

FARMING

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Exhibiting and Judging Live Stock

Now that the smoke of the battle has cleared away and the strife in the show ring for 1899 is over, it may be well to enter into the retrospective a little and find out just where we are at. The contests in nearly all classes of live stock at this year's shows have been very keenly contested, more so than for several years back, especially in the cattle, sheep, and swine classes. So much so has this been the case that the most despicable practices have been resorted to, in a couple of instances, in order to gain favor in the prize ring. And, indeed, we may well ask: "Where are we at?"

The contemptible action of the manager of the Miller & Sibley herd, and apparently of those in charge of the herd of a prominent Canadian breeder, in forcing back the milk into the udders of their Jersey cows before taking them before the judges at the Toronto Fair cannot be too strongly condemned. When exhibitors at any show resort to such practices they should be prohibited from ever entering a show ring—at least until they have learned that honesty in the show ring is just as necessary and is as much looked for as in any business transaction.

The action of the Industrial Fair Board, as reported in last week's FARMING, in withholding the prize money won by the Miller & Sibley herd and in restraining them from exhibiting at the Industrial Fair for one year, will be generally commended. But what seems strange is that no punishment has been meted out to the other breeder implicated. Those responsible for the action referred to in this case were either innocent or guilty. If the latter, why was not the same punishment meted out to the Canadian firm as to the American firm, whose manager admitted the wrong-doing? If the Canadian breeder was totally innocent of the charge made against him it is only fair to himself and to the public that the fact should be made known.

It is somewhat strange how this affair is developing. In a letter to the president of the Industrial Fair Association made public last week Messrs. Miller & Sibley state that they were greatly shocked on learning that one of their employees had resorted to the practice already referred to, and would forego all prize money, honors and success unless they were justly entitled to them. While we have no desire to question their sincerity in this matter, yet it seems strange that they should have as the manager of their large and valuable herd a person who would stoop to such methods. Their manager is not a novice in the business of managing a Jersey herd, and it is hardly reasonable to suppose that his visit to the Industrial Fair a few weeks ago was the first time when milk had been forced back into the udders of their cows before taking them into the show ring.

This particular instance, to which we have referred at some length, however, suggests a thought that it might be well to consider for a moment. Just how far an exhibitor should go in fitting and fixing his animals for the show ring and how far the judges should be governed by such preparation in awarding prizes is open to question. Is an exhibitor who has a superior animal constitutionally speaking to be put down in the prize list because another animal inferior in other ways, but specially fitted for the show, takes the eye of the judge and is placed first? Every one will

admit that a certain amount of fitting is necessary not only for the show ring but in order to make an attractive exhibit for visitors, but how far its influence should extend in awarding the prizes is another matter. Certain it is that a well-fitted animal looking sleek and nice, and not a hair turned the wrong way, will take the eye of the judge and unless it has some very glaring defect otherwise will not be passed over carelessly by him.

While we believe that a certain amount of fitting up is necessary, still we are somewhat inclined to the view that of late years there has been a little too much fitting and fixing for the judge's eye rather than for the visitor to the Fair. In this we do not think the exhibitor is so much to blame as the judges. If the judges are in any way influenced in making the awards by the finish, or way an animal is fitted for the show, it is quite natural for the exhibitor to cater to this influence, and to strain every point in order to have his animals make a distinct impression upon the judge. While there may be no great objection to this so long as legitimate and fair methods are adopted, yet there is always the temptation to go a little too far along this line. Besides, there is a possibility of an injustice being done to the exhibitor of a superior animal, who may not have the taste or the means at his disposal to fit his animals as the others do. In other words, it may tend to shut out all but the professional exhibitor from the show ring, and to make it very difficult for the ordinary farmer, who becomes possessed of some high-class stock, to get a first place in the prize list.

The Apple Trade

By Major James Sheppard, Queenston, Ont.

Having had forty years' experience as an apple grower and twenty-four years' practical knowledge of the packing and handling of the fruit, I have naturally taken much interest in the discussion that has taken place in Parliament and in the press lately concerning the export apple trade. From Prof. Robertson's evidence before the select committee on the subject it is clear that a great part of the trouble in the export trade arises from bad handling. If one will observe the way in which apples are handled in many cases by the railway and steamship companies, we might well wonder that they came through as well as they do. On that part of the subject, however, I cannot speak from experience. Prof. Robertson says the great trouble arises from lack of skill, lack of care and lack of honesty in packing. Every experienced dealer will admit that this is true, and I shall briefly note my observations under these headings.

First—lack of care—as to which farmers and packers are both to blame. Farmers do not take care of their trees, do not trim, do not manure, do not spray, in fact, outside of a few districts, they look on the apples as a sort of side crop, that may or may not yield something and consequently take no interest in the orchard. The result is that in poor years, when prices are good, they have no apples, and when there is a crop their sample is so poor that the dealers come and run over the fruit and reject two-thirds of it. In many cases the picking is carelessly done; boys are set to pick, often with a bag slung over the back, and the fruit is turned out into barrels or in a pile. The farmer will scold