

Judging Beef Breeds

By Col. D. McCrae, Guelph, Ont.

The leading breed of beef cattle in Canada is the Shorthorn. It is the great beef breed of the country and the other breeds do not make up—all together—anything like the numbers of this breed. Good judges of Shorthorns are not difficult to get. There are many good judges who



The Queen's Hereford Bull, Dictator, 1st Prize at the Royal Show, 1899.

have made a life study of the breed and its peculiarities. For the other breeds, Galloways, Herefords and Polled Angus, it is more difficult to get good men who have a knowledge of the little things which in the eye of the expert go to make an animal very near perfection. As a consequence Fair managers too often take men who may be good judges of Shorthorns but who know little or nothing of the peculiarities of the other breeds. Only those having ample and accurate knowledge of the breed being judged should take a position as judge.

It may be said that beef production being the ultimate destiny of the beef breeds the one giving the best carcass from a butcher's standpoint should be the animal to get first place. Only to a limited extent is this true. It is well known that butchers do not make good judges in breeding since we want in beef breeds, beef, good beef and plenty of it, spread liberally on the most valuable parts. A carcass may have size and weight and be less valuable than a much smaller one having the valuable parts better fleshed. In a carcass of beef some parts, notably sirloin, rib roasts and steak portions, will bring six times the amount per pound obtained for the least valuable parts. It is, therefore, very necessary to take this into consideration in judging. The wealth of good juicy meat on the most valuable parts should be most carefully considered.

But this is not all. The breeder and feeder wants the most valuable carcass in the least bulk and he wants it made at the least possible cost to the feeder. It may be said to this that it is impossible to judge at what cost the animal has been placed in the show ring and that therefore this can not enter into competition. Let us consider the question carefully. There is no good judge but will feel the hide of the animal before him. This is not for the value of the hide, which may be sold regardless of quality at so much per hundred pounds. Kindly handlers feed

better than others. Every feeder knows this, and, therefore, a good hide is worth much in the show ring. Here come in many valuable points that long years of development have emphasized. In the Galloways good hides are valuable for robes, and the quality, length and appearance of the hair has to be considered. Soft hair wears better in a robe than the long, coarse kind. Wavy hair of a brownish tinge is preferred to very curly jet black coats, not because of the very modern idea of making robes but because it was found out a hundred years ago "that cows whose hair is curled are slow feeders." That was a good reason at the time and holds good still, but the modern judge may know that this point is preferred to another without being at all familiar with the reason that first brought in the fashion. Certain it is that to all these minor points there is a value and they have not been adopted and become familiar in the past without a good and tangible cause. They change just as our habits and preferences change in other things.

In judging the modern type should always have the preference in any of the beef breeds and that adopted and acknowledged by the best breeders in any of the beef breeds should be the type to be placed first by the judge. Those who are ignorant of these things should not be asked by Fair managers to act as judges, and those asked should not accept and act without being able to do the work in a satisfactory manner. Each

breed has its own code of points and these should be adhered to in all cases. Only thus can our Fairs be of value to the general public and have good work done in the judging rings.

Fitting Sheep for Export

By John Jackson, Abingdon, Ont.

This is a very important matter, as there is no animal so well adapted to clean and keep up the fertility of the soil as the sheep. Nor is there any other stock on the farm that will give better returns for the food consumed if properly managed than the sheep. But the man who so over-estimates the possibilities of the sheep as to be content with the culls of some inferior flock, bred to a cull ram picked up at a small price, and then allows them to shift for themselves, picking the roadsides, bare lanes and fallows in summer, with the shelter of a rail fence, and straw stack to pick at in winter, will not be long in realizing the fact that there is no money in this way of handling sheep.

SHEEP DO NOT DETERIORATE IN CANADA.

I am not one of those who believe that sheep, properly managed, will deteriorate in this country. But when the hay and coarse grain are being sold off the farm year after year, without an equivalent return in manure, the farm must deteriorate and become poorer each year, and it's no wonder that the cry of such is that crops don't yield as they did in years gone by. I believe there is no better way of checking this waste of fertility and restoring it to farms already wasted than by raising and fitting sheep for the export trade, and if more were raised that shippers would have less trouble in picking up a load better prices would be obtained.