

## Judging Dairy Cattle.

[A paper read by J. C. Snell at the annual meeting of the Canadian Jersey Breeders' Association.]

While the only absolutely trustworthy test of a cow's capacity for producing milk and butter in quantity, and of a quality above the average, is that of the pail and the churn, supported by the evidence of weights and measures, there are certain outward indications in the conformation of a dairy cow, in the color of her skin and its handling quality, the form, attachment and elasticity of her udder, the size and placing of her teats, and the extent of her milk-vein development, which to a close observer and an experienced dairyman may, as a rule, serve as a tolerably correct and reliable index to the cow's capability for more than ordinary milk and butter production. These outward indications of utility are not infallible, as many notable exceptions have proven, but they have been found sufficiently reliable, as a rule, to be safely accepted as a guide in the selection of a dairy cow for use, in the formulation of a standard of excellence for judging by inspection in the showing, and in breeding to fix a type which is generally approved by and acceptable to breeders and judges.

To most admirers of high-class dairy cattle it must be a source of satisfaction that the approved type of an ideal dairy cow is not incompatible with a robust constitution and symmetrical proportions, but that beauty and utility may well be combined in one and the same animal, as has been demonstrated by many actual tests and in the experience of most breeders of dairy cattle. It is well that ugliness and usefulness are not necessarily synonymous terms as applied to a dairy cow, though an acceptance of the pet theories of some oracles might lead to the conclusion that they are. It is true that among the very best producing cows have been some that were very plain in appearance, but it is fair to conclude that their usefulness was not necessarily owing to their ugliness, but was quite as likely in spite of it, and probably even the advocates of the theory of angular conformation, raw bones, and the convex pelvic arch, are not seeking to breed their cattle on those lines so as to perpetuate and intensify those peculiarities, how ever highly they may profess to esteem them.

The animals of any dairy breed which are most sought after by buyers, and which command the highest prices, are those which combine beauty and vigor with the accepted tokens of superior milk and butter production; hence it is the part of wisdom for breeders, in mating breeding animals, to aim at producing that sort as uniformly as possible.

The judges at competitive exhibitions, by inspection, accept a serious responsibility, as they are expected, in the relative placing of the animals, to set the standard of type, and in this respect are regarded as educators, and for this reason should be well qualified, experienced, and up-to-date in their knowledge and views of the approved type of animals of the breed they undertake to pass upon. The man who looks at and sees a cow only from the standpoint of utility, is an unsafe judge and is not up-to-date in his views, for the reason that as in a season of drought all signs of rain fail, so in individual cows it sometimes happens that all the signs of being a superior producer fail when the pail and the scales are brought into requisition. Of course this may happen in the case of the handsome cow of approved style, with shapely and well-balanced udder, as well as in the case of the uncouth and ungainly matron with pendant vessel of abnormal size, but since both classes are liable to the same variation, surely it is more sensible to give preference to the animal of attractive appearance and which conforms most nearly to the highest type of the breed to which she belongs. The adage, "Handsome is that handsome does," is a convenient consolation when one cannot capture beauty and usefulness in combination, but even in the serious business of choosing a wife, men do not generally act upon it, for when in that case the competition is so close that he feels sure he "could be happy with either, were t'other dear charmer away," a sober man is disposed to allow a few additional points for general appearance. The utility specialist may argue that since the chief value of a special purpose dairy cow lies in her ability to yield the largest quantity of the richest milk, the first place in the prize list should be given the one showing the strongest indications of milk production, without regard to appearances apart from this. Our reply is that, as before stated, the signs are not infallible, and that even if the cows are milked in the showing, as the judges have sometimes required, it settles nothing. "One swallow doesn't make a summer," and one milking does not decide the superiority of a cow. It proves nothing as to the time elapsed since last milking, the quality of the milk, nor the cow's ability to milk well for a long term. The difference in time since last calving is not taken into account, and, moreover, the bag that milks out like a dishcloth is often a delusion, and the udders of some of the very best milking cows do not collapse when emptied of milk. There is a time and a place for a practical test of these qualities, and the judge who is appointed to decide the relative merits of the cows by inspection, had better leave it to the scales and the churn to worry over the problems of pounds avoirdupois and proportions of water to butter-fat and casein. In order

that I may not be understood as attaching undue importance to beauty, allow me to say that in the absence of reasonable signs of capacity for dairy work, especially in size and form of udder, the handsome cow should not be placed over a plainer one with those signs well developed if she conforms fairly well to the established characteristics of the breed. A cow that has only beauty to recommend her, is, for the purposes of the dairy, about "as useless as a painted ship upon a painted ocean," and should find an early end in the butcher's shop. So should the plain one that is not a good milker nor likely to be one.

