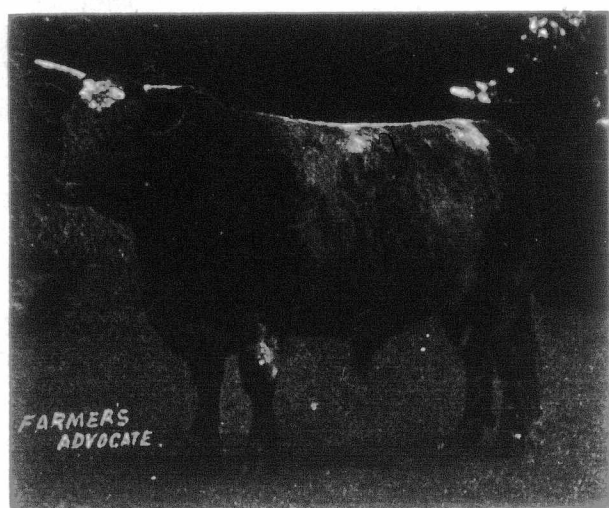


Judging Horses.

To the Editor "Farmer's Advocate":

Sir,—I read an editorial in a late issue of the "Advocate" on "Judges and Judging at Fairs." As your columns are always open for honest discussion on subjects of interest, allow me, in the first place, to say that judges, as a rule, are a much-criticised and, in a majority of cases, not over-paid class of people, no matter how intelligently or honestly they perform their duties. I will try to show you some of the things on which a judge is liable to be sharply criticised. He may go into a ring of, say, Clydesdale stallions, beginning in a section of six or eight entries, a number of which may be of a true type of the most fashionable Clydesdale characteristics. The



BARON ABBOTSFORD 76087.

Two-year-old Shorthorn bull, winner of first prize, Royal Show, Cardiff, 1901. (See Gossip, page 797.)
PROPERTY OF MR. WM. BELL, ALNWICK, NORTHUMBERLAND.

others may be registered Clydesdales, but of another type—larger, coarser, and lacking in action. They may perhaps be as useful or more so for breeding export geldings, but are certainly far easier bought and much cheaper, in some cases probably at not much over one half the cost of the former, which are of finished quality and type. You have to leave out one or the other. Which is it to be? I say, under the present rules and their wording, a judge cannot overlook fancy and quality, thorough soundness in all cases being required. Then comes the other man's kick. You made your award to stuff that cannot begin to breed for export with my horse of coarser stamp. There is a certain amount of logic in that claim, and they also have some backing. Sharp criticism follows, and the poor judge has to take it. There is one suggestion as a remedy. They are all supposed to be Clydesdales, the same as Thoroughbreds are Thoroughbreds, and are judged as such. But I see that at Toronto and other leading fairs Thoroughbreds are judged from a Thoroughbred standpoint, and then they give special prizes to Thoroughbreds most likely to get a certain class of horses, say a large hunter. Why not apply the same rule to the Clydesdales, which would be an educator to the public.

A judge has generally an easier task in judging Shires, as they are generally of more uniform size. Then it is only a matter of picking soundness, quality and action. There is another very annoying class in which the poor judge often gets "fits"—that is the general-purpose class. I have frequently seen come into a ring say eight to twelve of what are entered as general-purpose horses, when there were perhaps only one or two that fitted the class as it is generally understood. The rest may be of more money value, but here again the judge gets censure if he picks those less valuable on the market and leaves the others, although frequently they are fairly suited for an agricultural class. But it seems hard to find a way out of this dilemma unless it can be done by the scales and standard, which would be easier for the judges, but perhaps not for exhibitors. The agricultural classes are about the easiest to judge, as they properly come in between general purpose and heavy draft. A judge has more sea room as regards weight to make his awards. With draft teams there is only one rule—that is to pick thoroughly sound animals, with wearing qualities for the one purpose of heavy work. There is still another grievance a judge has often to hear, which is this, "I will not exhibit if So-and-So is going to be judge," but I will say that such complaints generally come from shoddy horsemen, in some cases only passing through our country towards their home, and they squeal because they cannot bias or bulldoze a judge into giving less worthy stuff prizes. It is invariably the case that the better the exhibits placed before a judge the fewer complaints are heard. No judge is perfect, nor knows it all; therefore, if he gives an honest, intelligent decision, he should be accorded respect and a certain latitude and sympathy in matters of opinion.

