

CATTLE—THEIR GOOD AND BAD POINTS.

There are few things among Canadian farmers in which there is greater room for improvement than in the quality of their Neat Cattle. In the Gore District, we believe, there are some good Durhams, and some attention is paid to the improvement of Stock: as to other Districts we know but little of them in this particular, but if they are like the Home District they will justify the truth of our first observation. We need never expect to make beef an article of export to Great Britain until we improve the *breed* of our cattle, as well as the modes of fattening and preparing for market. Some farmers may think beef is *beef*, no matter what breed the animal was of, nor how it was fed, so that it was made fat. This is a great mistake; and if they appeal to the taste of an Englishman, they will soon be made aware of it. The following extract, from the American *Agriculturist*, shows what the Americans have found out on this subject:—

“Not a circular do we receive that does not emphatically point out the necessity of packing beef for the English market cut from heavy, well-fed cattle of an improved breed, and as nearly as possible into 8 lb. pieces. Our stock-raisers would gain immensely if they would pay proper attention to these facts.”

The extract which follows is from an article in the London *Veterinarian*, by Mr. Robert Read, V.S. The remarks of this gentleman, who ranks high among able English writers on the subject of Cattle, deserve, as the *Agriculturist* remarks, “to be studied, rather than read.” We hope our readers will derive some information from its perusal:—

The skin or external envelope in the *ruminantia herbivora* is an important feature in developing the disposition of cattle to fatten, and is of much import to the farmer and grazier.

A good skin is known by the familiar name of *touch*—that is, the animal should possess a mellow skin, with resiliency moderately thick, yet loose and yielding to the fingers when gently elevated, and resuming its station with an elastic spring, as if there was underneath a tissue of wool impregnated with oil. The resiliency of good skin in an animal depends on the organization beneath it, and the presence or absence of cellular or adipose tissue. The existence of this membrane constitutes the good handler—its deficiency the reverse.

The pilary or hairy covering should be thick, not coarse; glossy and soft with an inclination to yellow, and in proportion as this exists as a quality or constituent, so is the propensity to make fat; on the other hand, a thinness of hair, and coarseness in fibre denotes an unthrifty animal, more especially if conjoined with a dense firm hide or skin, and with short hair. This implies a bad handler, and is a sure indication of being a slow feeder, with a tardy disposition to increase in volume, either of fat or muscle. It is by the feel of the cutaneous tissue that a judgement is formed as to the state of maturity now, that an opinion be formed of the condition and worth hereafter. The beautiful mossy skin that seems like soft velvet; its peculiar feeling, as if it were stretched over a bed of down when the fingers are applied; and its easy resiliency when traction is made use of; these are the best and surest prognostics as to the future worth of the animal.

Physiologically speaking, a mellow skin arises from a free circulation of the vascular system through the meshwork of the cellular or adipose tissue, or those cells that are destined for the reception of fat. These tissues are considered by some alike synonymous anatomically. They are always in a moist state, from the internal cavity of the cell performing the office of exhalation. Want or supply of interstitial deposit makes a bad or good skin.

The adipose and reticular tissue are extremely vascular, more especially that portion in immediate connexion lying under it. A good and kindly handler has a full development of this material well spread over the superficies of the external frame under the skin. The membranous tissue is a bed for the origin of the absorbents, and the adipose tissue is the depository in which the fat is deposited by the exhalents peculiar to it. These membranes participate in the character of the hide. They are more dense and inelastic, and less expensive. They do not admit of

being so readily dilated by the interstitial deposit, and consequently are longer in acquiring a mature state in the progress of making fat.

A thick and unyielding hide, not succumbing to the internal deposit in the adipose tissue under the skin, is thus continually re-acting by pressure on the absorbents, and in this manner, makes the animal slow in accumulating fat on the external parts of the frame. The difference in the feel between the glossy and coarse-haired animals is dependent on the secretion from the cutis. In the thick skin it is more inspissated, and exfoliates in branny scales. In the mellow and glossy skin it is more oleaginous, which may also be accounted for. It is having a greater freedom for the assimilation of nitrogen—one of the compounds of ammonia—a chemical agent that is abundantly given off from the skin, and uniting with the unctuous exudation of the cutis, gives to the skin that particular spongy feel, so necessary as the index of that organ performing its healthy functions, and may be ranked as a sure symbol of early maturity.

