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EDITORIAL

FITTING STOCK FOR SHOW.

The preparation of animals for competition in the show-ring, in order to bring out the best that is in them, and to show them to greatest advantage, requires, in most cases, more than a few days' or weeks' work, and special feeding and training. An animal normally of superior individual merit in conformation, quality and type, may fail, in close competition, owing to lack of fitting, to receive from the judge the place in the rating which, with proper preparation, it might reach. And this statement does not necessarily imply unfitness of the judge for his work. Two animals in the same class may be so nearly equal in general characteristics that the better condition and bloom of the one will turn the scale in its favor. Indeed, it often requires more courage than the average judge possesses, in the presence of a crowd of spectators, to place a superior animal, shown in inferior condition, above one that his best judgment assures him is less valuable, though making a better appearance for the time being, owing to extra care in conditioning and fitting for the contest. Some classes of stock, such as beef breeds of cattle and heavy horses, to show to best advantage, require to carry more flesh than animals of the dairy breeds or light-horse classes, but excess of flesh, and especially of fat, may handicap a contestant in the heavier classes if it unbalances his proportions or injuriously affects his limbs and action. And a dairy-bred animal, if shown carrying a surplus of flesh, would probably be discounted as lacking in the ideal qualities and propensities of a typical representative of that class. Swine in preparation for showing may, in these times of predilection for the bacon type, be easily overfed and overfitted for success in the judging ring; and overfat sheep, with too little exercise, are apt to show defective underpinning, which may account for their being turned down by the judge.

Good judgment and careful management in feeding and fitting are essential requisites in the showman. But much, also, depends upon the judgment displayed in the selection of the animals to be fitted for showing. Size is of less importance than approved type and quality. As a rule, an extra large animal is less likely to be well-proportioned and evenly-balanced than a medium-sized one, and less likely to prove a uniformly good breeder. The evidences of a strong constitution, such as full heart-girth and wide chest floor, are important considerations, as also are wide nostrils, a broad forehead, a bright eye, a strong neck, smoothly-fitting shoulderblades, a short, strong back, level quarters, full hams, strong limbs well placed, and with a good quality of bone, and sound feet. In beef cattle smoothness and evenness of flesh, and level lines, count for much; while in dairy breeds, the more wedge-like form, wide and heavy hind quarters and narrower shoulders and withers are preferred, while depth and spring of ribs, and wide, strong loins, and soft-handling skin and hair, are requisites in both classes; while fineness and evenness of fleece are essential in sheep, length and depth of sides and fleshiness of back are important in swine, as are oblique pasterns and true action in horses.

Much may be done towards improving the general appearance of animals by judicious feeding, exercise, trimming and grooming, but the special feeding should commence several months before the show season, and the animals should be brought

into the required condition by a gradual course, care being taken to avoid overfeeding, which may cause indigestion and illness, and render it impossible to bring them up to the desired condition. The food should be of a nutritious yet safe kind, of which oats and bran should form a considerable proportion, while a little oil-cake meal added, especially for cattle and sheep, aids digestion, adds flesh, and tends to maintain healthfulness. Exercise is essential to health and soundness of legs and feet in animals that are being liberally fed, and they should have daily exercise either in a field or paddock, or by being led out for a walk. Housing in hot days for protection from sun and flies is essential to their thriving and to the best condition of skin and hair or fleece, but exercise may be had in the evenings, or the animals, if quiet, may go out on pasture by night to good advantage. Attention should be given to trimming the hoofs occasionally to keep them level and of proper shape, in order that the beast may walk well. Training to lead by the halter, and stand in desirable position, should be practiced months before the shows, and the necessary grooming, washing, and, if need be, blanketing, to secure the desired quality of handling of skin and hair, which counts for so much with the judge, should be attended to in the last weeks. However full-fleshed and however correct in conformation an animal may be, it is liable to suffer in the comparison and placing if from exposure to the sun and flies and drafts the hair or fleece is dry and harsh to the touch, while one less correct in essential points, presented in the pink of condition and fitting may win, and for this reason care in presenting animals in the best possible condition and showing them to the best advantage may make all the difference between winning and losing in the competition.

THE COLLEGE AND THE FARM.

