

Ayrshire Achievements.

To the Editor "Farmer's Advocate":

Sir,—We have been expecting for months (since the Pan-American test was concluded) to see some able penman or noted breeder take up the defence of that noble dairy breed, the Ayrshires. As there has been none forthcoming, we will try and say a word in their behalf. We presume the main reason for this silence (all the other dairy breeders have been heard from) is that they (the Ayrshire breeders) think the breed requires no booming, and, Scotch-like, prefer to let their cattle speak for themselves, which they are quite capable of doing. There appears to be a feeling of general satisfaction over the past year's record, even over the result of the Pan-American six-months' dairy test. While it is true the Ayrshire did not quite reach the top, yet she practically equalled the best, the difference per head being less than a dollar for the six months for butter and away ahead of those breeds in cheese products, and each breeder knows, in comparing with his own herd, they were an average lot only. Further, we have been informed that their position in the barn was not as favorable as those breeds that beat them, not having a supply of fresh air, and so suffered more from the heat, and it is quite possible that a saving might have been made in leaving out some portion of the most expensive grain ration.

We say without fear of contradiction that as a breed they are the most uniform in production, and that they cross better on other breeds or natives for dairy cows. When we come to the show-ring, we say it was a year of triumphs, as they clearly outshone all other dairy breeds. Never in the history of the breed did they attract so much attention and admiration. Allow us to quote freely from some of the leading agricultural and dairy papers published on the continent to substantiate this statement.

From "Farmer's Advocate," Sept. 16, 1901, issue, in writing of the dairy breeds at Toronto: "It was a spectacle for the gods to look upon with wonder and amazement, for it is doubtful if on a fair ground of any other country under the heavens could as good a collection of special-purpose dairy cattle be found as filed into the arena at Toronto." And in writing of the Ayrshires, it says: "It is not an invidious comparison to state that they were the most uniform in quality, type, and condition." Then, again: "The Ayrshires, among the dairy breeds, it is a question whether the display has ever been excelled in the history of exhibitions in Canada." Oct. 1st issue on the Pan-American: "While all were great, none will dispute that the Ayrshires made the grandest display of all—in uniformity of type and excellence of character. The modern Ayrshire cow as moulded by the canny Scot and perpetuated by Canadian breeders, sets the standard for the model dairy cow in style and conformation and in the size and shape of milk vessel and placing of teats. She is a thing of beauty, and also carries with her all the usefulness of a worker in the dairy. In this class, Canadian herds created a sensation, calling out unstinted expressions of admiration and commendation from all beholders. It was a sight never to be forgotten by those privileged to see it when the long line of twenty full-uddered and sprightly cows (aptly described by an enthusiastic admirer as 'the milky way') faced the judges."

Then, to quote from the Jersey Advocate, published in the interests of the Jerseys, in its notes on the Pan-American: "Anyone who was privileged to witness the grand array of that very useful breed, the Ayrshires, as they complacently chewed their cuds in the live-stock barn and as they were led into the show-ring, will never forget the sight. It was one long to be cherished in the heart and mind of a true lover of dairy stock, it matters not what breed is his preference. The exhibit of Ayrshires was truly magnificent—a finer collection has never been brought into the showing in this country. As the forty-five matrons were led in, in the aged-cow class, murmurs of admiration were heard on all sides. The spectators, as well as exhibitors of other stock at that time in the show-ring, paused to admire and comment upon this truly superb string. As they marched to their several places, with their beautiful silken hides, their straight backs and rumps, broad loins, deep bodies, and truly enormous udders of perfect shape, no one could fail to admire and appreciate them." Again, in same issue: "By their grand display at the Pan-American, the Ayrshires have won many friends and admirers." In another issue: "What a sight was the string of 40 superb Ayrshire cows ranged up to be judged at the Pan-American last week! They won the admiration of all. A grander sight has never been seen in any showing in this country."

