

\$75.00 to \$85.00 according to age. There seems to be more money in the younger stuff, at least it can be turned more frequently by buying them.

This is the line of cattle farming offering the best prospects today, i.e., handling stockers or young stuff that has hardly even reached that stage yet. It is the end in which the quickest and safest money has been made. With pasture and enough rough feed for winter available there is no better or safer line of agriculture operations in the West today. At the same time one can be gradually growing into breeding stock without any big immediate capital outlay and with much less danger of loss. Of course everybody can't do it but everybody isn't going to do it. Rome was not built in a day and the evolution of cattle operations is not going to be accomplished in a season. Moreover there are still parts of the West where grain farming is more profitable and chances are, will be, for some years at least.

Buying is Big Consideration

It doesn't pay to buy any old stuff for wintering. "Well bought is half sold" is true and it could almost be said "well bought is an insurance against loss." There is no use in following the custom of Friday morning shoppers in department stores and looking for bargains when buying steers. The cheapest stock is often the dearest, consequently there are a few things to be kept in mind when "buying in" the stock. If this stock can be picked up near home either by the farmer or the local drover with satisfaction so much the better. There is a great variation in the "doing" qualities of cattle bought in different parts. The climate and even feed often varies and it takes a good while for some stock to get down to real weight gaining when radical change of location is made. There is of course, a saving of freight hauls and probably a certain amount of commission also, as well as that of a big bill previous to weighing and shrink in shipping.

Buyers at a certain market get the benefit of a larger selection and competition. A more uniform lot as to quality and color can be got. They may come from different parts of the country and there will likely be a considerable difference in their ability to "do" well for awhile. One of the safest assurances of making a profit on stocker or feeder cattle is in getting quality stock to start with. The right kind first and the right price afterwards is pretty safe counsel for most men. The butcher shop is the final resting place of a steer and if he is to get a front place there he has to possess certain characteristics during life time. Steers need to have good conformation first. Fairly short legs, tolerably straight top and underlines, not dropping backs, level not high rough rumps and well let down at the flank will give the first appearance of the right kind of steers. A big deep thick heart girth and lots of bone indicate strength and ability to handle lots of roughage and to stand heavy feeding as well if that is to be carried on. Spring of rib back of the shoulder and good width at the loin as well as width and depth at the quarters and depth at the twist (between the hind legs) are essential in the make up of a steer that will class high on the final market. There are also a lot of other indicators of the right kind of steer like width between the eyes, width of muzzle, prominent clear eyes, and short neck that are invaluable but if the steer has the characteristics outlined above, those just mentioned will be found associated with them. An important point is the skin. A thick coarse heavy skin is not a good sign but it is no worse than a thin papery one. A pliable skin of medium thickness and lots of soft hair are the ideal tho the condition here again depends much on the feed the stock has been getting.

Some Things to Avoid

There are a few things that it will pay to avoid. Get solid colors reds, roans, or blacks, if possible. Don't get them spotted especially black and white. Dairy steers are not good feeders as a class, i.e., they don't put on weight in the right place and they don't sell



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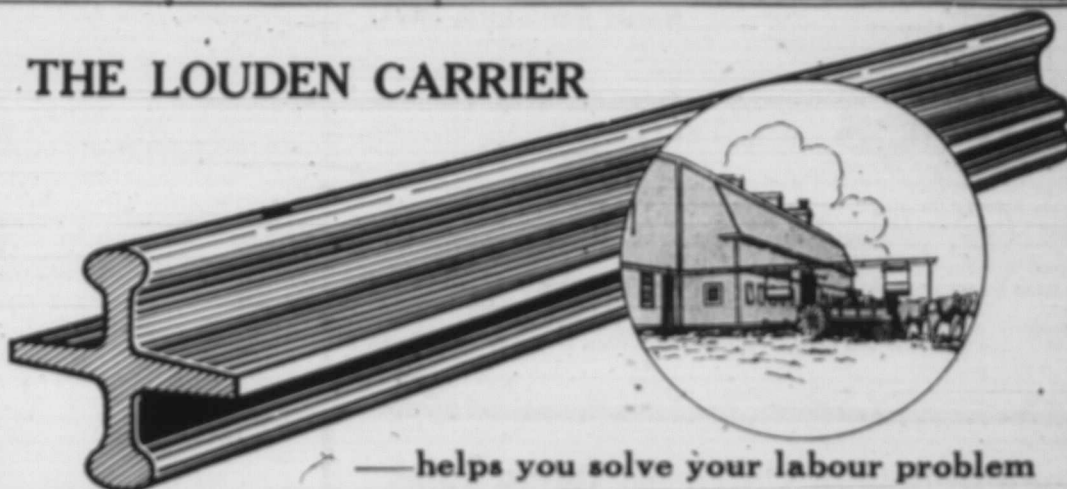
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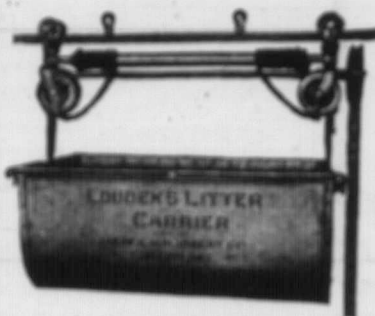
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