

STOCK.

The Royal Show of England as Seen by a Canadian.

In accordance with your request, I am now sending you a short account of the impressions made upon me as a Canadian attending the great Royal Agricultural Society's Exhibition held at Birmingham, Eng., and the way in which it struck me as comparing with our own Canadian fairs and Toronto Exhibition. A point which struck me forcibly upon first entering the show was the entire absence of "special attractions" outside of matters purely agricultural. I thought what a relief it was to be able to devote one's whole time to an agricultural exhibition without the temptation to go and see some of the so-called "special attractions." I am of the opinion that some of the boards of directors of our exhibitions in Ontario are devoting too much attention and money to these attractions, forgetting the objects which these exhibitions are intended to promote. I notice this year that one of our largest exhibitions has reduced the sum of money appropriated for the prizes, but I do not see that they have curtailed their appropriation for special attractions. The exhibits of live stock at the Royal were very numerous in almost all the classes, and it did not appear to me that in any of the various classes there was a "walk-over" for any exhibitor. In all the classes there appeared to be plenty of competition for the honors. In the sections of the different breeds of horses the exhibits were very superior, and they were all shown to the best advantage, but no trials of speed were given in any case. The spectators had a splendid opportunity of inspecting the animals on exhibition, as the horses and cattle were each day brought out on parade, and upon each animal a number was exposed, and full particulars could be ascertained as to owner, pedigree, etc., by reference to the official catalogue, which is carefully compiled. This parade was without doubt the most interesting feature of the show. All the animals, whether prize-winners or not, were compelled to be brought into the parade. I counted as many as fifty Shorthorn bulls in one section, and any one of them good enough to head a herd. All the English, Irish, and Scotch breeds of cattle were equally well represented, together with those of the Channel Islands.

The sheep department was where the highest degree of development was achieved, the various English breeds being well represented. I was surprised to find so many different breeds, being in all sixteen varieties, and they were all brought out in a high state of perfection. The prizes that were realized for the prize-winners in the different sections would be a surprise to many of our Canadian farmers. I was informed that 80 guineas was a common price for single animals, and from 15 to 20 guineas was the common price for lambs. Several prize-winners were sold to go to Canada. The Argentine Republic was a strong competitor for high-priced sheep. Shropshires and Lincolns appeared to be selling at the highest figures.

But it was in the swine department that I was mostly interested. Taking the swine exhibit as a whole, I do not think that it was equal to that of the Toronto Industrial. There was not the same variety of breeds. The American breeds, viz., Chester Whites, Duroc-Jersey or Poland-China, are not bred in England. I was very much disappointed in the exhibit of Berkshires, the number of hogs and the quality not being as good as those shown in Toronto and London, the large White or Yorkshire breed being the largest exhibit and the best quality of any of the breeds exhibited. The Tamworths came next in point of numbers and quality, but in all the exhibits of the different breeds of hogs they were shown in breeding condition and not so highly fitted as is the practice at Canadian shows. One of the conditions of winning a prize in the breeding sow section was that she had to produce a litter of pigs within three months from date of exhibition; failing this, she would forfeit the prize awarded. I did not consider the classification so good as at our shows, there being only two sections for each sex, viz., boar farrowed previous to 1898, and boar farrowed in 1898. Also, sows farrowed previous to 1898, and sows farrowed in 1898. With a classification of this kind, a proper comparison of the animals cannot be made owing to the difference in age of the animals shown in the same sections. Upon summing up the entire exhibits, I was impressed with the fact that Canada could hold a creditable position in comparison with the "Great Royal" in point of quality of exhibits of live stock. "Oak Lodge Farm." J. E. BRETHER.

The Present Tendency of Shorthorn Breeding.

