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EDITORIAL.

Fixing the Type.

In breeding live stock for any purpose successfully, the special purpose must first be definitely fixed in the mind of the breeder, who must have an ideal there to which he aims to attain, and which must be constantly kept in view, just as the artist studies his model, and every movement he makes in the line of his ideal is to copy the model as nearly to the life as he can with the materials available. First of all, the special purpose for which the animal is mainly intended, whether for production of meat, milk, wool, or work, must be considered; and the next consideration is the best type for that special purpose in conformation and general characteristics. At the foundation, or as the foundation of all, there must be a strong and robust constitution, which is indicated by a broad chest, sufficient thickness through the heart, depth of foreribs, and width between the fore legs, giving ample room for the vital organs, the heart and lungs to do good work. These characteristics should give health and good feeding qualities, which are essential to success, no matter what the purpose may be. Texture and quality of bone, and the placing of the limbs squarely in the right place, is of greater importance than is generally acknowledged by the uninitiated, and should have a high place in the breeder's ideal, in the model he works by, and in his production. "No foot, no horse," is a sound maxim of breeders of the equine race, for if the foundation, the feet and legs, are not right, no matter how symmetrical the body may be, nor how handsome the head and stylish the carriage, the horse is a failure, and must be relegated to a menial place in the ranks of the race. He must not be permitted to reproduce himself in offspring. The impression is prevalent that the limbs in other classes of stock are not so important a consideration as in the case of the horse, but it is a false impression. The quality of bone, and shape and standing of the limbs, are indications to a large degree of constitution, vitality, endurance and impressiveness in a breeding animal of any class, and cannot be overlooked or neglected with impunity. Perhaps in none of the domestic animals, until recently, was this quality more neglected than in the hog, but intelligent breeders now make it a *sine qua non*, and a hog with coarse bone and weak pasterns, and not standing straight up on his toes, is unhesitatingly disqualified in the competition for premiums and in the breeding harem, no matter how perfect in all other respects. Just as the foundation of a building must be safe and sound in order to secure a successful superstructure, so the constitution and limbs must be right in order to success in breeding high-class animals, as without these "all other ground is sinking sand." We are free to admit that the development of this quality depends largely upon proper treatment and intelligent feeding of properly balanced food rations to produce the best results, but primarily it depends upon skillful breeding. It is satisfactory to know that in breeding stock there are some general principles that are established and irrevocable, and this requirement of constitutional vigor is one of such that applies in all classes, no matter for what purpose intended. There is danger that in following too closely prevailing theories in relation to form, a fatal mistake may be made. One of these which occurs to us is that of the "wedge shape" in dairy cows, a theory which, if not carefully guarded, may readily degenerate into a mischievous fad, for the simple reason that if it means what it seems to imply—a narrow chest, it is inconsistent with a strong constitution, and it is safe to say that in no class of animals is this requisite more essential than in the dairy cow, which is expected to be a voracious feeder and to have machinery capable of converting large quantities of rich food

into marketable products; and this, with a contracted chest, the seat of the vital organs, upon the strength of which the whole digestive machinery depends, she cannot do successfully, while to attempt to force the machinery beyond its capacity simply means failure, and is often the cause of disease and death. Having laid the foundation broad and deep in the character of the females in a herd or flock, the fixing and perpetuation of a type must depend mainly on skill and judgment in the selection of suitable sires to mate with them. This is not so simple a matter as some may suppose, for the animal selected must not only personally conform as nearly as possible to the ideal of the breeder or to the approved type, but it is important that his ancestors for several generations have been built upon the same lines to insure that he be not an accident, but has inherited his desirable qualities and hence will be likely to impress them upon his progeny. The writer has in mind a flash imported show bull, which won first prize at the Provincial Fair over bulls that were worth a score like him for breeding purposes, as the sequel proved. He had a high-sounding pedigree on paper, and stood high in stature and had lots of style, but he left an impress on the herd in which he was principally used in the one year he remained in the country that the owner has been trying to weed out for these twenty years. It would have been better for his reputation, and for his purse by thousands of dollars, if he had closed them all out nineteen years ago. If that breeder has any doubts about the prepotency of a good bull from good ancestry, we feel sure he has no doubts as to the influence of a mean one with ancestry of the same description. This instance may serve to emphasize the importance of using a sire sparingly in a herd until some of his progeny have proved that he is an impressive sire for good, and it may also serve to emphasize the value of one that has proved satisfactory, and the folly of parting with him hastily and trusting all to an untried one. In the selection of a sire, masculine character and strength, without coarseness, should be sought. A medium-sized, compact, active and spirited animal, as a rule, is preferable as a sire to an overgrown and sluggish one, and more likely to beget a uniform class of progeny. Uniformity in a herd or flock is a desirable and commendable feature, which can only be secured by the course we have indicated, seconded by selection of the fittest of females and weeding out those below the standard. This, we admit, may in some cases involve considerable sacrifice, as sometimes a plain one proves a good breeder; but if uniformity is to prevail she must go, and generally, if she is offered in good condition, a buyer at a moderate price can be found, in whose herd she may not noticeably detract from its uniformity if there is in it no high standard of excellence. Failing this, there is always an exit by way of the butcher's block or the canning factory.