Now, when an unprejudiced and popular paper like the "Farmer's Advocate" gives such commendation we appreciate it, but when a paper like the Jersey Advocate, published in the interests of another breed, writes so strongly in their favor, it speaks volumes for the breed. It must be quite evident to all that among the dairy

breeds in the show-ring, the Ayrshire is the queen of them all. The thanks of all the breeders are due to those gentlemen who loaned their cows to the Pan-American dairy test, to the gentleman who fed and cared for them, and to the breeders who contributed such splendid exhibits to Toronto, Buffalo, and elsewhere.

Northumberland Co., Ont. ALEX. HUME.

Note.—When Mr. Hume's letter was written, he probably had not received the last issue of the "Farmer's Advocate," on page 87 of which appeared an excellent letter from Mr. Steward Clelland, of Quebec, dealing with the achievements of the Ayrshires at the Pan-American Exposition.—Editor.

The Dogie Business.

BY J. M'CAIG.

The condition of the ranch-cattle business illustrates the fact that booms are bad for any business. The jump in beef three or four years ago developed a feverish demand for stockers for the ranges in both United States and Canada, and at times yearlings in Ontario have sold as high as eighteen or twenty dollars each right at home. This was a good price, but buyers may be credited with knowing what they were doing. They had to figure on freight one way, interest on their money for two years, cost of care, but practically free feed, and subtract this and the cost of the cattle from the price delivered at the stock-yards near the range and he frequently had a profit of twenty-five per cent. on his side. It was generally at least fifteen, and he seldom got stuck unless through want of care of eastern stuff in exceptionally bad weather, and eastern yearlings demand considerable care the first winter.

Of course, this stimulated the breeding of stockers in the east. Every available female was turned into work, no matter what her type, age, or quality. When the demand for any commodity is high, the lower grades of the commodity acquire a higher relative value than they are entitled to. The whole mass of available supply is not scanned so nicely and carefully for quality. It is when the supply is great and demand low that buyers can afford to be saucy. Of course, with the large dairy interests of Ontario, it is natural to expect that even with Shorthorn bulls of good quality there would be a good many light-fleshed yearlings from Jersey or part Jersey or Ayrshire mothers and sometimes a few raw-framed Holsteins. There are few Western range bunches—that is, of dogie cattle—that have not an occasional fawn-lipped specimen or two. These dairy cattle, of course, are not good stuff for the ranges. They do not stand the outdoor system in winter as well as the fleshy-carcaused Hereford or Shorthorn. They are never as good quality at maturity, nor are they as good block cattle, for they have little meat on the places where it is most wanted—i. e., hams, loins and shoulders—and, besides, it takes them longer to mature.

The demand for cattle to convert the free grasses into beef led not only to a careless selection of dogies, but likewise to the bringing in of bulls of inferior quality. All the she stuff of the West was held for breeding, and eastern bulls were in sharp demand, and any old thing in the shape of a Shorthorn to which a pedigree could be attached (and there are those who think that the hunting of pedigrees called out considerable ingenuity) could be sold at a good price. The consequence was that the standard of young stuff bred in the Territories itself was not raised or improved. In fine, the boom operated as booms always do to increase the number of the commodity at the expense of the quality or average perfection.

Now, when a bit of a lull comes in demand, from slowness in the world market, the producer feels the ebb coming in the tide of prosperity that has been carrying him up. Conditions are adjusting themselves to normal by reaction, as is always the case, but the reaction is hard on the fellows who have been carried in too deep by the boom.

Slack demand means careful culling. Export stuff finds a market readily enough, but even then it must be in good finish and the cattle of good block type, with the best cuts prominent. Generally in the east, the existence of numerous towns makes it possible to consume the second and third grades of stuff at home. The prairies, however, have plenty of cattle of all grades, but few to the supply. The result is that with high cost in the first place and high freight on top of this, with slow demand, even free grass will not let the rancher out, and this is the first year for quite a while that there is any check to his prosperity. The rancher is frequently looked on as the most independent man and surest winner you can find. He gets more for nothing in a new country than anyone does. But though it seems a sure and easy thing for him on the go-in, his status is not a good one and his business, unlike most others, is subject to limitation rather than expansion as he goes on. The coming of neighbors is a check rather than an impetus to his prosperity. Fi-

nally, the idea is forced in on him that his business is influenced by competition like anyone else's, and his returns depend on movements in the larger commercial fabric of the world. It might seem almost unnecessary to call attention to this to anyone accustomed to eager and urgent business. Among all kinds of Western enterprises, however, that of ranching has been pretty free of care.

