

Professional Live Stock Exhibitors.

To the Editor FARMER'S ADVOCATE:

SIR,—Your September 15th issue is to hand, and I note your criticism of our Minnesota State Fair, and especially that part which seems to condemn the practice of throwing the Exhibition into the hands of professional showmen and herds, to the exclusion of the smaller but more practical breeders. While you are not very strong on this point, I think I can safely guess that your sympathies are in the opposite direction, and if so, and your conviction is strong enough, you cannot do better service to your country and people than to condemn in the strongest terms this pernicious practice. Our system of encouraging professional exhibitors to hunt the world over for the best specimens that money can buy, then load them up to excess with fat (utterly destroying their stamina and breeding qualities), to the exclusion of all honest breeders who will not prostitute themselves and their stock to this bad practice, is entirely wrong in principle and educates backwards and the very reverse from the proper lines.

We should allow our breeding herds to exhibit in healthy breeding condition, and all highly-fitted animals should be excluded. Let them exhibit in the fat stock class, where they belong and where their exhibit is not misleading but right to the point. I understand very well that such changes cannot be brought about in a day, or old established rules vanquished by a sweep of the hand, but the man who has the courage to condemn this evil practice and lead up to a reformation that will allow a good, practical, sensible breeder to exhibit stock of his own raising in that good, healthy breeding condition that will perpetuate their stamina and usefulness is entitled to and will receive the blessing of his patrons.

This matter has been agitated somewhat for the past several years by breeders, and even some journalists have referred to the matter cautiously, but all seem to be afraid to make the break. A year ago last September, at our State fair, I informally brought the matter to the attention of a company of breeders and journalists, including A. H. Saunders, of *The Breeder's Gazette*, and Maj. Wilcox, of the *Agriculturalist*. The ideas advanced met with hearty approval of the entire party. The latter two gentlemen the following week in their respective journals wrote very good articles on the subject, but the matter was finally dropped.

I was in California when elected President of our Agricultural Society and did not return until our premium list was made up, but through Col. Liggett, our Superintendent of Cattle Department, I had inserted on page 19 the following clause:

"In making awards in the beef classes, the judges are instructed to lay much stress on the evidence of superior breeding qualities. When animals show evidence of having been 'overdone' (overloaded with flesh to the evident injury of their breeding qualities) they are to be marked down accordingly. Judges on sweepstakes will give awards to the animals, herd or exhibit that they shall judge to be the best type or representative of its breed or class."

Perhaps this has done neither good nor harm except to agitate the subject, which I think it has done very effectually. I find a great many people thinking strongly along these lines, and it seems to me that all we want now is a Moses for the occasion. Will it be the *ADVOCATE*? At all events, it would please me very much to have its views on the subject.

JOHN COOPER,
President Minnesota State Agl. Soc.

EDITORIAL NOTE.—Our correspondent touches a point that does not affect our Canadian fairs to any great extent. We have no "professional showmen," as the term is understood in the States. Live stock exhibitors at Canadian fairs are all breeders, and the great majority of them are dependent upon their stock and farms for their living. We do not believe in excluding anyone from showing stock as long as they conduct their business honestly and according to the rules of the associations. The man who owns the best cattle is surely entitled to the honor of winning;—if of his own breeding so much the better; if purchased from others, then it is the breeder's lookout to get as much of the credit as possible, while the exhibitor gets the prize money. And right here is one of the benefits of the exhibition live-stock catalogue, which is one thing the Minnesota State fair should have. As to excluding from competition "all highly-fitted animals," the difficulty is to draw the line between that which is "overdone" and that which is just "ripe." What one would call "healthy breeding condition" another would consider too thin for even the barnyard. Then,

again, young animals may be put into much higher flesh without injuring their breeding qualities than older animals. Where should the age line be drawn?

