

Maisemore, while the cow, Tulip of Standen won her class unchallenged, an ideal cow of shapely outline and massive with it all.

The sheep classes saw a number of new exhibitors make history so far as their flocks are concerned and this pushing round of honors will be helpful to stockholders when the war is over.

At Northamptonshire County Show, E. S. Godsell, the Gloucestershire lover of the dual-purpose Shorthorn won the lion's share of leading awards with animals of that type. J. J. Cridlan scooped the pool in Aberdeen-Angus cattle, where in the Duke of Grafton was among the prize-winners. Cridlan won championship on his young bull Errant Knight of Wicken. In Shires the Edgecote Shorthorn Company Limited won mare championship with Chirkehill Forest Queen. A local tenant farmer won five first prizes in farm horses. Sir Humphrey de Trafford was the most successful pig exhibitor.

The highest price ever paid for a Jersey bull sold at auction was the 475 guineas given by T. Carson for the yearling Pro-Consul sold at Tring Park on the occasion of the dispersal of the herd owned by the late Lord Rothschild. Heifers sold up to 81 guineas. The general average was £43, a high figure for Jerseys in Britain. All the Rothschild milking Shorthorns are coming into the market. So are the Shires. What a pity the ports of the world are shut to us at the moment.

Prices of fat cattle are mounting higher and higher, living all round is dearer. We are in as I said once before, for a warm time of it. Surrey, Eng. G. T. BURROWS.

### Selecting Stockers and Feeders.

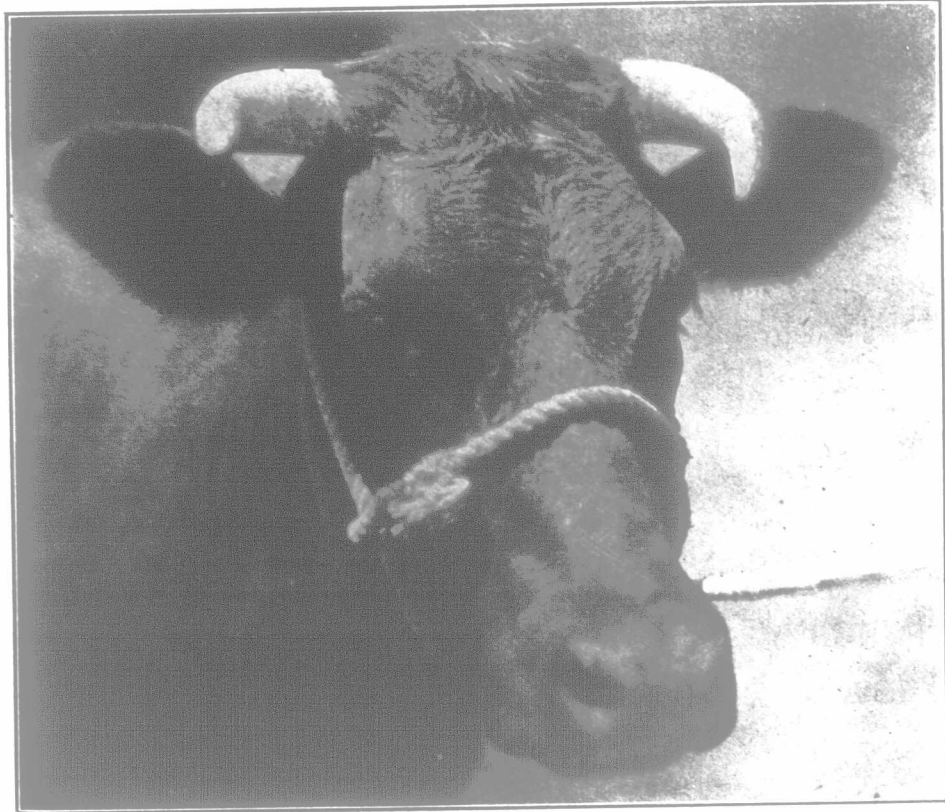
If there is a barnyard fowl there is a class of bovines which may well be known as barnyard cattle; needless to say such stock are not economical feeders, neither do they produce the kind that lay on the most profitable gains. There is an art in breeding good stock; skill is required to finish it, but the man who "picks up" feeders from now until September with which to fill his runs must combine the judgment, shrewdness and skill of breeder, feeder and dealer. Fat cattle will be marketed, and stockers and feeders must be put on to the grass. Many farmers are ready to sell during the summer months, and the feeder of steers is ready to buy. The trouble nowadays is to evade this undesirable class of barnyard cattle, and select a bunch of steers that give evidence of good breeding and have capacity and constitution.

