LIVESTOCK INTERESTS

SELECTING ANIMALS FOR BREEDING PURPOSES.

This is an all important matter and one that has never received from the farmer the attention which its importance demands, writes W. J. Kennedy. It would be putting it mild to say that it has never received a tithe of the attention of which it is deserving. When directions are given for selecting breeding animals they generally refer to males rather than to both males and females. Now it is quite proper to lay much stress on the selection of suitable males. It is quite proper to hold it up as being more important to make a careful choice of males than of females, but a careful selection of females should in no wise be overlooked. It is probably time that more care is exercised by breeders of grades in the selection of females than by those who breed pure breds. The reasons for this are found in the anxiety on the part of those who breed pure breds to turn them all into money at prices in advance of those which represent their meat values. It should not be so. It cannot be so without working injury somewhere. If the animal is sold for breeding, the results will not be good in the herd, flock or stud into which it goes, and if it is not sold but kept to breed from, the progress of the herd, flock or stud in which it is retained will be so far hindered. Advice is fully given by way of urging our breeders to castrate all males which are not up to the standard and such advice is good; but it should not be forgotten that it is very important also that breeders should be reminded now and then of the importance of discarding all females for breeding purposes not up to a given standard. Selection may be said to contain, in germ at least, the art of breeding. To be able to select well, generally speaking, means to be able to breed well. It involves a great many considerations. These relate not only to form but also to disposition. It has also reference to pedigree and performance of ancestry.

The breeder who is to select well must have in his mind and well mapped out, the form or type of an animal which he desires to breed. This image, though only existing in the mind should be as clearly defined as though it were transferred to canvas. He is at sea when he attempts to select unless thus equipped. Without being able to select with reference to a true standard he may undo in one generation what he has effected in another. He is thus whirled about in an eddy which greatly hinders, if it is not fatal to all improvement.

BULL PRICES OUT OF LINE.

Comment runs generally at all the spring sales to the effect that the prices of bulls are entirely too low compared to the values set on the females. Various reasons are offered, probably the most important being the fact that many of the ranchmen have not yet sold their feeding steers and do not want to buy bulls until they effect a clearance of their range products. Farmers who have filled their feed-lots from the ranges the past two years at the high prices current have not always been able to win out on their ventures and they are insisting on lower prices, which the ranchmen do not seem willing to concede. Hence operations in feeders for the farms and bulls for the ranges are not at presen very active. This is one view of it.

Whatever the cause it must be conceded that prices are out of line when a good yearling bull sells for $150 or $200, and his dam next comes into the ring and commands around $1,000. Instances approximating these figures have happened at the sales this spring. Such a situation offers opportunity to the shrewd buyer who has the facilities for carrying bulls at reasonable cost a few weeks or months. Good young bulls at around $150 to $200 should be a pretty good investment, quite independent of the prospective range trade which is expected to open up before long. The demand for bulls from the farms is constantly growing as more and more men enter upon cattle-breeding and others put into effect the lesson of stock improvement they have learned. The strong values now commanded by the best females indicate the determined disposition on the part of breeders to equip themselves with the choicest material for the work of the future, but in the scramble for females the values of the males should not be overlooked.—Breeder's Gazette.

DEHORING CATTLE.

The Agricultural Experiment Station of Arizona issues the following timely hint on dehorning cattle:

The thought of saying something upon this subject was suggested to the writer by seeing a promising young bull suffering the loss of his horns by what seemed to be a most barbarous method. The poor brute had been thrown and was lying with his feet tied together, his head tied to one post and his hind foot drawn back by a pully and tackle to another. Three men and a boy were working about his head helping to saw off the horns. The dry, powdery manure of the corral was used to stop the flow of blood. The operation of dehorning must cause some pain, but it need not be accompanied by such rough handling as to endanger the future usefulness of the animal dehorned.

There are few men, if any, who have handled hornless cattle that do not appreciate the advantages of dehorning, and who do not strongly advocate its practice. Not only is danger of injury from hooking avoided, but the animals are more quiet and peaceable, giving better results in the milking corral and the feed lot. With the loss of their horns they seem to lose their desire to fight. It is no longer a question as to whether cattle shall be dehorned or not, but a question of when and how to do it.

The old original method of dehorning was by use of the saw. It is still advocated by some and has the advantage of taking off the horn where other means some times fail. Clippers designed for that purpose are more convenient and as a rule more efficient. In the case of old animals, not only do the horns themselves become very hard, but the so-called pith assumes a bony character, such as it is some times impossible to cut

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