

### Fancies and Fallacies versus Experience in Cattle.

Prepared by R. Gibson for the Dominion Short-horn Breeders' Association.

We all have our fancies as to color in cattle. Some admire a roan, others a red. With Hereford breeders, red with white face is orthodox, and with Angus men, black and all black is their creed. Color may be called a fancy: so it is. Experience says you may follow your fancy so long as it is not prejudicial to the animal.

That the Angus and the Devon breed true to color is certainly not an objection. That the Herefords are better, except for the sake of uniformity, by being so uniformly marked we doubt, as in our boyhood days, in the early forties, we well remember the greys shown by Knight & Heath and Lord Hatherton.

That the Shorthorn has suffered much from the red craze cannot be denied. Experience says nothing has done the breed more harm in these latter days than this foolish desire for all red. Fortunately we have escaped this mania in a great measure in Canada, but where it has been carried to the extreme, as in Kentucky and the West, there the cattle have deteriorated. Their hair is harsh and wiry, having lost that mossy and beaver-like undercoat, such as is indicative of feeding propensities. It is admitted on all sides that roans are superior as feeders. Then why does fancy run riot? Lack of uniformity in color? What a fallacy! Experience says it is better to be uniformly good, though of various colors, than uniformly bad and all of one color. If Shorthorn men must have but one color, why not choose roan? The Shorthorn race being the only pure breed, so far as we know, that are of that color, whilst there are lots of red sorts.

The Jersey men tell us the craze or fancy for solid colors, black tongue and black switch, nearly destroyed the useful qualities which first brought the breed into prominence.

In horns there is another fancy; some say let us have a good strong horn, it is an indication of constitution. The Angus men retort you don't want any, whilst the Hereford and the Ayrshire breeders like a certain shape. Experience says though the horn may meet the necessity for defence, still it is of great value to the breeder in making selections for stock purposes. A heavy, coarse horn may not be desirable, but it is much to be preferred to a light delicate one, which, especially in bulls, should be avoided.

Many a good animal have we seen discarded at fairs, thrown out for having a heavy horn, perhaps placed behind a light fleshed one with a delicate steer's horn, the other carrying many pounds more beef and in the most valuable parts. Such is surely a fallacy. The head is worth but a few cents on the block, but on the living animal what an index to the value for breeding purposes. It is said Mr. Bates fell in love with Belvedere on seeing his head thrust through an open window, and determined to buy him at any cost. What are the fancies? In females the most common is the objection to a thick or meaty pouch near the jaws, or what in horses would be called the throat latch. Fancy asks that they shall be well cut up, or in other words, the setting on of the head must be slight and slim. Yet experience says that it is an indication of a good feeder rather than a defect, and will never be found on a thin-fleshed, ill-thriving beast.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

### Veterinary.

#### "His Water."

BY W. A. DUNBAR, V. S., WINNIPEG, MAN.

