

# FARMER'S ADVOCATE

AND HOME MAGAZINE

\* AGRICULTURE, STOCK, DAIRY, POULTRY, HORTICULTURE, VETERINARY, HOME CIRCLE. \*

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## EDITORIAL.

### The Judges and the Catalogue.

We notice that at a recent meeting of the committee charged with the revision of the rules and the appointment of judges for the Toronto Industrial Exhibition it was decided to insert a clause in the rules requesting the judges not to refer to the catalogue while in the discharge of their duties. We are not informed of the reasons assigned for this request, but presume it is based on the old-fashioned idea that the judges should, if possible, be kept in ignorance of the ownership and breeding of the animals shown. If this were possible it might be desirable, both from the standpoint of the judges and the exhibitors, but in these days of breeders' association meetings it is hardly possible to select competent Canadian judges who are not personally acquainted with most of the exhibitors at the leading shows, and who do not know their herdsman and their cattle, so that if there is anything in the contention that they are liable to be influenced by the knowledge found in the catalogue, it seems to us that the exhibitors who are not known to the judges might reasonably insist upon an introduction in order to be placed upon an equal footing with their competitors who are acquainted, and yet, as a rule, these are the men who object to the judge referring to the catalogue. For a number of years, at the request of exhibitors, the judges in the classes for dairy cattle at the Toronto Exhibition were brought from a foreign country, one of the objects being to secure men who were not known to exhibitors, and who were uninformed of the breeding and history of the animals shown; but while some excellent judges were secured, they have not given more general satisfaction than our "home-made" judges, and this year we understand that Canadian judges have been selected for all the classes of cattle on the nomination of breeders' associations. If, unfortunately, a judge is appointed who is weak or dishonest, he will not need the aid of a catalogue to identify the men or the animals he may be disposed to favor. Exhibitors of Jerseys at Toronto last year will probably recollect that the foreigner who went through the form of judging that class made no reference to the catalogue. He went in empty-handed and bare-faced, and yet we fancy few will claim that his work was a blooming success from the standpoint of justice and fairness. Our own opinion is that in this matter justice does not depend upon the use or abuse of the catalogue, but on the selection of competent men of sterling character as judges, and trusting them fully. Knowing that their reputation is at stake, and that they are acting under the critical eyes of a company of discerning breeders who know what is right, and know when wrong is being done, there need be little fear that any will suffer from injustice. As to the catalogue, we cannot but think that if it is to properly fulfil its mission as an advertising medium, a check upon fraud, and an educational factor in giving helpful information, exhibitors should insist on having it made more complete and reliable, and that it should give the same amount of information respecting each and every entry. This should embrace the name and record number of the animal, the date of birth, the name and address of the breeder and owner, and the name and record number of sire and dam. The motto of fair boards and exhibitors alike should be "let there be light." Those who contend for the exclusion of the catalogue from the showing, and for keeping the judges in ignorance, should, to be consistent and to follow their idea to its logical conclusion, go a step or two further and stipulate that the judges be blindfolded and shall do their work by the sense of feeling, or else that the men who lead the animals into the ring shall wear masks to conceal their identity.

### The Smithfield of Canada.

The question of the permanent location of the Ontario Provincial Fat Stock, Dairy and Poultry Show was finally decided at a recent meeting of the representatives of the various Breeders' Associations, and the Royal City of Guelph was chosen as the place where the show will find its home for the future, or at least during the good behavior of the people of the favored city.

The City of Brantford made a brave bid for the show, and presented many strong claims, not the least of which is the public spirit of its leading citizens, the generous hospitality of its people generally, and the unstinted willingness of representative men of both city and county to do and dare for the advancement of the interests of the show, and of the farmers and stockmen of the country. Brantford and its citizens will always hold a warm place in the hearts of the exhibitors and the officers and directors of the Fat Stock Show, for the kindly reception and treatment they received during the two years in which the show was held in that city.

The central location of Guelph, its prestige as a stock-raising district, and as a market for fat stock, to which buyers from all over the Dominion gravitate, its being the site of the Agricultural College and Dairy School, and the meeting place for the Experimental Union, together with the fact that for over a quarter of a century the stockmen of that district have maintained an annual Fat Stock Show, were claims which to the majority of those privileged to cast a ballot for the location seemed to promise the greatest good to the greatest number, and hence Guelph will still be entitled to the designation of "the Smithfield of Canada." While the future success of the show will depend mainly upon the action of the officers and directorate, yet much also will depend upon the hearty sympathy and co-operation of the local committee and the leading citizens of Guelph, whose profuse promises while pleading for votes will have been registered in many minds, and will not be forgotten by the stockmen, even if they are by those on whose behalf they were made.

