

STOCK.

London Hackney Show.

The thirteenth annual show of Hackneys under the auspices of the English Hackney Horse Society was held at Islington, March 2 to 5, inclusive. The entries numbered 495, against 442 in 1896. In every section good animals were in evidence. In each of the young classes the blood of such sires as Danegelt, Garton Duke of Connaught, Ganymede, Cadet, His Majesty, and Danebury flowed in the veins of a number of the winners. The junior championship was unhesitatingly placed to the credit of Sir Walter Gilbey's three-year-old Royal Danegelt; Matchless II., by Lord Derby II., out of a Danegelt mare, winning the reserve award. The senior champion was picked from a grand collection, viz., Rosador, Rosencrantz, Gentleman John, Saxon, Winald Fireaway, and Polonius. Rosador, by Danegelt (afterwards supreme champion), was finally placed first, followed by Gentleman John, by Lord Derby II. The championship mares were little if any easier to judge than those of the sterner sex. The junior cup fell to Lady Crompton, by Grand Fashion II., out of a Danegelt mare; the reserve going to the yearling Clairvoyante, by Ganymede. The senior championship mare was found in Orange Blossom, by Connaught, and reserve in Bonwick Belle, by the same sire. The challenge cup and gold medal (for the second time) was also taken by Orange Blossom; reserve, Bonwick Belle.

Early Shearing of Sheep.

It is, we believe, the practice of many of the most successful flockmasters in the Dominion to shear their yearling sheep, especially, and if in good condition, their breeding ewes as well, early in April, claiming that the sheep thrive much better through the warm spring months free from the weight of their coats. There are several advantages in this practice, among which is the one above indicated; another is getting the work over before spring seeding commences. Sheep with heavy fleeces on are liable in the warm spring days to get cast upon their backs and may die before being discovered. If they are infested with ticks they suffer severely from this cause and cannot thrive as they should. Shearing and dipping early prevents this loss. The sheep will have longer wool on in the fall when they are more generally offered for sale, and will on this account present a more favorable appearance and bring a better price. There is very little risk of the sheep taking cold if the shearing is done in mild weather and they are kept out of drafts for a few days. They do not seem to mind it at all and are vastly more comfortable without their wool. The only objection that can be urged against early shearing is that dealers are apt to make too great difference in the prices of unwashed wool as compared with washed. It is generally considered fair by breeders to deduct one-third the weight for unwashed wool. Dealers generally want to make the price less favorable, but there is not so much prejudice against unwashed wool now as there was a few years ago, and we think that one-third off is as much as the farmer should submit to; but even if he has to take a cent or two less than this, the other advantages in early shearing more than compensate for any loss in this respect. Let the ewes be sheared as soon as the weather and their condition will justify, then let the lambs be dipped for destruction of ticks in a few days after shearing the sheep, and you give the whole flock a fair start to make the best use of the early bite of green grass and the best returns for the care bestowed.

Since writing the above we have received answers, in reply to an inquiry, from wool dealers in Toronto, in which they claim that the reduction for unwashed wool should be from 40 to 50 per cent., according to condition of wool. A London, Ont., dealer would put the shrinkage at from 25 to 50 per cent., depending upon the condition of the wool and how the sheep have been fed and cared for. He found less shrinkage on the short wools. If proper care has been observed to keep the wool free from dirt, we are of the opinion that a fair reduction would not be above 33 per cent.

Hog Raising.

BY T. H. MASON, ELGIN CO., ONT.

The importance of this branch of agricultural industry to the Ontario farmer can better be appreciated by the study of some statistics. Our exports of ham and bacon to Great Britain in 1891 were a little over half a million; in 1896, \$4,382,000. At the same time, our imports from the United States have fallen from about \$1,500,000 annually to a merely nominal amount. This shows conclusively that it is the British market that the Ontario farmer has to cater to. This market demands a long, well-fed hog, well streaked with lean, and weighing from 150 to 225 lbs., live weight, preferably 180 to 200 lbs., and our packers to-day are paying from \$1.00 to \$1.25 per cwt. more than they will pay for the fat, heavy hogs that formerly were in so much demand. Now, if the British markets demand this class of hogs, and are willing to pay for them, it is to our interest to produce them, because we can produce these weights cheaper than we can the heavy weights. This point, increased cost of production with increased weight, has been proven time and again by experiments at Ottawa, Guelph, and the leading experimental stations of the United States. No one breed has a monopoly of

the good points essential to this trade. Yorkshire, Berkshire, Tamworth, Chester White and Poland-China are all suitable if judiciously selected and properly fed. Probably a first cross of the longer breeds with the shorter classes will give the greatest satisfaction to feeder and packer alike.

