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EDITORIAL.

The Ups and Downs of Breeds.

Observation extending over a considerable period of time has revealed the fact that the different breeds and classes of live stock have each had their times of prosperity and depression—when prices have soared to fabulous heights, then gradually dropped into gloomy depths, to languish for a longer or shorter period, and then come again into more general favor. This "see-sawing" has sometimes been due to the whims of Dame Fashion, or the wild worship of a family fetish; sometimes to the enthusiasm and forcefulness of one or more wealthy or enterprising breeders in placing before the public the merits or claims of the breed they favor and pushing it to the front; sometimes to a change in the demands of the market, as to class and quality of products. But there is scarcely a breed among the many bidding for public favor that has not experienced the ebb and flow or the ups and downs of demand and of values in the market for breeding stock. The very fact of these periodical fluctuations may be taken as fairly reliable evidence that no class or breed has indisputable claims to the title of best, and that all, or nearly all, have valuable characteristics or qualities that render them worthy of a place and of preservation.

In the field of horse-breeding there is room and a place for both the heavy and the lighter classes, the latter for light work and fast travelling, the former for heavy draft, requiring less rapid movement, but greater strength. Then the different breeds embraced in these classes are more or less suited to the wants of buyers and users, according to their needs, the nature of the soil they have to do with, the distance from markets, and the tastes or preferences of the men who breed or buy and use them. The demand for a certain breed of light or heavy stock in a district, generally, or for the time being, also influences the breeding and raising of that class, for fashions change in the demand for these, and market values change with the prevailing fashion. These intermittent changes have, perhaps, been most marked and noticeable in the realm of cattle-breeding for meat and milk production, no single breed having held the field of favor constantly or continuously, and all having had their periods of unusual demand and fancy prices, and of neglect and depression of values. At the same time, the dealers who buy and ship, and the butchers and purveyors who kill and cut up the beef breeds standing highest in public favor for the time being, and also those less fortunate in that regard, do not always agree that the former have the advantage as profitable carcasses from their standpoint, nor do feeders all agree that animals of the popular breed of the day, or their grades, are the most profitable for their purpose, while many butchers and feeders pin their faith to breeds that are not in the swim of popularity. For these reasons, and others that may occur to him, the breeder who has espoused a certain breed that suits his fancy, and has had its day of prosperity, need not lose heart or become discouraged because for a time the popular demand is not for his, and fickle fortune, in one of her many moods, is favoring some other. The sensible thing for him to do at such times is to weed out his worst animals, feeding them for beef or disposing of them as best he can, retaining only the best, and improving the character and quality of his herd so as to increase its usefulness and attractiveness, and be ready to take advantage of a turn of the tide when it takes place. And a time of depression is often a

favorable time for the breeder to buy a good sire or a female or two for the foundation of a worthy family, as at such times, prices being low, the necessary outlay may be comparatively little more than he has received for his culls. The mistake is frequently made of selling off too closely, or of delaying to purchase in a dull time or in the early days of a rebound, waiting until the returning tide has reached its highest plane, then rushing into buying, and when a decline in the market comes, selling for lower prices than were paid.

These statements apply equally to breeding and buying other classes of stock as well as the beef breeds of cattle. The dairy breeds have each in turn had their days of sunshine and of shadow, and no one can authoritatively claim that the breed he ties to is the best. Dairymen and others differ widely in their opinions as to which has the strongest claim to favor. There are inferior and superior producing cows in each and all of the breeds, and preference is largely a question of predilection, of environment, of contiguity to a general or a special market, whether it be for cream or for the manufacture of butter or of cheese, for which latter the cow coming nearest to the dual-purpose standard may be considered by some the most profitable. The point we wish to make is, that, in breeding and managing a herd of any breed, a man may not be discouraged if for a time his breed is not in the lead in public favor. With all breeds and at all times the process of testing and of weeding out the inferior workers should be carefully prosecuted, but especially in times of dullness or lack of active demand. And the best of any of the breeds will prove profitable even in the darkest days of depression. Breeders of various breeds of sheep, swine and poultry have also experienced these ups and downs in demand, but those who have staid with the breeds they prefer, and have bred and managed them intelligently, conforming more nearly to the quality of flesh or fleece demanded by the best markets of the time, have found a steady demand at paying prices, even in dull days, and have had a fair share of prosperous years, owing to a turn in the trend of the markets or an unusual call for animals of their breed from some particular district or country, to be bred in their purity or used for crossing or grading purposes for the production of a specific product for the time being in demand and bringing unusually good prices.

