

When, therefore, such have to be forthcoming from a certain division, mistakes cannot fail to be made in the selection, nor are the representatives of the council to blame.

Second. The method now practiced places the members of the council in an unpleasant position. It lays them open to the charge of favoritism and wire-pulling. To practice this under the present arrangement would be easily possible. And it must be conceded that there is a strong temptation in this direction. An officious man may say to a representative, I would like to go to the next Provincial Exhibition. Just give me a chance to act as judge in some department, and you are sure of my support at your next election. We take it for granted that the members of the council have too much of manhood about them to listen to such a proposal save with becoming indignation. Yet the present arrangement renders them liable to be thus assailed, which is far from pleasant.

While we cannot look for judges under any circumstances to give entire satisfaction before the advent of the millennial age, it is the bounden duty of every organized body governing the management of an exhibition to leave no stone unturned to secure fair and impartial judgment. One mistake may mean loss to the amount of hundreds of dollars to some of the exhibitors, as in the giving of a sweepstakes on a stallion or a pure-bred bull, and may tend at the same time to falsely educate the onlooking community.

We do not know that the awards at the Provincial have given more dissatisfaction than at any of the other exhibitions, but in instances not a few it has been transparently clear that the judges were not masters of the position. An exhibitor once said to a fellow-exhibitor whom he was desirous of assisting, "I should have held your sheep, and they would have taken the red." On another occasion the judges of Shropshire sheep in their innocence commenced their work amid the Southdowns. Their tickets put them right.

Other instances might be cited in the same strain but we forbear.

It may seem unkind to take exception to any system without suggesting a better. On the principle that it is always easier to pull down than to build up, we are not quite certain that we can, but we apprehend that selecting judges through committees should work better. The members of the board who have a love for horses are best fitted to select the judges on these, and so through each of the departments.

We trust that the council may see fit to consider the suggestion that we have thus ventured to throw out, and place it in the balances of deliberation. We cannot but think they would like to be freed from the possibility of being pestered by officious and incapable men who are seeking appointment as judges, and we confidently hope that the association will receive our criticism in the friendly spirit in which it is given.

The Outlook for Live-Stock.

The stringency of the times is having some influence on the prices obtained for live stock, not only in beef but also in the breeding lines. This is particularly noticeable at sales where the prices paid are not only somewhat lower, but there is a tardiness in the bidding which betokens scarcity of money, and a feeling of suspicion regarding the course that things may take in the future.

That the prices paid for breeding stock are on the whole somewhat reduced is not to us very serious matter of regret, as fancy prices cannot be paid by the average farmer, and this partial lowering of the averages obtained will bring breeding stock more within the reach of this class. That fancy prices will still be

paid for animals of extraordinary merit none can doubt; nor is it desirable to have it otherwise, as the men who shape the moulds in which the most desirable types of live-stock are cast must have this class of material to work with, and usually they can afford thus to pay for it. On the principle that skilled labor of the most valuable class should be well paid, and that men who stand upon the Andes of their respective professions should be fittingly remunerated, it is meet that animals of rarest merit should bring prices far above the average. But when the averages of animals, more especially of those intended for sires to be used in lifting up the common types of the country to a higher level, become so high that they are beyond the reach of the common purse, though it may prove a gain to some, the number is limited. To the many it is a misfortune.

To say what the ordinary price of a good pure-bred animal should be is impossible; and to attempt to fix a buying and a selling rate would be absurd, owing to the difference in the intrinsic value of different beasts of the same breed, and even of the same herd. It is easier to say what one possessing a large herd or flock of common beasts can afford to pay. If the use of a good male increase the value of each individual of the progeny but two dollars, say in the cattle line, there is no difficulty in showing the ordinary farmer that he can afford to pay \$100 for a one-year pure-bred bull on the supposition that he receives but an ordinary share of patronage from his neighbors, or indeed even without this. Allow out \$25 per annum from this latter source, and that 10 head are raised annually, and the case will stand thus at the end of three years, when a change must be made: \$60 the gain in value on 30 head of cattle + \$75 for service = \$135; less \$100 first cost of beast + \$18 interest on outlay = \$12 gain. The price realized for the bull should pay for his keep. But to say that \$2 per head will represent the gain is putting it very mildly, as in all probability \$5 will be quite under the mark. Not long since it was our privilege to hear the representative of Prescott Co. in the Ontario Legislature refuse \$60 per head for grade cows in a neighborhood where these readily sell for \$25. The owners of common stock do not believe what we are saying or they would not defer commencing the improvement of their stock, and yet we will freely open our columns to any one who will show that it is untrue.