Among the many vague and imaginary diseases from which the horse is supposed to suffer, the one known among horsemen as "his water" is believed to be the most common. Any veterinary surgeon, although of limited practical experience, is capable of giving ample testimony as to the general belief among the knowing class of horse owners and jockeys that the urinary organs of the horse are very liable to become deranged. The professional man can easily recall to mind the vast number of cases, for which he has been called upon to prescribe, where the owner of the patient, or some other person, equally as wise and as well qualified, has informed him, in a knowing and mysterious manner, that the animal was troubled with "his water." The writer, now at the close of fifteen years' practice, can aver that three out of every five cases of sickness and disease in the equine race, which he has treated, were previously diagnosed by some knowing individual to be something wrong with "her" or "his water"; this is, especially, true in connection with acute diseases of the digestive organs. The reason why the belief so extensively prevails, among the classes mentioned, that the "waterworks" of the horse are liable to become obstructed and otherwise deranged is, to a certain extent, involved in obscurity. It may, however, be partially accounted for from the symptoms exhibited by a horse suffering from intestinal indigestion or constipation, when a great mass of feces has accumulated in the pelvic flexure of the large colon. The bowel in this case being abnormally distended by solid contents, and in consequence a great deal of undue pressure is brought to bear on the bladder and surrounding structures, which causes frequent stretching and apparent attempts at staling. In such cases the inexperienced and unscientific observer may have some grounds for supposing that the trouble is of a urinary nature; but in a large majority of the cases which are termed "his water," none of the above symptoms are present, nor any other symptom that would indicate the correctness of such a diagnosis. The veterinary surgeon meets with this opinion regarding the troubles the horse has had with "his water" at almost every turn, and in many cases he has to manifest his acquiescence, or run the risk, at some future time, of hearing the opinion expressed that his knowledge is much inferior to that of "the old man Knowall," the local quack. In some instances the belief that the urinary apparatus of the horse is often defective, leads to bad results; for acting on this supposition some owners, grooms and drivers of horses are continually dosing the animals under their charge with diuretic medicines, or, in horsemen's language, "Givin' them som'at for their water," which, in quite a few cases, actually inflames or debilitates some of the principal organs connected with the urinary system, and thus, in their supreme ignorance, they bring about the very condition which they are endeavoring to avoid. Diseases of the urinary organs of the horse are not by any means unknown, but in my experience they are not nearly so frequent occurrence as they are generally supposed to be. Compared with diseases of the digestive organs they stand

about one to twenty-five, and in relation to diseases of the respiratory system about one to twenty. The symptoms of the principal diseases of the urinary organs of the horse are, by the practical observer, quite easily distinguished. I would, therefore, humbly suggest to those who employ a veterinary surgeon that they in every instance, not only in supposed urinary trouble, but in every other case, permit him to make a diagnosis without interrupting him with a gratuitous opinion; only answering, if you can intelligently, such questions as he may deem necessary to ask. I am quite sure that by the observance of this suggestion, there will be laid on the veterinary profession a heavy debt of gratitude.

### The Dairy.

#### Testing Cows.

Testing cows has been a feature of many of the best Canadian fairs for some years past. The object has been to demonstrate which is the most profitable dairy cow, but owing to the methods adopted have in very few instances thrown much light on the subject, in fact, on the contrary, the results have been decidedly misleading. As these tests have usually been conducted, the amount of milk and butter produced has been shown, but the cost of producing has not been taken into consideration. Better to produce one pound of butter at a profit of ten cents than two pounds at a loss. Therefore, the point should be how cheaply can the cow produce butter, not how much can she produce; or, in other words, the test should be which will make the most butter from a given amount of food. The farmer who keeps his cows in the stables and feeds all alike can reach a fairly satisfactory conclusion by weighing the milk and testing it with a lactoscope, or even a pioscope, costing but seventy-five cents, will lead to a fairly accurate conclusion as to the comparative values of the different animals. In the summer season it is much harder to arrive at a fair conclusion, as the cow that produces fifty per cent. more milk may do so at seventy-five per cent. greater cost. While in some sections the summer feed does not count for much in this country as yet, the time is fast approaching when it will, and it is wisdom to breed with that end in view. Professor Robertson estimates one-half of the cows in Ontario to be paying for their own keep and helping to pay the board of the other half. If this be correct, and many practical dairymen claim that it is quite within the mark, surely we should learn a lesson from it. It does not cost \$2 per year more to milk and care for a cow producing a profit of \$25 than one that does not pay her board, so that the actual difference in a small herd of cows might pay the interest on the mortgage. It is to be hoped that tests of cows may prove in the near future a profitable and attractive feature at our best exhibitions. If such is to be the case, however, they must be conducted on proper principles, and not by simply awarding the prize to the cow that makes the most butter regardless of what it costs to produce it.

Thomas B. Wales, a Holstein breeder of Iowa, says:—"I believe public tests are of value to the public, though the cow hardly stands a fair chance. They are as fair for one breed, however, as another. I believe private tests are of greater value, and the hints as to dishonesty in making them by writers are ridiculous and unmanly. The same kind of testimony is given regarding them as is taken by our juries, and that sends men to jail and the gallows. The more tests published the better. If it had not been for tests and printer's ink we would still be contented with seven pounds of butter a week."