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EDITORIAL.

Stay by the Cows.

The shrinkage in market values of dairy products, which, happily, applies only to cheese, and is more noticeable in this owing to the abnormal prices of last year, the scarcity and unsatisfactory quality of farm help, and the fairly good prices obtaining for beef cattle in the past few months, are, we fear, reasons being considered by too many farmers sufficient for changing their methods, giving up the dairy business, and trying something else. The object of this article is to give such persons pause, to admonish them to look before they leap, to be sure they are right before they go ahead. We are confident that a much larger proportion of those who have stood by the dairy business in the last twenty years have made steady progress financially than those engaged in any other special line of farming. There is no crop on the farm so sure as milk, taking the years as they come, and if prices for its products are sometimes low, they rarely remain so for more than one season at a time, but quickly recover, and show a good average over a number of years. There is, on the whole, no market for the hay and grain grown on the farm equal to that which the cows provide. If reasonably well fed and managed, they pay a good profit on all they eat, bringing in a little cash every week in the year, and helping to keep up the fertility of the farm by means of the manure made, so that it may continue to grow good crops of all kinds. The good prices prevailing for pigs makes the feeding of that class of stock profitable, but pigs cannot be successfully raised without milk, and the skimmed milk and other by-products of the dairy are among the cheapest and best of foods from which to grow the bacon hog. These are branches of farming that involve little risk and no large outlay or expense, and that require no great skill to make them profitable, although there are degrees of profit in these as in any other, and the better the judgment and management employed in their prosecution, the greater will be the profit. If for a season prices for these products are low, instead of neglecting the cows, the true policy is to give them better attention, and endeavor to get more milk to make up for the lower price, as a good old German farmer once said at a Western Ontario dairy convention, "pull der teats a leedle harder and a leedle longer." The mistake is often made of allowing the flow of milk to shrink when a dry time comes and pastures fail, by neglecting to feed the cows something extra, failing to reflect that when once the flow is allowed to shrink it is difficult, if not impossible, to restore it to its normal condition in that season, and failing to consider that the cow will pay promptly a fair price for the extra feed she gets, so that there can be no loss, even if cash is paid out for the extra feed in a time of need.

The notion now being nursed by an increasing number of farmers, that they can do better by giving up dairying and going into grazing beef cattle, is a dangerous one if overdone, as it easily may be. There is no market more uncertain or that fluctuates more frequently than that for beef cattle; few men have the necessary experience and judgment to buy cattle judiciously and safely; the competition in the British market is close and keen, as there we must meet the corn-fed cattle of the United States, which are generally better finished than ours, while South America ships largely, and will ship more largely, of dressed beef, and as soon as the embargo

on her live cattle is removed, as it may be any day, the quality of her cattle will be better than ours, for the stockmen of that part of the world are buying the best beef bulls of Britain, regardless of cost, to improve the character of their stock. One of the greatest difficulties facing breeders of beef cattle here is the scarcity of suitable cattle to feed profitably, and if a large proportion of our farmers turn their attention to feeding and a smaller number of calves are raised, where are the cattle to come from to stock the grazing farms, or fill the stalls for winter feeding? To our mind, the outlook makes it reasonably certain that the farmer who keeps cows and raises calves, using the best class of sires, will find himself on the safest ground in years to come. He has less risk to run, and a greater certainty of a steady income. The plea that dairying involves much labor, while true, can scarcely be accepted as a justification for its abandonment. If well managed, the work may be divided so as not to fall too much upon any one member or section of the household, and, after all, it is not heavy work, as compared with most of the other operations of the farm. With the comfortable stabling now so common in this country, the winter care of cows and the raising of calves should not be considered irksome, and it may be made to pay well; while the summer work of providing fodder and other food to be stored has been greatly mitigated by the culture of corn and by the many labor-saving appliances for all farm operations.

Shows and Showing.