Waiting your valuable paper success.

H. C. G. Out.

A. INNES.

STOCK.

Improving the Ayrshire Breed.

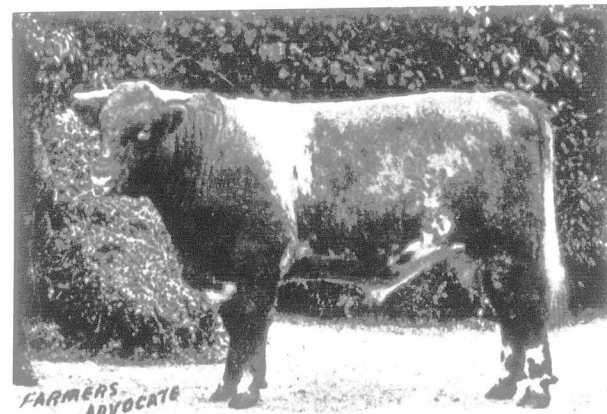
BY ARCHIBALD MACNEILAGE, EDITOR OF "THE SCOTTISH FARMER."

This is an all-important question for Canadian dairy farmers. They have invested largely in Ayrshire cattle, and so far with general advantage to themselves, but they have occasionally "had their fingers burned," and paid big money for animals that were very unlike the man's daughter who "was better than she was bonnie." These particular animals would have been good enough had the Ayrshire not been wanted to yield milk. As ornamental pieces about a farmstead they might pass, but the man who took the risk of bringing them across the Atlantic had little for his pains. How these members of a dairy breed should to so large an extent have lost their dairying properties is a subject that will stand some debate, and it may be useful to ask whether there be anything in the early history of the breed to warrant the supposition that the Ayrshires should be deficient in milk yield? As an answer to this question it is well to remember that Ayrshires are of two kinds—the show type and the commercial type. Those who have been disappointed with their purchases have, as a rule, invested in the show animal: the failures have been amongst the high-priced animals which have been bought not because they had good records as milk-producers, but because they had won prizes. Had enquiry been made about milk-production, little accurate information could have been given, as very few Scotch dairy farmers keep records. In Wigtownshire, where the Ayrshire is seen to good advantage as a commercial animal, the existence of the creameries and purchase of milk by the creamery companies according to quality, has taught dairy farmers something about the butter-fat in the milk of an Ayrshire, but very few have any definite information to give concerning quantity. Another element in the case is the type of animal wanted. A comparison of photographs of the past and immediate present does not convince one that the show bull of the present is as robust and "framy" an animal as his predecessor. Whether he has been altered for the better or the worse during the past 50 or 60 years may legitimately form matter of debate.

The Ayrshire Agricultural Association has during its long career played a most important part in moulding the type of the Scottish dairy breed. There is before us a copy of its premium list for the year 1837, bearing the autograph of Mr. James Murray, Carston, and dated Ayr, 18th January, 1837. The Association is there styled the General Agricultural Association for Ayrshire, and the premiums offered include the prizes for live stock to be held "at the Great Show to take place at Maybole on the 1st day of June, 1837." The cattle classes are for the two breeds of Ayrshires and Galloways, both of which are described as "Dry Stock." In the class for bulls not under three years old, the first prize is eight sovereigns, the second five sovereigns, and the third three sovereigns. For the best two-year-old bull, the first prize is six sovereigns, the second three, and the third two. There are three classes for cows—aged, three-year-olds, and two-year-olds: from which we infer that there is not likely to have then been much encouragement for bringing forward stirks of both sexes in the fashion so familiar at the present time. In these circumstances the famous bulls whose names crop up in early records would not be forced like the youngsters of the present day. One of them, named "Geordie," whose portrait hangs in the Hall of the Highland and Agricultural Society, Edinburgh, appears to have been a more substantial animal than would find favor in show-yards now. He is said to have somewhat resembled the modern Hover-a-Blink in conformation, but was flecked (or red and white) in color. He was gay and masculine-like in appearance, but might have been deficient in depth of rib. He was a favorite breeding bull, in great request in North Ayrshire and the neighboring parishes in Renfrewshire, and gained first prize at the H. & A. S. Show at Inverness in 1839. It required no ordinary pluck to send a bull so far in those days. In 1840, Geordie was second at the Ayrshire show held at Girvan, and eventually passed into the island of Bute. In this part of Scotland some of the best Ayrshires may still be found. They have been kept singularly free from disease, and as a rule are of the larger-framed, good-milking strains. As an indication of the greater robustness and scale of these early bulls, reference may be made to a son of Geordie, known as the "Horny bull," which left a strong impression on the breed. He was used by all the leading breeders in the district of North Ayrshire, and amongst others by Mr. John Reid, Auchengown, Lochwinnoch, who patronized the best bulls the district could afford. The "Horny bull" was of the same color as the well-known Shorthorn champion, "Sign of Riches"—red, with a white mark on his back—and was a very big and heavy bull. Mr. Reid had a stout stirk by him which at six quarters old weighed 28 Ayr-