Farmers' Wives and Daughters Duped.

We have received complaints during the past fortnight of several cases where persons have been imposed upon by a so-called co-operative knitting company, the plan of which appears, in a general way, to resemble many fake concerns that have frequently been exposed. It seems that their attention was first attracted by advertisements holding out seductive hopes of remunerative (\$15 to \$20 per week) employment at home. "More help wanted" was the refrain of the philanthropic promoters of this project for turning out socks and mittens, for which the demand was simply unlimited, and their chief anxiety was to enrich the persons who replied to their advertisements, which, we understand, appeared in a couple of weekly sheets, one of them making considerable pretensions, published in Montreal, P. Q. Their plan was to send out a machine with a partly knitted sock, which was to be finished and for-

warded to the company for approval, whereupon yarn galore would be sent out, and soon the hum of the busy and happy knitter would be heard in the land. They proposed to pay 10 cents a pair for bicycle stockings; woodmen's socks, 5 cents; motor-men's mits, 12 cents; and others in proportion to size; and claimed that a pair could be turned out in 30 minutes. Merely as a sort of preliminary, the person receiving the glowing circular letter was simply to send down \$15 cash net (25 per cent less than manufacturer's prices) for a \$20 machine, with outfit and all instructions complete, or they had the privilege of paying for it on the "instalment plan," \$12 cash down and \$8 worth of knitting! The cash remittance was, however, an essential part of the programme. The company was to prepay the charges on the yarn, and the purchasers on the finished goods sent back. In one section alone we were informed of three parties who were thus induced to part with their money, and when the machine came the letter of instructions required postage to be forwarded for the carriage of the yarn. One of these persons at least sent 14 or 15 cents postage, but no yarn came, and she was never able to get any reply to her letters sent this precious company, though the machine was received months ago, so that the postage was swallowed up with the rest. Furthermore, the machine furnished had no outfit of bobbin for winding the yarn, and "ribber," and the work represented could not be done upon it. Many of the persons, probably the majority of those thus imposed upon, could ill afford to lose their hard-earned money in this way. We have rejected these very advertisements, and can only warn the public, as we have done repeatedly before, against all such schemes. The parties at the bottom of them shift from place to place, and when one fake plays out they invent another, by means of which they contrive to fleece the unfortunate readers of papers that accept anything and everything in the shape of an advertisement tendered them. It does seem extraordinary that the authorities, either Federal or Provincial, cannot set some machinery in motion that will stop these impositions upon innocent people.

Utilizing the Institute and Convention.

January and February are the favorite months of the year for gatherings of those interested in various branches of agriculture. At this season there is greater leisure, particularly in the evenings, for these rallies of farmers, dairymen, stock-raisers, fruit-growers, poultry-keepers, and others. Rightly conducted, they all make for improvement by bringing those interested in these industries into greater unanimity of spirit, purpose, and methods tending to promote a sociable and intelligent discussion of the business of the farmer, and the adoption of better methods by stimulating thought and awakening a desire to acquire fuller and closer knowledge by subsequent study. In Ontario and New Brunswick Provinces, extended and well-planned series of Institute meetings are in progress, and if those who attend would derive the most advantage, they should go prepared to take part in the discussions, by closely questioning the official speakers and contributing items from their own experience, because a plan that may succeed under one set of conditions in one section of the country might prove a failure in another where the conditions were radically different. Hence the evidence even of experts or specialists must be thoroughly sifted. Programmes of these meetings are usually distributed in advance, and it is a good plan to look up the subjects to be considered carefully beforehand, and thus be ready to add something of value to the general fund of information. Incidentally they afford an excellent opportunity for the cultivation of public speaking on practical subjects tending to raise the standard of agriculture, by developing the gifts of those engaged in that greatest of all secular callings.