While the scale of points or standard of excellence adopted by the associations of breeders of dairy cattle may be acceptable in a general way, and as nearly right as many men of many minds can be expected to agree upon, I do not think a judge should feel bound in every case to follow it slavishly or to the letter, especially in minor details. For instance, the sharp withers and wedge-shaped outline is all right if coupled with a sufficient width of chest and depth of ribs to indicate a good constitution; but if, as is too often the case, the narrow withers are accompanied by a narrow chest and short ribs, and other tokens of lack of strength and vigor, the judge, I think, should use discretion, and hesitate to place such an animal above one equal in all other respects except for a little heaviness of shoulders, a characteristic found in many meritorious cows and bulls, and one which can hardly be fairly called a fault, since it indicates vitality and vigor of constitution, without which there is liable to be a lack of the best feeding qualities and of the power to work up large quantities of rough food into milk and its contents.

Bulls of the dairy breeds are more difficult to judge than those of the beef breeds, as in the latter symmetry of form and thickness of flesh are principal factors in determining superiority, but in the dairy breeds the standard for cows applies generally to bulls, except, of course, in the points allowed for udder and teats, and even in regard to the latter a good deal of importance is now attached to the size and especially to the placing of the rudimentaries of the bull. This, however, may be only a fad, as it has not been sufficiently proven to be a reliable indication of a bull's power to reproduce the virtue of large and well-placed teats in his daughters, and too much should not be allowed for it, though, other things being equal, we all like to see it. Masculine character, as expressed in head and eye, and a strong, muscular neck, and a general appearance of vigor and nervous force, are indications of prepotency in a sire, which should be allowed due weight. A narrow forehead, a pointed muzzle and a cowy neck and horns, should be heavily discounted in judging bulls in any class, as they are almost surely evidences of slow feeding qualities and a lack of vigor and potency.

A word as to the course of the judge in the performance of his task in the showing. It is presumed that he knows his business from experience as a breeder, that he has confidence in his judgment, and is honest and unbiased. It is well, after a general look over the animals entered in each section, to draw out a few of the most likely to be in the prize list, and after a close and careful examination have them walked around a circle to see how they look in motion, and then place them in the order of precedence with a view to usefulness and breed type combined. The remaining entries should then be placed in their relative order of merit, so that the dominant type may be recognized throughout the class and the judge's work show uniformity and consistency of aim. His work, if well done, will then be an education to those who need to learn the best type of the breed.

The opinions of exhibitors and onlookers may not in all cases coincide with those of the judge, and the careful and conscientious judge is liable to make a mistake, but it should be borne in mind that exhibitors are apt to see their own in the most favorable light, and are quite as likely to be prejudiced as the judge, if there is such a thing in either, while spectators should remember that the judge who feels the responsibility of his undertaking and is in close touch with the competing animals, is in a better position to weigh the evidence and give a just decision than those who see from a distance, without the same facilities, and criticise without the same sense of responsibility attaching to their opinion. There are always, and probably always will be, instances of disappointment on the part of exhibitors, but there are also generally compensating surprises in the showing where the exhibitor gets a better place than he expected, and the man who brings out up-to-date stock generally strikes a fairly satisfactory average in the prize list.

## The Slaughter Test at London.

To the Editor FARMER'S ADVOCATE:

SIR,—In reading the report of the slaughter test at the Fat Stock Show in London, I notice your report of the Essex carcasses is not borne out by facts. If you will read the Davies Co.'s report on the cutting up of the carcasses you will find that they were reported very lengthy, with plenty of cutting in the middle between ham and shoulder, and instead of being too fat, three of them were not fat enough, while two of McClure's were rather fat (and one of mine)—in fact they were the longest slaughtered, except the Yorkshires and two pairs of Tamworths.

JOSEPH FEATHERSTON & SONS.

Peel Co., Ont.