It certainly is not right to give animals fitted so that their usefulness as breeders is ruined prizes over others in prime breeding condition. Good judges almost invariably pass over those animals that show overfitting in favor of those retaining their usefulness if otherwise worthy. It is hardly in the province of the *FARMER'S ADVOCATE* to make suggestions to the management of the Minnesota State Fair, but we believe a revision of the prize list, the introduction of a properly compiled live-stock catalogue, a judging arena where all stock judging would take place at certain advertised hours, so that the public might get some benefit and comfort out of watching the work done, would tend very greatly to increase the interest and number of exhibitors. The prize list does not now give chances enough for the small breeder and beginner to win his expenses. Were the classification for the respective breeds made more liberal and less money wasted on competitions between breeds that, while good enough fun to look at, are of little practical benefit, greater competition might be looked for.

We shall be pleased to hear again from President Cooper or from others on the interesting subject of how, when, and where to draw the line between properly fitted and overfitted show stock.

kinds of pigs merely for that very reason. In this way a perfectly reputable herd may be quite unjustly suspected.

Again, it often requires considerable ingenuity on the part of a breeder to make a sale of an animal of one breed to an intending purchaser without having to somewhat decry the merits of the other breeds kept. Sometimes a buyer comes who has not made up his mind as to the breed of pig he wants to buy, and he is naturally confused among so many and probably ends by going off to some breeder who has only one breed, who can give definite reasons why he keeps that breed, and can point out its desirable features.

Such, Mr. Editor, are a few thoughts that have occurred to me. I am proud of your efforts and those of our breeders to keep up the standard of our flocks and herds, and trust that Canada will never be beaten in her struggle to be one of the principal producers of live stock for the Old Country markets. In my humble opinion our breeders will best work for this end by not dividing their efforts among too many breeds.

A LOVER OF LIVE STOCK.

The Breed Most Largely Represented at the Fairs, the Best Advertised.

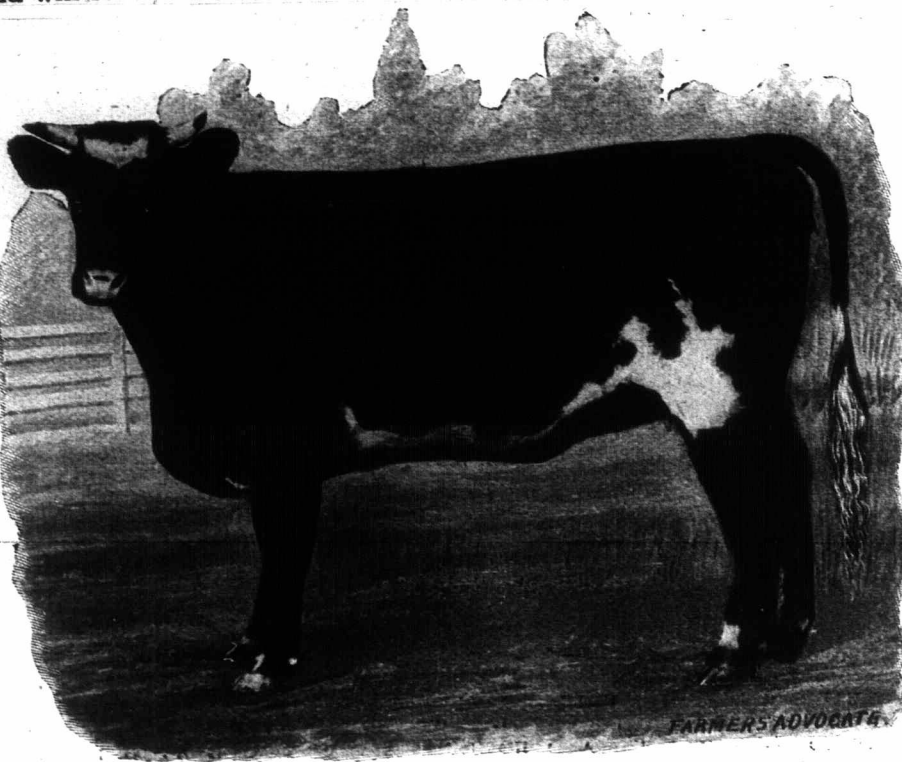
Recently we took occasion to point out that a breeder showing good stock of a breed most numerously represented at an agricultural fair, even though he might take no prizes, was better advertised than though he had won all the prizes in a breed of which he was the only exhibitor. In a late issue of *Hoard's Dairyman*, reviewing the dairy stock at the Wisconsin State Fair, this same point is forcibly brought out in the following paragraph:

