

Our Scottish Letter. PURE-BRED STOCK SALES.

During the past month we have been living in an atmosphere of high prices. We have seen a Shorthorn bull calf sold for 1,300 gs., a Shire gelding sold for 225 gs., and a Clydesdale filly foal sold for 175 gs. The stock-breeder who is not satisfied with these figures must be very hard to please. The days of buying on pedigree seem to have returned, for, at the Northern Shorthorn sales, which concluded a week ago, anything of Augusta blood went up to any figure, while much finer-looking cattle, no matter what their merit, went for prices no more than remunerative. There is danger in this, and breeders should not forget the lessons of the New York Mills sales, and the Dunmore sale of 1879. The prices recorded at these events have never come back, and many feel it is well they should not do so. A pedigree is good when the animal justifies and is worthy of its breeding. A pedigree without individual merit spells disaster.

The family upon which the "run" is at present is the Augustas. The tribe was founded by the late James Bruce, of Inverquhomery, on a Southern foundation. The deceased gentleman, who was one of the ablest breeders ever known in Aberdeenshire, believed in the tribe, and kept gradually improving them. He found his master sire at last in Waverley, a bull bred in Aberdeenshire by A. Strachan. Mr. Bruce himself said the bull was not perfect, but he supplied what the Inverquhomery cattle lacked, and the results have been more than ample justification for the confidence which Mr. Bruce reposed in him. He was used freely at Inverquhomery, and when the herd was dispersed, shortly before Mr. Bruce's death, a few years ago, the Shorthorn interest discovered that a new family had been added to the breed. The Augustas stepped to the front, and in the female line they are the most highly-prized Shorthorn tribe to-day. The bulls seen at the Northern sales of the race have, as a rule, had little to commend them, and they have not commanded any enhanced prices on account of their breeding.

The averages for the six days' sales of Shorthorns have been very noteworthy. They have varied greatly, and it is sometimes difficult to determine why there should be such variations. Eighteen head at Westside, Brechin, made £24 14s. 4d.; at Little Haddo, Methlic, Aberdeen, the figure was £40 9s. 3d. for 59. At Upper-mill, 36 bull calves made £211 17s. 4d., and of these, 19 belonging to Mr. Duthie made an average of £372 8s. 2d., the highest figure being 1,050 gs., for a white calf. At a joint sale at Old Meldrum, 42 head, of mixed ages and both sexes, made £38 9s. At the joint sale at Loanhead, Warrle, 52 head made £170 14s. 6d.; thirty of these, from the herd of A. T. Gordon, Combscausway, made the great average of £175 8s. 6d., one of them, a dark-roan bull calf, making the extraordinary figure of 1,300 gs., the highest price ever paid for a bull calf. John Wilson, Pirriessmill, Huntley, had 10 bull calves in the 52; the average price of these ten was £238 19s. 7d., and the prices were these: 1,000 gs., 500 gs., 220 gs., 200 gs., 130 gs., 100 gs., 52 gs., 31 gs., 23 gs., 20 gs. This was a most remarkable sale. The Pirriessmill bull calves were nearly all first-rate mellow reds or dark roans. They showed breeding, and were a genuine good lot, sold on their merits, and on nothing else. Mr. Wilson is one of the best and most unassuming of all the Northern Shorthorn breeders. But he has the right kind of cattle. The bulls which have done him so much good are both home-bred and well-colored. On Thursday there was a joint sale at Aberdeen, and 158 head made the splendid average of £52 12s. 1d. The highest price was 420 gs., paid by Germans for a bull calf bred by the Duke of Richmond and Gordon, K. G., Gordon Castle. Other prices for heifers were 330 gs. and 300 gs. (2). These figures were paid for Augustas. At the joint sale held at Inverness, 97 head made the excellent average of £25 17s. 1d. The highest price was 105 gs., realized by a heifer from the herd of Messrs. Peterkin, Dingwall, who have as good cattle as anybody in the north of Scotland. All together, it was a wonderful week, and Shorthorns were again proved to be the greatest of all our cattle breeds.