Mr. Wm. Housman, in the *London Live Stock Journal*, discusses the above named subject in the following fashion:

Kingdoms and dynasties, nations and families, may rise and fall in succession like the waves of the sea, yet in this world of change, instability, wearing-out and renewal, we see, both in natural and in artificial conditions of life, types preserved from extinction. At different periods in the history of the Shorthorn breed of cattle, the maintenance of the breed seemed to depend upon continuance of the work of one or another breeder whose excel-

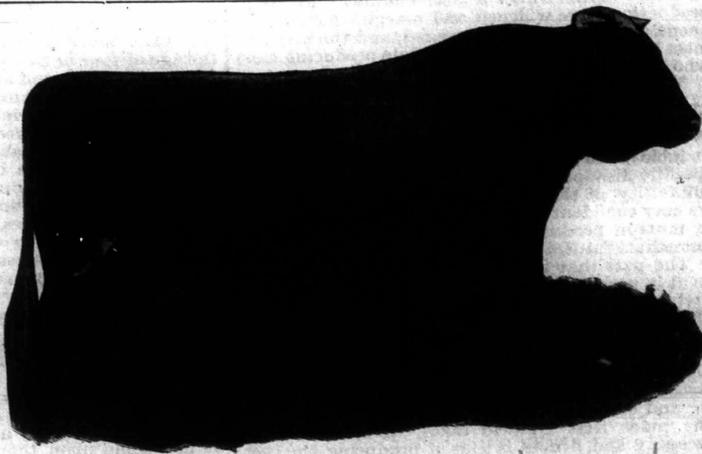
covers the blood-relationships concealed under new names and different family lines. A breeder who in his youth was familiar with the old herd, and meanwhile occupied with other pursuits, and a stranger to the progress of Shorthorn events, if he should after the lapse of, say, forty years, seek out the herds, and happen to see descendants inheriting the characters he well knew in early life, would recognize the recovered characters, but, reading the pedigrees, would wonder how the similarity to apparently unrelated cattle had been produced. Not until he traced by analysis the relationships below the surface would he be able to account for it.

There are more renewals going on than perhaps are generally known to be renewals. Whilst people are looking to certain lines of pedigree and to the appearance of certain names on the surface for the perpetuation of particular characters, it is quite possible to let those characters slip, and to find them reappearing unexpectedly in new lines. Those who, with the requisite skill, breed for the personal properties of the animal, assorting the unions according to their knowledge of the progenitors of the animals they pair, in connection with their judgment of personal fitness, will often succeed in obtaining, whilst those who rely upon certain lines of breeding, exclusively, fail to obtain faithful reproductions of a favorite type.

We must recognize, however, as the higher kind of judgment that which has as its standard a type upon which competent breeders generally could agree, and not the judgment which leans upon that of one master breeder alone. The tendency to lean upon a crutch has done much harm in the past. Possibly reaction towards under-valuation of the judgment and herds of breeders who, having attracted many satellites, have suffered in reputation from shoals of small-fry of their herds consequently brought before the public, has done scarcely less than equal harm. Such reaction may at times cause a tendency to an indiscriminate, a too extensive, and, when carried to extreme measure, a destructive practice of making miscellaneous mixtures, out of which anything like a distinct and constant type can be brought only by long patience coupled with skill of a very high order.

We have seen something of this tendency within the last fifteen or twenty years. It has, no doubt, helped to enlarge the basis of Shorthorn breeding and to give a mass of mixed material for experiment by breeders possessing keen judgment; and many active minds are now engaged in the endeavor to produce really high-class Shorthorns. Some indeed, ill spared, are missed as we look down the list of names distinguished in the recent past; but one scarcely can doubt, knowing the bent of the present leading breeders, that the older habit of leaning too hard upon a single staff, and the newer practice of venturing unadvisedly the whole weight upon untried ground, where quagmires are not uncommon, will be both avoided by them, at least for some time to come. There are those who can manage old families with but cautious and sparing infusions of fresh blood as occasion requires, and