"The Holsteins were out in great force—eight different herds, comprising over 100 animals, being exhibited. This large display will be a great help in advertising this breed, by bringing them prominently to the notice of the public. Remarks similar to the following were frequently heard from the farmers in attendance: 'What lots of Holsteins! This breed must be gaining in favor with the dairymen over other dairy breeds.' Whether this is true or not, that impression was created in the minds of many in consequence of the large show. It surely pays to show good stock at the fairs, and let people see them. It is true that in this class all could not get premiums, and in some entire herds there was not a single prize drawn, although the stock was fairly good, but there were others that were adjudged—and no doubt rightly so—better. The man who shows his stock is a gainer by it, although he gets no premiums. He helps to swell the number and create the impression that they are the coming cattle. He also has an opportunity of comparing his stock with others that do win prizes, and if he has been unduly loaded down with conceit concerning the merits of his own stock, this will be a good place to have that taken out of him, and he ought to go home from the fair a wiser man and with a determination to improve and climb toward the top."

FARM.

Nutritive Properties of Oats.

M. Balland is head of the chemical department of the alimentary section of the French army; he tests all food supplies, so he is the ablest authority in France upon organic chemistry. He is occupied with, among other cereals, oats, and has laid before the Academy of Sciences an exhaustive monograph on that grain. His papers lead to most interesting discussions by the ablest authorities of the day. He has just completed analyses of 1,000 samples of oats, grown in different regions and upon various soils. He desired to settle the question so disputed since a score of years: To what is the exciting, stimulating or fiery principle in oats to be attributed? To an alkaloid, asserted many, lodged in the pellicle sheathing the kernel of the grain. M. Balland could find no such alkaloid; but he discovered a small quantity of essential oil that could explain the stimulating property. Oats, he affirms, form a complete food, contain never less than 3 and as much as 7 per cent. of fatty matters; the starch or saccharine substances varied from 61 to 64 per cent., and the nitrogenous from 7 to 14. One hundred grains of oats varied in weight from 1.80 to 4.32 grammes, and there are 30 grammes in an ounce. The kernel forms from 61 to 74 per cent. of the grain. The shell is very hard and difficult to masticate—hence the advantage of bruising for rations. It is an error to judge of oats by their color. The white oats of many countries—those of Russia, for example—are most nutritive. In France the proportion of kernel is less in white than in black Tartary oats.



TWO-YEAR-OLD SHORTHORN HEIFER, PEACHBLOSS, WINNER OF FEMALE CHAMPIONSHIP OF THE BREED AT ST. JOHN AND HALIFAX EXHIBITIONS, 1898. BRED AND SHOWN BY F. G. BOVYER, GEORGETOWN, P. E. I.; NOW OWNED BY E. & O. CHASE, CORNWALLIS, N. S.

Handling More Than One Breed of Live Stock.

To the Editor FARMER'S ADVOCATE:

DEAR SIR,—During the past fall I have had the privilege of attending some of the largest exhibitions in this country, and have been very pleased with the general excellence of the stock I have seen there. It is evident that with most of the exhibitors their work is a labor of love and that the breeds they handle are those in which they are especially interested. There is one point, however, in which I think some breeders are making a mistake, and that is in keeping more than one breed of any particular kind of live stock. This was most noticeable among the swine exhibitors, some of whom had as many as three breeds on exhibition.

Now, I have no axe to grind in this matter and am not interested in any particular breed, but I certainly consider that these breeders are not consulting their own interests when they handle so many breeds, especially when these breeds are of widely different types, as they often are. I contend that one breed of swine, properly attended to and judiciously advertised, will bring in better returns to a breeder than three that have had the attention that should have been given to one.

Then there is the serious risk of animals of the different breeds getting intermingled and crossing resulting. Accidents will happen in the best regulated families. A chance visitor may leave a door or gate open, and great damage can be done before the omission is noticed. Even if no such accidents occur, the mere fact that a breeder has more than one breed in his pens is apt to cause suspicion that crossing may have taken place, and I have oftentimes known intending buyers decline to visit the establishment of a breeder of several