The advance of Shorthorn breeding is in nothing more clearly illustrated than in the progress of the Collynie sales. In 1886, the highest price made by a Duthie bull calf was 38 gs., and the average £28 5s. 4d. Three years later, the highest price was 111 gs., and the average £45 6s. 9d. Ten years later, in 1899, the highest figure was 305 gs., and the average £123 18s. In 1907 Mr. Duthie made his highest average, £409 16s. 3d., his highest price then being 750 gs. This year he made his highest price, 1,050 gs., and his average was £372 8s. 2d. His best sire this year is Danesfield Storm King, a very thick roan bull, declared by Mr. Duthie to be the best bull he ever owned, but one, the exception being the celebrated Field Marshal. Eight bull calves by Danesfield Storm King made the amazing average of £440 13s. 9d. Another excellent breed-

ing bull is Merry Stamp, bred by the late Sir H. H. Smiley, Bart., in the north of Ireland. Four of his bull calves made the handsome average of £447 10s.

ARGENTINE DEMAND UNSETTLED.

How long this extraordinary buoyancy in the Shorthorn market may continue, is a point to be pondered. Argentina has been doing much to enhance prices, but recent sales in Buenos Ayres do not warrant roseate expectations in that quarter. The most of the exporters lost money on their business, and even cautious operators who understand the market well had to be content with very unequal returns. In other directions the Argentine trade is not in a very satisfactory state. The country seems to be in a bad condition with foot-and-mouth disease, and control of such things appears to be of the feeblest character. The Government, with great promptitude, closed the reports to British stock upon the report of an outbreak of this disease in Yorkshire, 7,000 miles away, while they winked at its existence within their own borders, and allowed affected cattle to come into the public markets in Buenos Ayres, without let or hindrance. On the whole, Shorthorn breeders will do well to make hay while the sun shines, to work while the day lasts, for it will not always be midsummer.

HORSE-BREEDING FLOURISHES.

Horse-breeding seems to be almost as flourishing as Shorthorn-breeding. About 1,300 head of Clydesdales have been exported from the beginning of the year up to now, and there will be further exports before the year is ended. The Clydesdale has by far the most extensive export trade, but, for work horses, the Shire is selling well. Mr. Truman, of the Pioneer Stud Farm, Bushnell, Ill., purchased a Shire gelding at the Crewe sales last week for 225 gs. This is an extraordinary price for a gelding, but no doubt the buyer means the horse as an advertisement, and that is quite good business. We have had great sales of horses at Lanark, and notable enough figures have been realized. Two of these have been named, and foals at such figures would require to be good ones. So keen is the demand for sires of approved character that the Clydesdale stallions, Up-to-Time 10475, and Revelanta 11876, have already been hired for 1912. Nothing in the least degree approaching this has ever before occurred in the history of the breed. Up-to-Time and Revelanta are two of the most popular of all the sons of Baron's Pride, and quite a large proportion of his stock have been exported to Canada.

The Government has at length resolved to do something for horse-breeding. A sum of not less than £50,000 per annum is being set aside for this purpose by the Development Commissioners. How it is to be applied, is not yet declared, but one may be allowed to express the hope that too much of it will not be frittered away in salaries and equipment. After all, the horse-breeding problem is easily solved. Let the Government pay a remunerative price for horses, and the farmers will soon breed them. In spite of the somewhat improved tone in agricultural circles, the farmer is as open as ever he was to turn his attention to the production of anything that will leave him a profit. Nobody will breed horses for the army if the prices offered by the War Office leave no profit.

CANADIAN CHEDDARS SELLING AS WELL AS SCOTS.

I have spoken of the improved tone in agricultural circles, but this is a relative term. In the dairy trade the outlook is rather gloomy. The market for cheddars is quiet, and at Kilmarnock Cheese Show, which closed yesterday, no price was quoted above 58s. per cwt. of 112 lbs. for cheddars. It is difficult to account for this, but the fact is attested by those who ought to know, that there is no longer a margin of 6s. or 8s. per cwt. between homemade and Canadian cheddars. Since May, 1910, they have been running an even race, without advantage to the home produce. Makers here are alive to the situation, but, whether they can meet it, is another matter. The voices at the show dinner on Thursday were not of one mind. Thomas Clement maintained makers were producing a cheese which was too hard and dry. The public are demanding a cheese that is full of meat, with plenty of moisture. But a merchant from the East of Scotland had quite a different tale to tell. He is all for a high-class, well-flavored "hard," keeping cheese. He will pay the highest price for that class of cheese. Hugh Affleck, the judge of the championship class, supported Mr. Clement. He is a "whole-hogger" in this business, and was the first to maintain the necessity for a change in the character of Scottish cheddars. He has been proved correct in his forecast—made some years ago—and to-day demands, as well as then, the cheese which the public wish to buy. Whether the spirited speeches referred to will have the desired effect, remains to be seen. The Scots cheesemaker is a conservative person. He believes in doing as he has always done. But the Manchester merchant who spoke on Thursday was