## Maritime Stock Notes.

Mr. Joseph Yuill, Carleton Place, Ont., having been honored with an invitation to attend the annual meeting of the Maritime Stock Breeders' Association, which was held on Dec. 27th and 28th, at Truro, N. S., writes us as follows: Every session of the meeting was well attended. I spoke on the Bacon Hog, The Dairy Cow, Care of Milk for Cheese and Butter Making, etc. These subjects brought out good lively discussions. Mr. Wm. Fawcett gave a very interesting paper entitled Beef Raising, but in reality it was championing the general purpose cow. The discussion was taken part in by almost every one at the meeting, and the general opinion seemed to be that there was no place for the general purpose cow in N. S., although a few stick to her with great tenacity. Mr. A. C. Bell spoke on the future Horse Raising in the Provinces. This subject proved very interesting. Hon. Mr. Emerson, Premier of New Brunswick, spoke of the great amount of good that had been done by this Association in stock breeding, and stated that the Government of N. B. intended at a very early date to import some of the very best stock obtainable into that Province.

While at Truro I visited the chicken-fattening station on the Experimental Farm there, under the management of Mr. F. L. Fuller. They had killed and shipped two hundred chickens to Liverpool, but had not received the returns. They have at present two hundred more in coops, fattening by the cramming process, same as was exhibited at the Fat Stock Show at London in December last. The people of N. S. speak very highly of the good work being done by Prof. J. W. Robertson in introducing the fattening of chickens and opening up a market in Great Britain. They look on the chicken market as being a great addition to their income.

I also visited the Government Experimental Farm at Nappan, N. S., under the efficient management of Mr. R. Robertson, and found everything in the very best order. Everything was kept in the order that a man of Mr. Robertson's experience can keep them. I found a lot of dairy cows of different breeds, well kept, well fed, and giving good returns. He was feeding twenty as good steers as ever I saw in Ontario. They were put in on Nov. 16th, and weighed 2,400 lbs. The first two weeks they gained 880 lbs.; second two weeks, 740 lbs.; third two weeks, 780 lbs., making a gain of 2,400 lbs. in six weeks. Total weight of steers on Dec. 30th was 26,380 lbs. They were fed for the first month, turnips 75 lbs., meal 4 lbs., hay 10 lbs., straw 5 lbs.; second month, turnips, 50 lbs., meal 6 lbs., hay 5 lbs., straw 10 lbs., per each animal.

I also visited the farm of Mr. C. A. Archibald, Truro, N. S., and found that Mr. Archibald was doing more for the good of his country than any other man in the Province, so far as I could learn. I found nearly 100 head of registered cattle, representatives of the following breeds: Shorthorn, Ayrshire, Jersey, and Devon. The Ayrshires and Shorthorns especially are extra good. These different breeds are kept for the benefit of his neighbors at a very small fee.

## Death of Mr. W. W. Ogilvie.

Just as we go to press the sad news comes to us of the very sudden demise of Mr. W. W. Ogilvie, the great Canadian miller, of Montreal. Apparently in his accustomed good health, he went to the office on the morning of Jan. 12th, but before noon he felt unwell and requested a sleigh to take him home. His physician was called, but the sick man suddenly sank and died in spite of all that could be done. His death was attributed to the rupture of a blood vessel in close proximity to the heart.

Mr. W. W. Ogilvie was one of the leading millers of the world, the combined output of his numerous mills being about 7,500 barrels of flour per day, made from 33,000 bushels of wheat, which is supplied from his own elevators in Ontario, Manitoba and the N.-W. Territories. Mr. Ogilvie took a deep interest in farming and stock breeding, a very superior herd of registered Ayrshire cattle being maintained on his fertile and well-equipped farm opposite Lachine Rapids, on the River St. Lawrence, where is situated the magnificent summer residence of the family. In 1897 the herd of Ayrshires at Rapids Farm was replenished by the importation of thirty high-class animals from Scotland.

## Thoughtlessness.

A WORD WITH THE READER.

Caution must always be exercised in doing business. We have received lately several subscription circulars, which we enclosed with the Dec. 1st issue, without either the name of sender, P. O. addresses or anything to indicate who sent same, and containing postal notes and P. O. orders. As the postmasters are not obliged to keep the name of the party who buys postal notes, it is impossible for us to find out the name of the remitter. The date of your address label indicates to what date your paper is paid. If you have sent us any money, and credit has not been given on your label, let us know at once how you sent it, exact date, amount, and at what post office you purchased postal note or post office order, and we will investigate the matter carefully. If you have not already remitted for 1900, please do so without delay, and at the same time send us a few new subscribers, and take advantage of some of our valuable premiums.