While we must admit that butcher's meat has fallen in price, it has not fallen in proportion with other products. A few years ago wheat averaged from \$1 to \$1.25 per bushel, and now it averages from 70c. to 80c. per bushel. Most other kinds of grain have fallen proportionately, while beef has not fallen more than 20 per cent. That meat should maintain its price when all other products of the farm were at a discount is not to be desired. It would be an anomalous state of things which could not fail to work mischief, as then without a doubt a time would come when we would have too much meat. Every stockman should be satisfied if the drop in the price of meat is less proportionately than that in other farm products, and thus it has been up to the present. That the price of meat will maintain this vantage ground for the stockmen for a long time to come we fully believe, as meat is a staple, and with the developing of our cities and towns the demand for it is likely to increase in a more marked ratio than the supply. It should be borne in mind by all producers of stock that when the price is lower, it is of the utmost importance to produce what is prime in quality. It is at such times that inferior meat will be sold at a loss, while the prime article always brings a fair price,

Dairy products have fallen considerably, but it should not be forgotten that up till this season the prices have for some years been—we had almost said—abnormally high, which makes the present drop appear somewhat greater than it really is. If the returns of the dairyman at the close of the season be compared with those in other lines of farming, the dairyman will still have occasion to feel proud of his position. If in her season of agricultural distress Britain is urging upon her farmers to become dairymen, as a means of relief, our dairymen surely cannot go astray if they stick to the ship.

But is there no danger that the market for pure-bred sires shall be overstocked? We answer, not in this generation nor probably in the next. During a tour recently made in the easterly counties of Ontario we were pained, not so much at the inferior character of the live-stock as at the apparent apathy of the owners in regard to its improvement. The march of improvement, slow at the best, is still further hindered by the constant pleadings of one of the most extensively circulated agricultural papers in Ontario in behalf of scrub stock, a fact to be deplored by every Canadian who desires the advancement of his country. The counties above referred to are not a whit behind many others in the Province, so that for long years there will be a demand for good sires at fairly remunerative prices—for poor ones there should be no demand at any time.

Stockmen, therefore, have no cause for misgivings as to the future, for so long as "stock-raising is the right arm of agriculture," it must be the last of the industries to fail.

Railway Rates.

The Fair season once more brings before the farmers' notice the unconscionable charges to which he is subjected for the movement of live-stock from one point to another in the Province. He knows that he can bring a colossal stove or half a ton of barreled salt, or any other heavy merchandise for very little money from Montreal to the centre or end of the western peninsula; but if he has a yearling bull which, owing to judicious advertisement of his stock he has a chance to send sixty or a hundred miles to somebody desirous of improving his herd, he has to pay a large slice of the bull to get him there. If he wants to exhibit at the Provincial Fair he is amazed at what the station-master tells him it will cost to transfer the object of his affectionate pride to the show-ground. If he desires to participate in the benefits of the large annual sale of Shorthorns at Toronto, he hesitates on being informed of the rate he will be charged. If the local butcher offers him only four cents a pound for three or four likely steers, he defiantly says he will rather send them to the Toronto market than take such an offer. The butcher smiles; for the knight of the cleaver knows that it will cost the farmer the same to send four head of steers to Toronto that the drover pays for eighteen. In other words, though the railways encourage through traffic and wholesale dealings, their extortion is simply prohibitive of the small interchange of commodities which is the very life of agricultural pursuits. Their cars are all—stupidly enough—of one size, and no provision is made for retail dealers in one of the chief staple articles of trade. One small Jersey cow travels down from Hamilton to Toronto in a gigantic receptacle, capable of holding thirty; and nothing else is put in the car. This the ostrich-like officials regard as a justification of a monstrous charge, forgetful of the fact that this car, if fitted with movable partitions, could hold merchandise of any kind besides the one