

to disqualify animals which do not appear to be in a fit state for breeding purposes; and in the cow classes it is expected that "a live calf" shall be produced within a certain period after the prize has been awarded. But both regulations are often a dead letter, and might as well be omitted altogether for all practical purposes. Judges look to condition, and favor it; and the "live calf" may only have had sufficient strength to draw a single faint and almost imperceptible breath ere its existence terminates—a finale attributable solely to its dam's unnatural and unhealthy "condition."

It is necessary that show regulations should contain a proviso of the nature we have mentioned, but it must be evident that everything depends on the judges as to the manner in which a regulation of this nature shall be carried into effect. We do not mean to say that judges do not act conscientiously under the circumstances when they give prizes to over-fed animals; but we do mean to say that in doing so they act very differently from what they would do were they making a selection for their own use and advantage; and all we ask is, that they would act for the public as they would do for themselves. Let them do as they would be done by. For what is the object of their appointment as show judges? It is to tell the public which are the best animals for breeding purposes out of a number brought under their notice; and it appears passing strange that they should select as patterns the very fattest, as they almost invariably do, or at least, with comparatively rare exceptions: whilst all the time they would never think for a moment of keeping their own regular breeding cattle—male or female—in anything like similar condition. It is in this very point that the absurdity of the present system of judging lies; it is founded on a most vicious and ruinous fashion, and we decidedly think that the judges, who are breeders, should set their faces against it for their own credit, whenever an opportunity offers, and thus confer an inestimable benefit on all concerned.

Nor need we be afraid that the interest felt in our shows would be lessened were natural condition encouraged, instead of being discouraged as it is at present. We entertain the opinion that our show catalogues would present a much greater array of entries, and that the effect of encouraging natural condition would be to bring out many first-rate animals, of the existence of which the public are scarcely aware, as these are at present kept at home, because their owners prefer that they shall be sure and regular breeders, rather than prize winners followed by infertility, or at least great uncertainty as to whether they shall afterwards perpetuate their kind or not.

It is not, however, in the short-horn sections alone that the evils of enforcing are evident. Hereford breeders are equally culpable, and, in fact, with the exception perhaps of West High-

lands, Ayrshires, and Alderneys, it is questionable if there are any of our British breeds which have not suffered more or less from that practice. We have all heard of short-horn cows and heifers being shown and winning at Christmas shows of fat stock, and then, instead of being handed over to the butcher, as one would anticipate from their appearance on occasions of this kind, taken home and shown next summer in the breeding class of a royal show, and we have considered such proceedings as savouring somewhat of the preposterous, but we have also known precisely the same thing done in the case of heifers of the Angus breed. And when we go into other classes of stock, into the sheep and swine sections of our shows, the same forcing system is found to prevail, and the decisions of judges in such cases are just as liable to be influenced by "condition" as in the short-horn and other cattle classes. It is, in short, a general as well as a crying evil; the great blot on an otherwise commendable "institution"—that of public competition; and it is satisfactory to know, therefore, that public feeling is decidedly in favour of its entire and immediate abolition; "a consummation," no doubt, "devoutly to be wished," but which depends wholly on the managers of our royal shows, and our royal show judges in all departments.—*Journal of Highland Society.*

Experiment to Test the Profitableness of Various Kinds of Sheep.

A very interesting experiment, to test the fattening qualities, as well as the profitableness, of various kinds of sheep, has just been brought to a conclusion at Millhill, Inchtute, by Mr. McLaren, factor to the Right Hon. Lord Kinnaird. The sheep selected to be operated upon were Col. Inge's breed of Leicesters, Lord Kinnaird's breed of the same sheep, Mr. Hardie's border Leicesters, and Lord Kinnaird's Greyfaced Cotswolds. Ten of each variety were chosen, and the experiment extended over twelve months. Unfortunately, the season was very unpropitious, the continued wet inducing foot-rot in many of the animals, which occasioned the death of some and threw others very far back—so far, indeed, that several of them were a good deal heavier two or three months before the experiment was completed than they were at its termination. Those dying had to be replaced by others not equal in points of weight or excellence, so that the test, so far as the whole ten in each lot are concerned, is not so absolutely perfect as could have been wished, though quite as correct as it was possible, under the adverse character of the weather, to make it. No doubt, it is almost of equal importance for farmers to know the hardiest kinds, or which will stand best an exceptionally moist season like that which we have just experienc-