At two recent sales of Shorthorn cattle 100 head sold at an average of \$251.25 each, the animals at the Platt sale, including a dozen calves under six months averaging \$426.61, and the Attrill sale \$226; while at the Hunter sale of Ayrshires, 47 animals averaged about \$200 each, including calves, or counting ten calves under four months old with their dams, an average of over \$270. Both for beef and dairy production the worth of pure blood is becoming more and more generally recognized. It is evident from these facts that the long-continued and strenuous teaching of the "Farmer's Advocate" has made its impress upon the agricultural thought of Canada, bearing a rich harvest of results.

One of the journalists of the daily press who sat through all the sessions of the recent Tariff Commission sitting at London, Ont., stated that of all the men who appeared before that body, none were able to present their case with the clearness and vigor of the farmers, who also displayed the most intelligent grasp of the trade question and the economic conditions of the country. "If you want an intelligent, well-reasoned statement of a proposition," said he, "you had better call in a farmer to make it."

The Fruit-growers and the Tariff.

Following the discussion on the tariff at the Ontario Fruit-growers' convention, Nov. 14th to 17th, an impromptu resolution was passed, and was printed next day in the daily press. It was felt, however, that it hardly voiced the opinion of the meeting, and was subsequently reconstructed in committee. After wrestling with it for some time, they drew up the following clauses, to be submitted to the Tariff Commission:

"We, the committee appointed by the Ontario Fruit-growers' Association, in convention assembled, would respectfully urge upon the Tariff Commission that it would not be in the interests of the fruit-growers of the country if any reduction should be made in the duties on fruits coming into this country from foreign ports; that while the fruit-growers do not ask for an increase in the tariff upon imported fruits, they would request that, wherever possible, specific should be substituted for ad valorem duties;

"That this Association believes it desirable and in the interests of the fruit industry and the general public of this country that the Tariff Commission should recommend a reduction in the duty on refined sugar imported from foreign countries."

We understand that, with the exception of one man, the committee were prepared to express the opinion that the duties on fruit were of little or no benefit to the fruit-growers, but in deference to him, that view was not put forth. A very strong plea was made for free sugar, and one man who spoke to this point referred to the advantages that would accrue if the duties were lowered on glass and porcelain jars to contain fruit. The way in which the matter of free sugar has taken hold of the fruit-growers makes it certain that it will be a rallying cry in the future.

Shall Toronto Become the Mecca?

The slim attendance at the Horticultural Exhibition and Honey Show, in Massey Hall, Toronto, November 14th to 18th, resulting in a heavy deficit, may raise the question whether it is advisable from a purely financial standpoint to continue holding the show in a city that patronizes it so sparingly.

The question deserves the more careful consideration since it seems taken for granted by the rank and file of two organizations interested, viz., the Ontario Fruit-growers' and Ontario Beekeepers' Associations, that the holding of the show is the most opportune occasion for their annual conventions. Besides these business congresses, the Ontario Vegetable-growers' Association held a two-day meeting this year, and a new Provincial body known as the Ontario Horticultural Association, representing the florists, was organized, electing as secretary Mr. H. B. Cowan, of Toronto, who already acts in a similar capacity for the Vegetable-growers, and for the horticultural exhibition, which, as explained last issue in the report of the show, is supported by the first three as well as several local organizations.

Is this centralizing of all these important meetings in Toronto a good thing? Is it fair to other cities and other localities? Is it advisable to establish the show, with its accessory conventions, as a permanent institution in the one place? An exhibition of this kind does not require very special accommodation. Other cities in the Province could house it suitably, and they could scarcely be less generous in attendance. Toronto enjoys many advantages as capital of the Province. Why should it be entitled to monopolize this show which is directly and indirectly supported by Provincial funds?

At the Fruit-growers' convention a feeling prevailed that it was necessary to increase the at-