The ears should be of a fair proportion, not overlarge, thin in texture, and capable of free and quick motion. A good ear denotes good quality; a coarse ear, thick and large, is generally associated with much coarseness in the animal. A good ear is nearly almost found in combination with a prominent and being eye, with thin palpebre or eyelids.

This development of eye is most times in unison with a good and clean horn, tending to a very slight red at the radicals or roots. This indicates also a kindly disposition to early maturity. The happy and beaming eye of the healthy animal shows contentment, a very desirable omen as to the quick growth of the animal; while on the contrary, a heavy eye, with a want of vivacity, with thick eyelids, and a too visible conjunctiva or white of the eye, is indicative of an unhappy and restless temper, incompatible with a good and profitable feeder. The eye of contentment, of quietude, and of calm expression of countenance, is alone compatible with that temperament so conducive to accumulation of flesh and fat. These qualities, if derived hereditarily, will be maintained throughout the whole evolution of growth; they are also well-known signs of early disposition to maturity. The hereditary principle should always be borne in mind. The old adage of “like will beget like,” whether applied to the symmetrical law of external form of quality, of temper, (either good or bad,) of constitution or disposition to make either fat or muscle, or to any other cause inherently acquired. Therefore the only method to ensure those qualities which are so essential to the welfare of the farmers, is to commence primumventu with the best and most approved principles that have hitherto been found to ensure a healthy and profitable stock.

I shall now speak of bone, as being the frame-work on which all the materials of the body are built. It should, when examined in the living animal, have the appearance of being fine and small in structure. It then augurs a good quality and being readily disposed to fatten, although it sometimes betrays too great a deficiency of constitution. A bone may be small from a consolidation of its structural parts, yet be capable of sustaining more weight, superincumbently, than bones of a large size, and whose size depends only on the cellular expansion, and not on a cylindrical consolidation. A large bone maintains a coarse-bred animal a dull feeder, with a torpid vascular action, that only tardily irrigates the frame with the living stream. Such animals have a greater disposition to lay on more muscular than fatty substance.

Having concluded my observations on the external structure, relative to the propensity animals have of making fat, I shall now offer a few opinions on the arrangement of the internal organs for that purpose.

The lungs should be large, but not occupying the chest too much posteriorly; the chest capacious and deep anteriorly; these being the organs for preparing the arterial blood that nourishes every part.

I have also remarked from inspection after death of hundreds of animals, that the roots of the lungs did not diminish in size so much as that portion which is in contact with the midriff in the fattening animal: lungs over large are not more productive of fat than those which are of a moderate size. My solution of this fact is, that if the lungs occupy too much of the chest in the posterior part, there is a limitation to the expansion of the rumen or first stomach, and the animal does not enjoy so much lengthened quietude in rumination, a circumstance very essential to the fattening beast. This substantiates what I have before stated. The chest cannot be too deep nor yet too broad in its anterior external conformation; therefore, instead of attributing the full, spreading, wide-ribbed chest,

posteriorly, as instrumental to the lungs, the space for the expansion of the stomach must not be overlooked, a large digestive apparatus being required for all large herbivorous animals. The heart is an important organ in the animal frame. It is rarely found over-large in the fat animal. It is the forcing-pump by which the whole of the body is irrigated through the arterial tubes. If symmetrical organization pervades throughout the animal, the chances are that the vascular action will harmonize over every part, and the deposit of fat will equalize over the whole of the body. On the contrary, an animal with disproportionate parts will have a greater disposition to lay on muscle or fat on these parts respectively that have the greatest share of vascular action.

CANADA FARMER.

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We are much gratified in being able to state, that in the township of Markham, we have already obtained a large number of Subscribers for the *Canada Farmer*; we are the more pleased to state this, because we were told by those who pretended to know from experience, that the people of Markham were not a reading people, and cared nothing about improvement. We thought, at the time, that this was a libel upon them, and are glad to find that we were right. We hope to have the name of every farmer in that beautiful and well cultivated township on our subscription list. With a little exertion, or the part of a few intelligent men, this might easily be accomplished.