Breeding sows in summer should have clover or grass pasture with plenty of water, and a shelter. If pasture should fail, some other food must be fed so as to keep sows in good, strong, healthy condition. Sows should never be allowed to get thin and weak, as it is quite possible to starve a litter of pigs before they are born. Sows in winter should have run of yard, a moderate amount of roots (sugar beets preferred), and a small feed of grain daily. Ensilage may be substituted for roots.

About two or three weeks before farrowing, sows should be separated from other sows, fed on warm, sloppy food—bran, shorts, ground oats are all good—so as to make sure that the sows have plenty of milk; feed lightly after farrowing, then increase feed as the needs of the growing pigs demand. Castrate while still on the sow, at three or four weeks of age. Have a part of pen separated off and feed little pigs scalded wheat, shorts and sweet skim milk. Sows should have two litters annually. Spring litters should come, if possible, last of March or first half of April; fall litters, as early in the fall as possible. Avoid winter litters, if possible; no matter how comfortable the quarters, or how well they may be handled, they rarely prove as profitable feeders as pigs coming in April. Spring litters should be weaned at say five weeks of age, if you have plenty of sweet skim milk for them; if not, let them go to seven weeks. By weaning at five weeks you have your fall litters that much earlier, which is important. Wean fall litters at say eight weeks old, so as to keep spring litters back until April. Spring litters are on the whole most profitable. As soon as clover is large enough turn sow and pigs upon it. When pigs are weaned, if fences are right, let them run on clover. Feed all they will eat up clean three times daily: at first scalded wheat, shorts or middlings, and milk, then later gradually work in with the shorts whatever surplus grains you may have on the farm. Peas, corn, barley, rye, oats, all are good. Pigs fed in this way give better returns from the grain fed, their digestive organs are stronger, and there is considerable food value in the clover. Fall litters will not stand as heavy feeding as spring litters. Especial care should be taken to keep the beds dry, to give a supply of wood ashes and charcoal, some sods or earth, and to feed a few roots daily. Spring litters should be ready for market at from four and one-half to six months old; fall litters at six to seven months. At present prices of shorts and grain at Western Ontario points, spring litters should not cost over 2½ cents per lb., live weight, and fall litters not over 3 cents per lb., live weight. To sum up:

- (1) Especial attention to constitution and feeding quality in parents.
- (2) Clover pasture in summer—some roots in winter.
- (3) Liberal feeding from start to finish.
- (4) Market at as early an age as possible.

Our Scottish Letter.

SUCCESSFUL BULL SALES—THE SHIRE HORSE SHOW.

Canadians do not like—at least, at the outset they strenuously opposed—the policy of compulsory slaughter at the port of landing in this country. Their view then was that this system would have a bad effect on Canadian stock-breeding, and, as a rule, farmers here were not disposed to dispute that contention. Whether Canadians are still of that opinion it is not for us to say. Having no immediate means of knowing, it would ill become us to dogmatize. The recent series of bull sales have made it abundantly manifest that the effects of the policy on the breeding of home cattle has been altogether beneficial. Seldom indeed have prices equal to those recorded during the past few weeks been received here, and this applies to all the breeds. At Perth the average price of 210 Aberdeen-Angus bulls was £30 7s. 6d.; another gross average for 279 animals of that breed of all ages and both sexes was £28 9s. 5., a figure never before reached in the history of these great sales, except in 1884, when 45 head made £29 13s. 7d. The black bulls are in extraordinary demand, their impressiveness for crossing with horned breeds being the great point in their favor. The produce in nine cases out of ten is invariably black, and polled, and calves of this type can be sold for 50s. apiece almost as soon as dropped. The highest priced bull at Perth was Mr. William Whyte's Jipsey Baron—a grand specimen for which the Marquis of Huntly paid £252, a fair figure for a yearling bull. At Aberdeen 215 pedigree bulls of the same breed made £22 8s. 1d. of an average—a capital price considering that there were no fancy figures and that all were sold, as we say, for crossing purposes. These figures fairly gave the black polled race the start and none of the other breeds have come within measurable distance of it, taking numbers into consideration. Apart from numbers, the highest average so far this season has been made by the Highlanders. At their great sale held in Oban on 25th February, 46 bulls made an average of £32 14s. 2d. each, and the highest price was £120, paid by Mr. Thom, the proprietor of the island of Canna, in the inner Hebrides, for the Ensay yellow bull, An Caraid 1173. It is very remarkable indeed to find such prices being paid for the old, slow-maturing race, but it is a most healthful token

when this is so, because the character of very much of the soil and climate of Scotland renders any other kind of farming impossible except that in which the Highlander plays a very important part. Mr. Stewart, of Ensay, has one of the best folds in the country and he is difficult to beat, whether in the sale-ring or the show-ring. The price realized for An Caraid is all the more noteworthy seeing he was an unfed bull and he was not placed in the show-ring. It was blood which sold him, and that is the thing wanted along with merit. The highest priced A.-A. bull, Jipsey Baron, is from a herd in which genuine merit has never been sacrificed to fancy breeding. Mr. Whyte's cattle are large framed, somewhat strong in the bone, and always come to the front with commercial men. The breeding men are realizing that that is the sort by which money can be made, and there is less disposition than formerly to run for fancy points only.

