

tributable only, we fear, to that mixture of prejudice and ignorance that characterizes too many farming operations. It is a dash of this mixture that makes many of our few existing flock-masters half starve their sheep, and so lose a proper return in weight and quality of fleece: and in the case of fine and medium woolled sheep it would undoubtedly pay to provide some low shelter of boards under which sheep could take refuge in rainy weather even when out to grass. The retention of the yolk is thus secured, and a healthier sheep and a higher priced fleece is the result. There is also in our climate a peculiarly suitable purpose to which farmers might turn their sheepskins. Properly cured and dyed, a soft, close, smooth sheep-pelt may well be utilized, now that buffalo robes are no more, for every need filled by the curly brown friend of our childhood. The Boers of the Transvaal have, since their first settlement in Africa, used sheepskins with the wool on, for coats and robes. Why should the Canadian farmer despise or ignore the cheap substitutes for a buffalo skin that he has in his own farm yard? If Persian lamb coats are found good things for the rich men, a nice, close Southdown coat cannot be a very bad thing for his poorer neighbor.

Fashions in clothes, carpets and wraps affect fashion in breeds of sheep: but whether carding, or combing wools be desired, those who look to the wool crop prophecy an immense impetus to the sheep industry, while so far as mutton is concerned it should be enough to state that lambs are selling in Buffalo at \$6.60, or for as much as their dams are worth, and they are only nine months old. A young ewe can clear her own cost, therefore, in one year. Her fleece pays the winter keep, and we would like to know what other investment on or off a farm gives such a return as this in sure cash. Now-a-days a well-fed medium-wooled shearing clip is an average of 6 lbs. at 24 cts., and if a farmer makes his winter keep come to more than \$1.44 per head he feeds either unwisely or extravagantly. The accelerating rapidity with which a flock doubles up is an easy application of simple arithmetic, and we will not dwell on it. Sheep can be profitably kept where cattle will dwindle from poverty of the soil. They like our dry, bracing cold. They require but little attendance. If properly kept they pay. So long as the Americans are content to let Canadian importers be middlemen between the English breeder and themselves, it does not become us to quarrel with our lot. They are also the best buyers of our home bred animals, whether for breeding or killing purposes: and as one of them observed the other day to an importer—"Ours is a mighty big country to fill. You can't overdo either breeding or importation in a lifetime; for the progressive farmers of the United States are receiving recruits to their number every hour of every day."

So extraordinary has been the demand for Shropshire sheep this fall that the lucky owners of Shropshires have had to resist most tempting offers, rather than utterly deplete their flocks. We know of one breeder, Mr. T. C. Patteson, of Eastwood, who has made sales in Nova Scotia to the East, Dakota, to the west, and in most of the intermediate States of the Union. So impressed is he with the genuine character of the demand and with the fact that it has come to stay, that, as will be seen by our present issue, he has determined to centre his leisure energies upon horses and sheep, and to dispose of his valuable herd of Shorthorns next month without reserve. Eastwood may be peculiarly adapted to sheep: but what Mr. Patteson, the earliest bird in the Shrop market, discovered, will no doubt ere long also force itself upon many another stock farmer in Ontario, who will fall into

line, and minister to the wants of our neighbors. The day was when sheep paid and everybody went into that department of husbandry. Then the industry pined for awhile, and nearly everybody abandoned it. The day of revival has now again dawned, and whether it be in Leicesters, Cotswolds, Shrops or Southdowns that the venture is made, there is no room to doubt that a period of great activity is at hand.

### Our Scotch Letter.

(From our Aberdeenshire Correspondent.)

THE LONDON FAT STOCK EXHIBITION—DOUBTLESS VICTORY FOR POLLED ABERDEENS—JEALOUSY AMONG ENGLISH BREEDERS.

In the largest exhibition and all round one of the best ever held in London under the auspices of the Smithfield Club, the Polled Aberdeen-Angus breed won, not only the champion plate, but the reserve place, and such a significant victory, as was inevitable, has formed a topic which has been much commented upon in this country. It is not so long ago when I used to be told that it was next to impossible for any breed except the Shorthorns or the Herefords, to win the championship at the London fat stock show, unless their claim to it was quite beyond question. There was at one time a feeling among Scotch exhibitors that the bench of judges who were selected were sure to lean to the Herefords or Shorthorns in the champion competition. Whatever real ground there may have been for such an opinion—and I do not think it was without some foundation—there can be no reason now for charging the Smithfield judges or the Birmingham judges with not giving due consideration to the merits of the great rivals of the "white faces" and "the red, white and roans." I am not sure, if the truth were told, that the jealousy that obtains between the "Shorthorn" and "Hereford" men had not something to do this season with the much-coveted marks of distinction—the Elkhington plate and the Smithfield plate—being given to our native "Buchan humilies" or, as they are also called, Angus "doddies." It has also to be noted, however, that Scotch interests are much better attended to in the appointment of judges than they used to be, but as Scotland was in a minority in the special court which made the champion awards, the English judges must, on the present occasion, be acquitted of acting with partisan motives, at least as regards their Scotch opponents. I should not like to be understood that the two Polled Aberdeens, which so well upheld the credit of the breed, were specimens unworthy of the honors which were bestowed upon them. That was not so. They were capital specimens of a breed which seem to finish almost better than any other breed—they come to the black so ripe. The late Mr. McCombie used to speak about giving his favorite Aberdeens the "last dip," an expression which I think showed that in his opinion they possessed in a high degree this quality of finishing well. The chief organs of English agriculturists, such as that influential newspaper, *The Live-Stock Journal*, have taken notice of the rivalry between the "Shorthorn" and "Hereford" men, which was quite apparent, both at Birmingham and London this year. At Birmingham it led to a deadlock, and at London almost to a "squabble." The sooner feeling of this sort disappears the better it will be for everything concerned. It were no credit to any breed to snatch a victory on account of the spirit of jealousy existing among the bench of judges. Neither Scotch exhibitors nor Scotch cattle need to win their victories by such means; they are quite capable of holding their own against "all comers," and it detracts from the honor of winning when it can be said of the judges that jealousy warped their judgments. The suggestion has been made, and there is a good deal of force in it, that to avoid—I had almost said such scenes as were witnessed at Birmingham and London—at least one direct representative of the consumers' interests should be upon the bench. After all, may we not depend on the good sense of Englishmen prevailing in the end? But should it be necessary to restrain their partisan preferences, in the meantime, the hint thrown out by the editor of the *Live-Stock Journal* might in some way be taken up. I should hesitate, however, before I put it into the hand of any butcher, however eminent, to be sole arbiter in such a case, as say the awarding of the Smithfield championship, if his colleagues were unable