When feeder cattle must be bought, fed and sold on a narrow margin the financial gain is often small. In former years 2½ to 3 cents per pound difference existed between the feeder and the finished bullock. If the animal increased in weight from 1,200 to 1,400 pounds, the 1,200 pounds purchased increased in value to the extent of \$2.50 or \$3.00 per hundred. There were two sources of profit: one, the actual gain in weight when it realized more than its cost to produce it and, second, the "spread" or increase in the pound-value of the animal. For instance, a 1,200-pound steer could have been bought for \$4.50 per hundred and sold when finished to 1,400 pounds for \$6.50 per hundred. If the 200 pounds of gain actually cost \$13.00 to produce, which they probably would, there was still the \$24.00 profit as result of the spread. Conditions now are vastly different. The spread as indicated by market reports varies from 50 cents per hundred to \$1.25. Last year at this season stockers of a common kind were selling for \$6.25 to \$7.10, while common steers sold up to \$7.50. Last week's market report in this paper showed butcher steers to be selling at \$8.15 to \$8.40 and \$8.50 at Toronto. Assuming that last year's stocker bought at \$6.75 to \$7.10 came back on the market during the first part of June this year it would probably get into the class which sold for not more than \$8.00 to \$8.25. Here then would be a spread of \$1.00 to \$1.25 per hundred, which on a steer weighing 800 to 900 pounds at the beginning of the feeding period does not amount to much. In many cases market reports indicate that it is even much less than that previously stated.

Finances, too, are not easily regulated. If a stockman has \$1,000 of a bank account he can operate his feeding enterprise fairly successfully, but short-time loans are not generally useful. It requires from ten to twelve months in most cases to make the turn-over, and during the last decade it has not been easy for farmers to procure money for that length of time through the banks. It is asserted that money advanced by the banks must be in a more liquid form than year loans. Consequently operations are carried on more modestly than feed and grass often warrant. Owing to the interest rate, less spread and higher values for feed, the stockman who buys his steers and heifers does not have as profit-

able a business as formerly, yet more money is required to finance it because of higher values. Conditions corroborating the findings of scientific investigation lead most breeders to finish their stock at a much younger age than has been the practice, and where the breeder is the feeder the tendency is towards baby beef. Withal, unfailing judgment must be exercised in "picking up" steers to handle the summer's grass and go into the runs or stable next winter.

As a general thing the cheap stocker and feeder will sell for 1 cent per pound less than the higher-priced animal when both are finished. When grass-fed cattle are on the market the difference is even greater. Thus less money is tied up in the cheap feeder, but in the end the profit on the



A Desirable Expression for a Beef Animal.

transaction is not so great. There is usually a color or a mark that brands the bullock of the cheaper class as of the dairy breeds. Sometimes no breed characteristics can be discovered for sure. This is usually the poor kind or the barnyard bovine. The head is a pretty good indicator of what the animal is. The broad muzzle, the broad forehead and the short face are indicators of capacity, constitution and compactness. The reverse of these characters indicate a small heart girth, lack of capacity for feed or, in other words, a "mincer" and ranginess throughout. The latter kind, under present conditions of labor, feed and markets, will lose money for the owner. When buying steers to feed such should be left with the man who raised them. The upstanding, narrow-backed steer is not the kind to buy, nor is it the kind to raise. Fill up the runs with the thick-set kind that have an expression of contentment about them, and the grain and roughage they consume will be sold at the best price.