The first of the Shorthorn sales was held at Penrith on the 18th of February, when Mr. Thornton disposed of a fine lot of sound, big, well-fleshed bulls, chiefly of the Booth and Bates class as distinguished from the Aberdeen type. Eighty-three bulls were catalogued and £126 was paid for the champion—a fine bull, named Magician, owned by Mr. Barnes, Baurgh, Wigton. The others sold well and an excellent demand was experienced. About a fortnight earlier Mr. Thornton dispersed one of the best herds in Cumberland, that built up with great care by the late Mr. John Strong, Crosby, Maryport. The history of this herd is very interesting. It originated with cattle of the Shorthorn type selected by Mr. Strong in the dales and on the fells of Cumberland and Westmoreland. These he graded up by the use of carefully selected pedigree bulls until he had a fully registered herd and one which was known far and near as composed of sound, healthy cattle, most of them having quite a unique reputation as milkers. The averages at this sale are worth noting: Sixty cows and heifers made £29 18s. 1d. and 13 bulls made £24 16s., the gross average for 73 head of both sexes and all ages, including calves, being £29 apiece. To return to the bull sales. We are still in Cumberland. The biggest event of the season in this line is the sale conducted by Messrs. Harrison & Son at Carlisle. The cattle are characterized by greater size than the Scottish sort, and some idea of the work to be got through by the auctioneer in one day may be inferred from the presence of 333 in the catalogue. There is a special class of white bulls much in favor on the borders for crossing on to Galloway cattle, the result being the famous blue-grays of which much has been heard. This year somehow these bulls did not sell quite so well, probably because there were rather many of them. For the others the demand was very steady and trade was good. At the Perth Shorthorn bull sale 203 bulls made an average of £26 5s. 6d., the corresponding figure for last year being £26 15s. 6d. The numbers were, however, much greater this year, so that the result was quite as satisfactory. It is an indication of the good effect of the cattle policy of the present government that the average price of bulls is £5 higher in 1897 than it was in 1895. At the Aberdeen sale the average price of 26 Shorthorn bulls was £28 17s. 2d., and at Inverness, where perhaps the best young Shorthorns of the season were seen, the Dunglass herd had an average of £32 12s. 6d. for seven and Rosehaugh had an average of £31 15s. 3d. for four. Gordon Castle had £33 1s. 6d. for two, Balnakyle had £31 13s. for seven, and Findon had £32 11s. for four. Perhaps the best bulls at this sale were not sold. Two splendid specimens were exhibited from Rosehaugh which will be further heard of. They were put in at a reserve of £150 each. So much for cattle.

Horses are now in the front. Last week the Shire Horse Show was held in London and another grand display of the breed was seen. As has been the case for several years past, the leading honors have been secured by the produce of Harold 3703, the Calwich stud horse, and himself one of the most popular horses seen in London since the show began. The champion horse was Mr. Henderson's Markeaton Royal Harold and the champion mare Mr. Grendage's Queen of the Shires. The former we care little about. He is a big, loose kind of horse, with little quality, but the mare is of quite the type which Scotchmen like if her feet were only larger. She has a fine head and neck and a grand back. A Clydesdale man prefers more quality of bone and a better kind of hair, but we have not seen many Shire mares of the kind which please in the North. One such is a gray mare named Bluetail, owned by Lord Llangattock, a Welsh peer who loves a good horse and is spending much on Shires. Bluetail is a lovely mare, but the English judges are not fond of her. She shows too much quality for them, so they put her back. The judges this year showed a strong determination to revert to the old-fashioned type of Shire; that is, the class with the round bone and coarse joints. Whether this is a wise policy we do not say, but from personal observation in the hall we should say it was decidedly popular. Having followed the Shire horse shows now continuously for about ten years, it does not appear to us to admit of doubt that the Clydesdale can always beat the Shire if breeders and judges will give careful heed to size and weight. The Clydesdale has the quality, and what is wanted is to keep the lorry in view. There is a big market for the right kind of lorry horses, and the judges should try to help breeders to produce such. "SCOTLAND YET."