to agree among themselves. Let the butcher element be represented certainly, but it must not be introduced ostensibly to keep the breeders right, though its very presence on the bench, I admit, may have that effect.

But to return to the Smithfield show. As I have already stated, it was probably the best on record, not on account of the outstanding merit of a few specimens, but as regards the general excellence of the display. There was a gross entry of 566 being 300 cattle, 183 sheep, and 83 pigs. In the cattle sections Mr. Stephenson, Newcastle, for the second time found himself owner of the Smithfield champion, the winner on this occasion being the five-year-old polled cow Young Bellona, which, as I stated in a former letter, won the blue ribbon at Birmingham. It was only two years ago that Mr. Stephenson accomplished the same feat with his noted polled heifer Luxury. It is certainly rather unusual to find the champion of Scotland and England in the shape of a cow. Cow beef is surely not the beau ideal of the English epicure! It is a wonderful performance for an animal that has had two calves, to carry the champion plate, and as a breed victory it is perhaps more significant than had the winner been a stot or a heifer. Still I am not surprised that the question should have been raised whether it would not be advisable to exclude cows from competing for the champion prize. Such a rule, however, is not really needed, as the chances of cows winning over heifers and steers have not very often to be taken into account. It is stated that her owner has taken Young Bellona home again for breeding purposes, but even should he succeed in getting her to breed, it is not an example that ought to be largely copied, as it serves no good or practical purpose.

The polled section was one of the best in the show. There were in all 27 entries, and the quality was exceedingly good. The Earl of Strathmore and Sir William Gordon Cumming carried the palm in the classes for steers, the latter winning in two-year-old oxen with Gordon, an animal of his own breeding, which showed great symmetry and ripeness; indeed, he was such a good one that he ran the champion cow, to which he was reserve, very close for the final honors, and he was awarded a special prize as the best steer in the hall. To me the cross-bred classes did not excel so much as some of the other classes. A good many breeders give rather too much attention to mere size as against real quality, and that was a conviction forced upon me as I scanned the different classes in this section, but it is quite true that it requires an uncommonly good little one to beat some of the enormous animals which are now shown, and exhibiters probably find that if they are to figure in the prize-list they must have something that will scale well. The Scotch polled crosses, as usual, more than held their own. They won all the first prizes except in one class, that is to say, the three first prizes out of four, and besides the special prize for the best "cross" went to an almost pure-bred Aberdeenshire from Aityre—a heifer which behind had no equal in the show, so deep, thick and true in her hindquarters and loins; indeed, had she been as good in front, I am not sure but she would have given the champion some trouble. The 66 entries of Shorthorns made as good a display as ever I have seen at London, showing that the "red, white and roans" are a truly grand race of cattle, and that they are still certain to keep their ground. Yearling steers have often been a stronger lot. Mr. Wilken, Waterside, won the first prize with an Aberdeenshire bred roan of great substance, which showed an extraordinary average daily gain of 2.43 lbs., but he had not quite the character of a Shorthorn which many judges like to see. The middle class of steers were headed by all the Birmingham winners, which, I think, were referred to in my notes of the show. Aberdeenshire Shorthorns have always a strong supporter at London in the person of Mr. James Bruce, Inverquhomery, who annually enters for competition a class of bullocks which are the admiration of everybody. They are big, thick-fleshed, well-proportioned animals, having a large dash of Sittyton breeding in their top crosses. For the third year in succession Inverquhomery bullocks have topped the aged class of Shorthorn steers, and on this occasion Mr. Bruce is not contented with first honors only, but he also gets the second prize. Rising four years old his bullocks girthed respectively 9 feet 3 inches and 9 feet 2 inches, their daily average gain in pounds being 1.65. The premier ox was a splendid roan of fine proportions, which but for a little narrowness behind the