One young man, who will please accept our best thanks for the interest he has taken in a *Canadian* enterprise, procured upwards of thirty subscribers in two or three days. Where are the young men in other townships who will follow so good an example? The price of our paper is no obstacle, for the man who cannot afford to pay 7s. 6d., or, if he join with others, one dollar, for a paper coming to him every fortnight, filled with the choicest reading matter upon every subject that concerns him, (except religion, and that we leave to others,) cannot afford to pay anything. If there are any farmers in this latter condition, we are sorry for them, and to show that our sorrow is genuine, we will, if they give us their names, send them a copy one year, for nothing. With regard to the value of such a paper as we intend ours shall be, supposing that our own remarks were utterly worthless, it can hardly be estimated. We heard, the other day, of an instance of the benefit which may be derived from a single paragraph. A farmer called upon the proprietor of one of our weekly newspapers which generally devotes a column to agricultural matter, and told him that in one year he had cleared \$100 through the information he had obtained from one extract in his paper! How much more likely will it be that those who take an *agricultural* paper, established expressly for the purpose of collecting and publishing every thing that can be useful, will derive benefit from it. We shall get as Exchanges, or by purchase, the best papers and publications in the world on this subject, from which, and from Agricultural Books, a good stock of which we have already procured, we shall be able to select every thing that appears suited to our condition. Then, with an extensive and varied correspondence, which we have no doubt we shall obtain, who will say that we shall not be able to make the *Canada Farmer* worth seven times seven and sixpence a year to every man who takes and reads it. Look, for instance, at one subject—the potatoe disease; an almost universal malady, hitherto not satisfactorily explained us to its cause, has seized upon this valuable root. Starvation, and distress of the most horrible kind, have fallen upon our brethren in Europe in consequence. Even here we have severely felt the evil, and may yet feel it worse. How important it is then to collect every fact that can throw any light upon a subject like this? The few statements that float about the newspapers are as often calculated to mislead as any thing else. But if the various

experiments which scientific men are making in every part of the world, in order to penetrate the inscrutable cause of this calamitous disease, or, at least, to find out something that will prevent it, are carefully noted and their results compared; and if the different modes of treatment, which practical farmers have adopted, with the same view, and the success of each be ascertained and given to the public, some conclusions may be drawn that will be of the highest importance, and at any rate, this is the only way in which a solution of the mystery is likely to be obtained, or a certain prevention of the disease discovered. We may observe, *en passant*, that we are collecting all the important facts upon this subject which appear to come from reliable sources, and shall publish them with our own conclusions thereon, in a future number.

We mention the above as one of the cases in which a paper like ours may be of the greatest benefit to the agricultural class, in the pounds shillings and pence view of the matter. But, in another light, the usefulness of such a publication is incalculable. Look at a family of children who have been sent to school until they have learned to “read and write,” and it may be to “cipher” a little, but who have been allowed afterwards to grow up without books, or magazines, or papers of any kind; and look at another family, under the same circumstances, except that the children have had free access to useful books, and the newspapers and periodicals of the day, and mark the difference. The first pass away their time in a state of self-satisfied mental indolence, or if they do exercise any thought, it seldom soars higher than the pleasures of a “ball,” or horse-race, or the low cunning of the bar-room. And is this the summit which the father wishes to see his children attain? Is he quite easy when he knows that they are looked upon as dolt and blockheads, even supposing that they are no worse, while those of his neighbour are considered intelligent, and fitted to act an important and responsible part on the theatre of life? We should think not: we rather believe, that when he makes the comparison, he will regret that he did not place before them, and encourage them to use every available means of improvement. The necessity for a general knowledge of men and things, and of the world at large, by our young men, is every day becoming more urgent. They cannot now settle down alongside of their parents, and profit by their example, and resort to them for advice in every difficulty. In most cases they must go out into the great world, and mingle with its busy crowds. What can they expect if they enter upon this career in a perfectly *green* state, but to find themselves *fed bare* in a very short time.

The *Canada Farmer*, as a Journal for the improvement of the youth of this young country, will be found, we have no doubt, to be unrivalled. It will be free from the chief objections raised against the newspapers of the day for family purposes, because it will be free from the angry jar of party politics: it will deal only in the useful, the interesting, and the instructive. We trust, therefore, it will find friends in every part of the country, who will interest themselves in its behalf. We have been very favourably noticed by the Press throughout the Province, for which we return our thanks. Some of these notices will be found on our last page.

All we now want is the *proper* kind of encouragement from the public. Who are for us? We trust we shall meet with but few such instances of public spirit and patriotism as a certain Member of Parliament in the West has just displayed: he very politely returned us the first number of our paper, apparently without opening it! Why, the honorable gentleman, if he had looked into it, would have seen that we intended to give it to him. If he was above reading it himself, he might have given it to his servant-man.

More tea is annually consumed in Great Britain than by all the nations of the earth together, except the Chinese themselves.