shire stones—672 lbs. beef. As his name indicates, he had a faulty horn, the fashion being in favor of the gay, upstanding horn, while his was inclined downward. He was a prizewinner locally, and bred good stock in every way, their vessels being correct and the frame and gaiety sufficient to carry them through in good company of any kind. Sons of his are known to have been used in various districts, and in particular one which was used successively in the herds of the Duke of Buccleuch in Dumfriesshire, who bought him from Mr. Bartholomew, Millbank, Lochwinnoch. After a time he came back to Ayrshire, and became the property of one of the great improvers of the breed, Mr. Parker, Broomlands, Irvine. This bull was in color dark red, with a white spot. He lived to a very old age, and bred big, roomy cows, with good vessels and teats, and good milkers. It was in connection with his stock that breeders began to pay great attention to the vessel and teats, and in the end the fancy for having the vessel tight and level and the teats perpendicular, and broad in the point, fostered the desire for small teats which as a rule were better planted. This fancy became a snare to breeders, as all the world knows.

One of the earliest fanciers of the breed—that is, one who made the show-yard a special feature in his breeding—was Mr. T. Paton, Swinlees, Dalry, in North Ayrshire. He liked an animal with great style about the head and horns, and to obtain this is usually credited with having introduced a cross of West Highland or Kyle blood. The Swinlees blood was largely used in the Broomlands herd, and along with the style of head and horn there came the distinctly Highland characteristic of the "clipped lug"—an ear about half as long as it ought to be, and shortened so that it seemed to have been clipped with a pair of scissors. These early sires were almost invariably red or brown in color, and some of them had dark-colored heads. "Tam of Dalrig," a bull bought by Mr. Ivie Campbell, from Mr. Allan, Flackstone, Dalry, about the year 1840, was a dark-colored bull, with white markings, and the dark-colored or almost black head which characterized the descendants of the Swinlees bull got by the Ayrshire of the period out of the West Highland black cow. This Swinlees bull was the sire of Tam, which consequently resembled his sire. Tam was first at Dalry, and other shows in Ayrshire, and in his old age developed a bit of temper. His outstanding characteristic was his size. He had great, branching horns, and left a numerous progeny of both sexes. All the leading bulls of about the years 1840-50 had this style of head and the red color, with black or almost black heads. At the Dumfries show of the Highland and Agricultural Society, held in 1845, three bulls of more than local reputation tried conclusions. The first was owned by Mr. George Lorimer, Rigg, Sanquhar, and was bred by Lawrence Drew (the elder), Carnyle, Tolleross. The dam of this bull was a cow named Medal, which Mr. Drew gave in a present to Mr. Lorimer. She won 13 first prizes, and her son was first at Cumnock and third at Ayr. He was a thick, square bull, with good horns, but deficient about the thighs. The second was known far and wide as Algie's bull. He was black in color, and was owned by Lawrence Drew. In 1846 he was second at the Ayrshire show at



BUTTERCUP'S PRIDE.
Yearling Shorthorn bull.

PROPERTY OF MR. WM. BELL, ALNWICK, NORTHUMBERLAND.

Girvan, being beaten by McGregor's bull, which was brown in color, with white spots. Algie's bull came from Glendrishag, Ballantrae. His chief defect was in formation of head, and he was only moderately successful as a sire. The third good bull at this show was owned by Mr. Hugh Kirkwood, Langmuir, Kilmaurs. He was bred by Mr. Young, Mains, Kilmaurs, who had a superior dairy stock, to which all the show fanciers, including Mr. Parker, Broomlands, were indebted. The colors of these early bulls show clearly that the all-pervading white is a comparatively modern innovation, and is not at all an inherent characteristic of the breed. Prices also ruled high in the years from 1840-50, a

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