hitting the nail on the head. He said, to produce cheese for the great B. P.—the British public—the man who eats great chunks of cheese to each of his three meals. Give him what he wants and he will pay you well for your labor. The connoisseur is an admirable person, and fulfils his own duties, but it is the British public who make the producers' work profitable. R. J. Drummond, of the National School of Dairying, has made quite a number of experimental cheese of different types, and submitted them to experts. They have approved of them, and it is quite evident that the makers in Scotland can meet the demands of the public, provided the public make quite clear what they really desire. For Canada, the broad fact is that, at the moment she is supplying the home market with cheese which competes on equal terms with the average products of the Scots dairies.

"SCOTLAND YET."

Cheese and Creamery Meetings at Guelph.

Instead of the district dairy meetings that have been held at various points in Western Ontario of recent years, where cheesemakers and a few patrons assembled to discuss topics suggested by the season's work, it has been thought well to have a change this year, by holding, during the Winter Fair at Guelph, one central meeting, at the Dairy School, in Guelph, on Wednesday, December 7th, at 1.30 p. m. This will correspond to the creamery meeting, held at the same place and hour on the following day. No set programme will be adhered to at either meeting, but lists of questions are suggested for discussion. Frank Hens, Chief Dairy Instructor for Western Ontario, will give a short report on cheese and creamery instruction work in 1910. Among other prominent men expected to be present and take part, are Prof. Dean, Geo. A. Putnam, Geo. H. Barr, G. G. Publow, Prof. R. Harcourt, and Prof. S. F. Edwards.

Poultry at the Winter Fair.

Over 4,700 exhibits competed for prizes in the Poultry Department at the Winter Fair last December, and on these, \$3,200 was paid in cash prizes, besides special awards of silver cups, medals and goods. For the coming Fair, which will be held at Guelph, December 5th to 9th, 1910, a number of new classes have been added to the prizes, which makes the classification a very complete one, including all the principal varieties of fowls, bantams, turkeys, geese, ducks, pigeons, pet stock and dressed poultry.

A special prize list for poultry will be ready for distribution about November 10th. This list contains specials for all the varieties, and consists of \$500 in cash, 50 silver cups, also medals and goods. Their value is about \$1,500. Poultry exhibits will thus compete for prizes worth nearly \$5,000, or about one dollar for each exhibit on the number shown last year.

Poultry exhibitors are requested to make their entries with the secretary before Monday, November 21st.

Ferguson's Ayrshire Sale.

Lambton County's first sale of Ayrshire cattle, on October 29th, the day of John Ferguson's sale at Camlachie, Ont., was ushered in with a blast which must have been somewhat similar to the one that welcomed the "Ayrshire Bard." Notwithstanding the storm of wind and snow, which prevented a great many from attending, the Ayrshires were all sold to the highest bidders, the sale being entirely left between the people and Mr. Moloy, who has proven an adept at handling a sale of pure-breeds. The demand was almost entirely for females, of which the 21 head made an average of \$72 each: six cows at \$90 each; two three-year-olds at \$85 each; seven two-year-olds, \$78 each; two yearlings, \$48 each, and four calves at \$33 each. The bulls went at bargain prices, the two-year-old bull selling at \$40, the calves at \$29 and \$15 each.

Sale Dates Claimed.

Nov. 11—Lyman C. Smith; Holsteins, at Glandford, Ont.
Nov. 12—Oak Park Stock Co., Brantford, Ont.; Shropshires.
Nov. 16—Sparham Bros., Morpeth, Ont.; Shorthorns.
Dec. 14—S. J. Pearson, Son & Co., Meadowvale, Ont.; Shorthorns.
Dec. 15—John I. Baisdon, Markham, Ont.; Shorthorns.

A misprint occurred in Mr. Austin's second-prize essay on the cost of milk production, in our issue of Nov. 3rd, by which the average cost of producing milk was given as \$66.12 per cow, whereas it should have been \$60.72 per cow. The total cost was stated correctly.