

The Farming World

For Farmers and Stockmen

Vol. XXI.

OCTOBER 14th, 1902

No. 16

Judging by Points

THIS question comes in for more or less discussion every fair season. Whether it will ever be settled to the satisfaction of everyone is doubtful. And yet there is good reason for believing that in judging live stock the score card or point judging is the only plan that can approach uniform methods in placing the awards. The present system of having no definite standard to guide the judge in his work often leads to varied and frequently amusing results. No two judges have the same ideals in every particular and while they may be perfectly honest in their convictions this lack of uniformity in ideals often brings them to totally divergent positions in placing the awards. Two or three cases of this kind occurred at the Toronto and London Fairs this year. At the former an animal would be placed at the top, while at London with the same competition, he would be dropped down to third or sometimes knocked out altogether under another judge. A case in point is given in our report of the sheep at London in the issue of Sept. 30. One could hardly conceive of two competent and honest judges differing so much in their ideals. And yet we find the same thing occurring over and over again to the utter confusion and mystification of the fair visitor seeking accurate information upon the subject.

Can this condition of affairs be remedied? There are surely right and wrong ideals in connection with every breed of stock, be it horses, cattle, sheep or swine. If so why cannot these right ideals be got into concrete form in the shape of a score card for use at all our fairs. We believe it is possible and that fair managers should bend their energies in this direction. No doubt different judges would vary somewhat in marking the score card and in allowing value to the different points, but there would be nothing like the variation we have under present methods. There is important work for our live stock associations along this line. They have gone over the various prize lists at our fairs often enough to have them perfected. Let them now bend their energies to securing a uniform scale of points for the use of judges at these fairs. The principle of judging by points is recognized at Toronto, Ottawa, London and other fairs in the live-stock judging competitions which are designed to train young men in judg-

ing stock. Why could not the same plan be used by the judge in awarding the prizes for the best animals. If the young man can pick out the best animal by points surely the older man can. With proper assistance a competent judge could quickly go over any section and mark down the value of points for each animal in the ring. Such marking would be of great value to the exhibitor as well as to the visitor. This question is well worth looking into by fair managers who will never have a perfect and impartial system of awarding prizes if they cling to the old plan.

The Jersey Advocate in advocating a scale of points for placing the awards on Jersey cattle at fairs says:

"The writer has followed with very considerable interest the awarding of prizes to the members of two herds which have been competing with each other at various fairs this year. One week, one cow or heifer is declared to be the best; the next week, another who has competed with the former champion defeats her. Does the exhibitor receive any instruction from such awarding of prizes? Emphatically, no! If his cow or heifer is placed first, he thinks the judge who so placed it is an excellent judge. If the same animal is defeated at the next fair under another judge, he votes him a poor judge. He recognizes that it is the individual opinion of the judge that is given; and in too many cases the judge cannot explain why his judgment was given as it was."

The same thing will apply to exhibitors in other classes. We frequently meet exhibitors who will not enter at a show till they know who the judge is going to be. If to their liking the entry goes in, if not the exhibits are kept at home. Such action is a rather sad reflection upon the ability or integrity of judges and would not be possible under more uniform methods of judging such as a proper scale of points would afford.

Improved Ocean Freight Service Needed

In the negotiations for a fast Atlantic steamship line between Canada and Great Britain the important point to be considered is the freight service. What this country needs is more and better ocean freight service for carrying our surplus food products to the British market. We published some data not long ago in which it was shown that the Canadian producer is placed at a decided disadvantage

as compared with his American competitor in getting his products carried across the Atlantic. The first consideration then on the part of the Government should be to secure better ocean freight service so that our products may be carried to the British consumer with the least possible delay and in the best possible condition. A fast steamship service that would land passengers at Canadian ports half-a-day sooner than at American ports would be a very nice thing to have, but if it is to be secured at the expense of the freight carrying service, we have no hesitation in saying that we don't want it. In any negotiations for an improved service the first consideration should be for better and more accommodation for carrying our products to the consumer, and if the passenger side of it can be worked in so much the better. But it should in any case occupy a secondary place.

We are glad to see that the Hon. Mr. Fisher, Minister of Agriculture, falls in with this view. In a recent interview at Montreal he stated that what was wanted was well equipped ocean steamships, making from 18 to 20 knots an hour, and capable of carrying a large amount of freight and a limited number of passengers. A very fast passenger service would be too expensive for this country to take hold of at the present time.

American and Canadian Prices for Beef Cattle

In a recent letter to the Toronto World, Mr. Andrew Webb, an Englishman seemingly conversant with the American packing house trade, points out that a concentration of the cattle trade in Toronto would aid greatly in increasing the price the farmer should obtain for his beef cattle. He points out that Canadian slaughter house methods are very wasteful and that our packers or dealers would be able to pay more for the animal on foot if they utilized the by-products to the best advantage as is done by the large American packing houses. He gives the prices paid on Sept. 23rd for beef cattle at Buffalo and Chicago, which were \$8.25 to \$8.50, and \$8.50 to \$8.75 per cwt. respectively, and compares these figures with the prices paid on Toronto market on the same day and which were only \$5.00 to \$5.80 per cwt. a difference of about \$2.65 per cwt. This difference, he claims, could be largely made up by a centralization of the market, which would make it possible to get full value for all