John Corbin, in a recently-published American book, seeks to answer the question, "Which College for the Boy?" He reviews the salient characteristics of half a dozen great universities, but devotes one chapter especially to what he calls "The Farmer's Awakening." He connects the marked improvements in practical farming with the advances made in college agricultural courses. The chief conclusion that can be drawn from this section of his work is that, in the application of scientific methods in farm operations lies the most hopeful field in the whole area of educational work on this continent. Mr. Corbin is optimistic enough to forecast the coming of a time when the realization of the ambition to own a farm will be all but impossible, because the farm will become the most attractive place for the application of the highest grade of intelligence. In Canada we have four outstanding institutions of research and instruction bending their energies in this direction—the Ontario Agricultural College, at Guelph; the Macdonald College, at Ste. Anne de Bellevue, Quebec; the Nova Scotia Agricultural College, at Truro; and the Manitoba Agricultural College, at Winnipeg. These seats of learning work from the top, permeating the mass downward. What is needed to complete our scheme of education is a gradual but fundamental readjustment of the public-school work of the country in the directions that have been very fully indicated through these columns in the past.

That Canada should have imported, during the fiscal year 1908, 621,150 pounds of honey, valued at \$35,405, is not at all creditable to "a land flowing with milk and honey," as Ontario was fain to describe herself after the Chicago World's Fair.

THE AMERICAN SHEEP-IMPORT REGULATIONS.

A new regulation of the United States Department of Agriculture, in regard to the importation of sheep from Canada, came into effect on June 15th, imposing a quarantine of 30 days for all sheep imported from Canada for grazing and breeding purposes, and requiring very exacting and onerous precautions, with a view to preventing the importation of scab-infested ovines into the Republic. One of these conditions is that sheep may not be imported into the United States from a district in which scab has existed within six months preceding the date of importation, unless upon inspection at the port of entry by the U. S. Official they show no signs of infection with scabies or other diseases, and are, moreover, accompanied by a certificate signed by a Canadian official veterinarian stating that they have been twice carefully dipped under his personal supervision, or under the personal supervision of another Canadian official veterinarian, in one of the dips approved by the U. S. Secretary for Agriculture, as described in Regulation 33 of B. A. I., Order 143. That is to say, if a neighbor's flock has scab, a breeder will be compelled to dip twice under Canadian official supervision before his stock are eligible for import into the United States. A breeder residing in a district free from scab, must, on selling to American buyers, be able to produce a certificate from a Canadian official veterinarian stating that the sheep have been inspected and found free from scab, and that no contagious disease affecting sheep has existed in the district in which the animals have been kept for six months preceding the date of importation. At that, they must endure the quarantine and run the gauntlet of American inspection at the port of entry. In brief, the conditions are thirty days' quarantine, two inspections (one Canadian and one American), and, in the case of stock from an infested district, two dippings. In addition to the lime-and-sulphur and tobacco-and-sulphur dips heretofore authorized, the amendment allows the use of approved coal-tar, creosote and cresol dips.

The quarantine will undoubtedly be a blow to Canadian breeders of pure-bred sheep, especially in the Province of Ontario, who have come to look to the United States for a market for their annual crop of breeding stock, particularly rams. To those in close touch with the trade, the action of the American Government is not surprising, as it is to be feared that a number of extensive dealers have played a very loose game in connection with the exporting business. The Branch of the Dominion Veterinary Director-General has been strenuously endeavoring, as far as possible, to search out and stamp out sheep scab throughout Canada. A large majority of the breeders have been thoroughly in sympathy with the regulations of the Department in this regard, and have co-operated with its officers to preserve the health and reputation of Canadian sheep. We believe some of the foremost men are anxious to have compulsory dipping once or twice a year in order to safeguard the American markets for the Canadian breeder, being aware of the carelessness of others who have been apparently doing business for the hour alone, without regard for the consequences certain to arise from diseased stock going over the line.

It is to be hoped the new regulations will serve as an effectual object-lesson, and that, with the more hearty and widespread co-operation of flockmasters, the Health of Animals Branch may be able to adopt such thoroughgoing measures as will cleanse the country of this scourge, and, by demonstrating the healthfulness of our flocks, secure, presently, the rescindment of the onerous conditions which are bound to prove detrimental to a