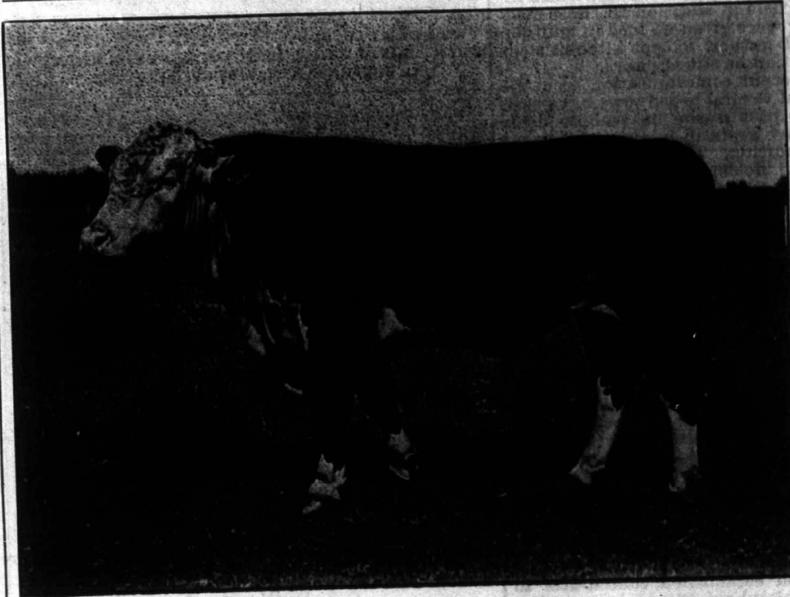
there are those who can admit fresh blood more freely, and yet breed to a type or standard with eminent success. Both classes do good service to the Shorthorn interest, and neither class can say with good reason that the other class is wrong. Those who can neither mix strains of blood liberally, nor breed in a way more nearly approaching to exclusiveness, with real skill, will necessarily fail, to whichever system they incline. Their failures (more or less), however, should not affect our judgment of the systems in which severally they fail. The successes of those who have the skill show that a considerable space of ground between the extremes is safe for breeders who know how to take their stand upon it.



SHORTHORN BULL, MARENGO, 1ST PRIZE AND CHAMPION, ROYAL SHOW, 1898; OWNED BY MR. PHILIP L. MILLS, RUDDINGTON. BRED BY MR. WM. DUTHIE, COLLYNIE.

lent judgment had done much to develop, to save, or to restore. But in the course of time those potent master minds which were regarded as indispensable, passed away; herds made prominent by unique points of excellence were dispersed, and falling into many hands, under many differences of circumstances, put out branches varying much from each other and from the parent stocks. Thus the peculiarities of distinguished sub-types were lost in the direct lines of continuous descent. Still, it has frequently happened in such cases that likeness to ancestral peculiarities has reappeared, and has proved to be recoverable as the inheritance of a family, transmissible from line to line, by intercrossing, and so, once more, eventually, the characteristic merits of a herd or group of herds have reappeared in temporary fixity in a new group.

Now suppose an instance of recovery of charac-



HEREFORD BULL, SPOTLESS OF INGLESIDE 68708, AT TWO YEARS AND THREE MONTHS OLD, WINNER OF 1ST IN CLASS AND CHAMPION SILVER MEDAL AGAINST ALL AGES AT THE WINNIPEG INDUSTRIAL, 1898; OWNED BY J. E. MARPLES, DELEAU, MAN.

teristics marking a type or a branch or sub-type, in the way here indicated. The pedigrees of the old dispersed herd may indeed form the foundation of pedigrees which in the later generations, and possibly in a majority of the recorded generations, are full of new names. But besides direct descendants from the old herd, there are animals of other female lines which have received the old herd's character through its males, and these, although true to the old type, have none of the well-known old names in their lineages. Analysis of their pedigrees dis-

safe for breeders who know how to take their stand upon it.

The Crow's Nest railway agreement called for certain reductions in freight rates by the C. P. R. in return for concessions granted the Company by government. One reduction which was to go into effect on September 1st next, called for a reduction of 1 1/2c. per 100 pounds on grain, flour, etc., from Manitoba and territorial points to Fort William. This reduction has now gone into effect.