Officers and citizens, however, cannot make a successful stock show unless the breeders and feeders on the farms of the Dominion do their part in preparing creditable exhibits. Of this, so far as the competition in the classes of sheep and swine is concerned, we have no fear, but in the cattle classes it must be admitted there is much room for improvement in respect to numbers, especially while even in quality we have not by any means reached the high average which might reasonably be looked for considering the many first-class herds existing in the country. The prizes now offered for cattle in both the beef and dairy classes are fairly liberal, and breeders will study their own interests by preparing and bringing out first-class specimens to represent and advertise the breeds in which they are interested, and to advertise the country as well. Our neighbors in the States are making vigorous efforts to re-establish their Fat Stock Shows, and if Canada is to hold her place of prominence as a stock-raising country, our cattle breeders will need to make a special effort to present a better showing at the Winter Fair than they have done in late years. It is gratifying to know that the Ontario Poultry Association has amalgamated with the Winter Show Association, and will hold its annual show at the same time and place. This feature will add very materially to the interest of the event, since the poultry industry has become one of the most important of which Canada can boast.

Mrs. Hoodless, who was chiefly instrumental in establishing the Normal Training School for teachers in domestic science and art, in Hamilton, Ont., has received a check for \$2,000 from Lord Strathcona as a practical evidence of his sympathy with the undertaking. His Lordship has written a letter highly approving of the school.

### Preparation for Spring Seeding.

As the month of April generally brings weather and soil conditions suitable for grain seeding in most sections of Canada, the present seems an opportune time to consider the question of making ready for spring work on the farm. Those who make it a rule to take time by the forelock and keep ahead with their work, so as to be ready to take advantage of any unforeseen circumstances that may occur, have doubtless made their calculations as to the crops they mean to sow on each field, and, knowing exactly the acreage of each field, have provided the necessary seed grain of a good variety, either from their own supply or from some good farmer who is known to keep his land clear of noxious weeds; clover and grass seeds have been carefully selected, to avoid sowing troublesome weed seeds; implements to be used in the seeding operations have been overhauled, repaired and sharpened, so as to be in condition to do their best work in the stirring and pulverizing of the soil for a suitable seed-bed; harness has been mended, cleaned and oiled, and collars covered and re-stuffed, if necessary, and everything made ready for an early start when the condition of the land and the weather is favorable for seeding. Those who have delayed these preparations cannot start too soon to make them, and the more thorough they are made the better.

Much depends upon the variety and quality of the seed sown, and also upon the thorough cleaning of the same. Do not depend upon running the seed once through the fanning mill, unless you have an uncommonly good mill. The largest and plumpest grain, as a rule, brings the best crop, while small, light and imperfectly-matured seed is liable to bring a crop of the same sort, and it costs just as much to produce the inferior crop. It takes just as much time to go over a field with a dull cultivator which slides over the hard places on the high ground without breaking up the soil as it does with a sharpened implement which will loosen and stir the land where it needs it most as well as where it requires it least, and the proper preparation of the seed-bed often makes all the difference between a good crop and a partial failure.

Early-sown spring grain, as a rule, produces decidedly the best crops. It is well, therefore, to be ready to rush the work when the time comes, though it is not wise in the older provinces, where clay soil prevails, to work the land before it is dry enough to bear the horses without poaching it too much. It may be worth considering whether the higher parts of a field which dry out first may not well be cultivated some days before the lower parts are sufficiently dry to go upon, as it sometimes happens that the higher land gets too dry and hard before the lower parts are fit to work on, and the moisture will be better retained in the high portions by reason of the extra stirring of the soil. Even after the grain has been sown, if a heavy rain comes to pack the land, it is often good practice to harrow those high places, even though the grain has germinated and grown an inch or two above the surface. The breaking of the crust and admission of air, heat and light, all of which are necessary to plant life, will cause the crops to grow more vigorously and gain time before possible summer drought occurs.

In districts where clover and grass seeding is done on spring grain crops, the early seeding is a distinct advantage in getting a good catch, and the plants grow stronger and are better prepared to resist a drought after the grain is harvested. In this connection it may be worth considering whether, as a rule, spring grain is not sown too thickly for the most healthy growth of both the grain and the grasses, the dense growth shutting out sun and air and giving the clover plants especially a weak and sickly growth, and leaving them liable to fail when exposed to the sun after harvest.