The success of an agricultural and industrial show, as an attraction and financially, depends largely upon the energy of its directorate, and principally upon its secretary, who is generally the only paid officer, and who is commonly regarded as manager of the fair. He needs to be a man of good judgment and executive ability, systematic, alert, firm and yet patient and courteous in his dealings with exhibitors and employees. The preparation of the fair grounds and buildings for the reception of exhibits should be commenced in good time, so that all may be in good condition before the opening day. A well-arranged programme of events should be prepared, and, if practicable, published in advance of the opening, and should be carried out as punctually as the weather and other circumstances will permit. Special attractions, in addition to the competing exhibits, to draw the crowd, may yet be considered necessary to gratify the craving for the kind of entertainment and amusement that characterizes the times and the people of the cities and towns especially, and whose attendance is necessary to the swelling of the gate receipts to meet expenses, but, happily, the tendency is to require a higher class of entertainment at the fairs than has obtained, and this should be encouraged by the introduction of such features as are educative and elevating, as well as entertaining. Each department of the fair should have a director in charge, to whom exhibitors may apply for information and the placing or stabling of their exhibits, and, in the case of the larger exhibitions, a superintendent of each division is imperative, whose entire time for some days before and during the show is devoted to the carrying out of the details of the programme. The comfort and convenience of exhibitors, and the satisfaction of visitors, depends much upon the energy and tact of the superintendent. The supply and distribution of feed and bedding for the stock devolves upon him. Timely notice of the hour at

which animals will be required in the ring is important to exhibitors, in order that they may be ready to respond to the call. The success of parades of live stock in the ring, before, during and after judging—always an interesting feature of the show to visitors—depends largely upon the firmness and tact of the superintendent in inducing exhibitors to co-operate with him in carrying out this part of the programme. Too often, spectators see the animals in the ring in only one position, either a rear or front view, and closely packed together. A change of position ordered by the superintendent or the judge, giving a side view and a survey of the animals in motion, varying the showing, gives relief to the showman and the stock, and a better opportunity for the judge to arrive at correct conclusions.

The exhibitor, of course, has an important part in the show, and much of its interest and success depends upon a thorough preparation and skilful placing and showing of his exhibits.

In live stock, it may as well be taken for granted that no matter what inherent merit an animal may possess, it will, if brought to the show in ordinary condition, have little chance of being decorated with prize ribbons. It is all very well to argue that the animal is more useful in common condition, and that a judge should recognize merit apart from a high condition of flesh, which if he were buying, he doubtless would, but it requires more courage than most men are possessed of to ignore condition in the show-ring, and the exhibitor, if he would win, must prepare his stock properly and present it in attractive form. This does not mean that in all classes the animals must be fat. In some, notably the dairy classes, this would defeat the object, but in heavy horses, the beef breeds of cattle and other meat-producing stock, a high condition of flesh, not overdone, counts for much in the judging, and in all classes thorough grooming, blanketing, trimming, polishing and showing to advantage, so as to bring out the best appearance, pays well for the time and labor expended, and, other things being equal, has weight in the decision of the judge. In showing, as in most other operations, what is worth doing is worth doing well.

The Chicago Strike.

At the Union Stock-yards, Chicago, and at other packing centers in the U. S., the strike of the men employed in the packing-houses is still on. The men seem determined to win their point, while the packers declare that they are determined the men shall not interfere with the management of the packing business. A certain amount of killing and packing is being done by the new men the packers have secured, and it is claimed men are being hired every day. The packers announce that they are now turning out about fifty per cent. of the usual output, but this is probably exaggerated in order to weaken the case of the strikers. Unfortunately for the men, their strike was called at a time when labor was fairly plentiful throughout the country, the policy of retrenchment adopted by many of the big industrial concerns having thrown thousands of men out of work. This condition makes the packers largely independent of the strikers. So the fight goes on. In the meantime, the American beef-producers, the packers, the men, and the British and American consumers are paying dearly for the disagreement between the unions and the packers, while the producers, the farmers and feeders of the stock-raising States are losing from a restricted market, which, when the trouble is ended, will probably be glutted and demoralized.