abandoned his card and went on with his work in the usual way. At the same show, the judge of beef cattle started in with the score card, and, we believe, carried it through, with the result, in the Shorthorn class at least, that many decisions made at Toronto Exhibition by first-class judges were reversed, and in the competition for sweepstakes bull the animal which had won this distinction at the former show was beaten by a bull calf which had been placed 4th in his class at Toronto.

We have always contended that judges are likely to differ as widely in their estimate of the relative value of the different points or parts of an animal as they are to differ on the general excellence of the animals judged by the eye and the hand, and the attempt to apply pencil and paper to the judging of live stock is sure to prove a failure, complicating matters, and ending in results that the judge himself would not approve apart from his faith in his figures.

As an illustration of the uncertainty of the scoring process, we give the result of the work at a meeting of Kentucky expert judges, so called. Eight men undertook to score a Berkshire boar, and the totals of their scores varied from 73.5 to 84.7, a difference of 11.2 points. It is probable that if these eight men had consulted, the majority of them at least would have agreed as to the weak and strong points of the animal, but when they undertook to reduce to figures their estimate of these faults or virtues they found themselves nearly a dozen points apart. In the discussion at Guelph, a case was cited where the same judge scored the same bird on two successive days with the result of a difference of eleven points.

The score card may be a very nice plaything in the hands of schoolboys, and it can do little harm, possibly some good, in the class-room, where there is no serious responsibility as to results, but he who carries his card into the show-ring ranks with the Sunday-school teacher who takes his lesson helps into the class. He fails to inspire confidence in himself or his work, to satisfy himself or his critics. Experience has shown that no better work has been done in judging stock than that done by the skilled eye and hand of the careful and honest man who has devoted years to careful observation and comparison of typical specimens of the class of stock he undertakes to pass judgment upon, and there is no better school for the young farmer who wishes to learn the art than the show-ring at our leading exhibitions, where competent men, feeling the responsibility of their position, are doing their work. We think it safe to say that no better opportunity is afforded for such a study than at