Any of the beef breeds will give rise to good feeding steers, but the cross is often looked upon with favor. Whatever the sire may be the dam is usually a Shorthorn. Being good milkers such cows raise good calves. A Hereford bull will usually sire a steer with markings resembling those of the sire's breed. The steers are good feeders and good doers. The get of an Aberdeen-Angus bull mated with a Shorthorn is usually black. They finish at an early age and make excellent beef. Elsewhere in these columns may be seen a group of steers, the outcome of such a cross. While the crossing of different breeds is detrimental to the live-stock industry, the first cross often gives rise to an excellent thriving steer, and where the buyer locates these crosses he usually remains until a bargain is made.

There are several systems of procuring feeding steers and stockers. Some of the most successful feeders have been men who knew the country for a radius of 10 to 20 miles around, and also knew what kind of stock was kept by each farmer. A few days on the road would be sufficient to gather together a select bunch of steers, each one to the buyer's liking. Many of such feeders now claim that dairying is making such inroads upon the live-stock industry that it becomes more difficult each year to collect a satisfactory bunch of steers. Furthermore, the breeder who raises good stock often finishes his animals at home, thus saving for himself any profits that might accrue to the professional steer feeder.

Another system of procuring stockers and feeders is to buy them from a drover or dealer who makes a business of buying and selling cattle. This way has an advantage in that the dealer or

"scalper," as he is sometimes called, knows the stock well throughout the country, can buy cheaper than the man who only wants 12 or 15 select steers, and can sell them in lots assorted according to size and quality. When buying from such a dealer the stockman can often get what he wants in a very short time.

Still another method of stocking up is to buy on the open market. This is usually done through a commission merchant, for such an agent can watch the run and sometimes buy when the receipts are large and stock is at the mercy of the buyer. Many feeding cattle are purchased in this way, but we are obliged to state that the most uniform lots of steers, the best type and the best doers that we have seen have been "picked up" by the feeder himself throughout the country in which he lives. This statement must be modified, however, to be applicable to all communities. If a feeder resides in a dairy district where the right kind of steers to feed are scarce then the open market is probably the most satisfactory place to buy, but a steer feeding never assumes large proportions in such localities.

The whole matter of successful steer feeding hinges upon the feeder or stockman himself knowing the type to select and buy. With the small margins of profit which now exist, intelligence and good judgment are necessary equipment on the part of the feeder. The tendency is now for the feeder to produce more of his

### Aberdeen-Angus Plus Shorthorn Equals Baby Beef.

Every man has his method. Some methods are good and profitable; others are bad and costly. As a general thing "The Farmer's Advocate" advises against cross breeding, and rightly, but a few days ago we visited a farm where cross breeding is being practiced, and we were bound to conclude that the method, as practiced, was a success, and yet we would not advise the rank and file of our farmer stock breeders to try it. Why? Because it would mean failure. J. B. Thomson, whose horse mangers and silo are described in this issue makes baby beef on a plan which is turning him in dollars—not as many perhaps as would straight dairy farming, but when net returns and labor are reckoned we are not so sure but that the baby beef would give the milk business a close run for the honors. In a stall stands a big, smooth, even-fleshed, pure-bred Aberdeen-Angus bull. In the pasture grazes a herd of big, strong, deep-milking, high-grade Shorthorn cows. In the loose boxes are to be found as fine a lot of young black polled calves, fat and sleek, as feeder could wish to gaze upon. And in the yard on the day of our visit were finished baby beef steers and heifers—sold to the drover—and ready for the block, prime, tender, juicy beef. The calves and the baby heaves were sons and daughters of the Angus bull and the Shorthorn cows, and worthy sons and daughters they were. The cross as practiced on the farm seems to be an advisable one for the purpose. The cattle sold would average about 15 months of age (some older, some much younger) and their average weight was around 900 lbs. each, which this year was worth \$8.25 per cwt. The calves are finished and sold at the earliest possible age. They suck the cows during the lactation period, and, besides, get chop composed of mixed grains as soon as they are old enough to eat it. January calves, at the time of our visit, were getting two pounds of meal per day. Up to six or seven pounds of

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