The business cannot be permanently hurt. There are large tracts of the Northwest Territories that are fit only for grazing by reason of being non-irrigable and of being short of sufficient natural rainfall for cultivated crops. The ranges, too, will support many more animals than at present, and it is a nice problem for the Government to regulate and adjust rivals for the range country. For the rancher the chief lesson is that he should try to improve the quality of his product. The "dogie" trade has had a check. If it is continued, as it doubtless will to some extent, nothing but the best should be brought out as to breed and type. Bulls, likewise, should be selected with more care. Satisfactory male animals cannot be raised under pure range conditions. Ontario, Manitoba, and the parts of the Territories where cereal and succulent crops can be grown will continue to furnish bulls. The irrigable lands will, of course, develop the breeding of stud animals also. These must all be of the best type, and inferior females as well as males must be weeded out. To many ranchers a cow is but a cow. Many have begun, and owing to early conditions have been fairly successful, without any knowledge of the business or of the good and bad qualities of beef stock. The time has come now for selection and breeding skill to shape the product. A knowledge of breeds and a study of beef type is highly necessary. It is often interesting to hear how experimental knowledge finds expression among the fellows who do not know anything of breeds. "The finest steer I ever sold was one off that big, long red cow and out of a bald (white)-faced bull o' Lem Pilkey's." The cow was a long, roomy, good grade of Shorthorn, and the bull, I presume, was a thoroughbred Hereford. Besides closer knowledge and more careful selection of breeding stock, there must be greater care. A little more hay for rough weather and a little more diligence and foresight will be necessary to keep up the condition, standard and finish of steers, especially as the range becomes more limited. Ranchers will soon be doing more feeding, and the cultivated and irrigable districts will soon be doing a good business in tame hay with the rancher. I suppose the hesitation of the C. P. R. to increase its rolling stock to a capacity to meet the transportation demands of the country will vanish with another railway: whether rates will decrease cannot confidently be predicted with the object lessons in wholesale amalgamations and combinations of big corporations before us. The railway problem must be more and more urged into Government regulation and control, for in no sense can our national railway be regarded as the property of the great corporation. The Canadian Pacific Railway has been built at the expense of the commonwealth and should be made to answer to popular needs in both the matter of accommodation and rates so far as is consistent with legitimate profits.

Smithfield Cattle Carcasses.

Included in the reports of particulars of carcasses of Smithfield cattle that have appeared in the Live Stock Journal are those of 13 steers not exceeding two years of age, whose aggregate age was 9,004 days, with an aggregate live weight of 18,110 lbs., and a carcass weight of 11,631 lbs. These give the following average result for the whole of the 13 animals: Percentage of carcass to live weight, 64.22; average daily gain of live weight, 2 lbs. 0.19 ozs.; ditto carcass weight, 1 lb. 4.00 ozs. Last year the carcasses for the corresponding age gave 66.30 per cent. of carcass to live weight, with an average daily gain of 1 lb. 14.84 ozs. live weight, and 1 lb. 4.39 ozs. carcass weight. It will be of interest to note that the highest percentage of carcass weight in the statistics collected of animals of this age sold at the show was 67.91, and the lowest 60.09, whilst in the carcass test 68.57 was the highest and 61.35 the lowest.

Of steers over two years, particulars have been given of 38, whose aggregate age was 39,514 days, live weight 63,255 lbs., and carcass weight 41,435 lbs., which show 65.50 per cent. of carcass to live weight, and give an average daily gain of 1 lb. 9.61 ozs. alive, and 1 lb. 0.92 ozs. of carcass weight. The highest percentage of carcass to live weight was 71.79, and the lowest 58.86.

Particulars of 31 heifers have been given, whose aggregate ages were 31,061 days, live weight 44,407 lbs., and carcass weight 29,165 lbs., which give the following results: 65.67 per cent. of carcass to live weight, 1 lb. 6.87 ozs. average daily gain alive, and 15.20 ozs. carcass weight.