

Our English Letter

London, March 9, 1907.

SHIRE HORSE SHOW

The Twenty-Eighth Annual London Show of the Shire Horse took place during the first week in March. The entries once more showed an increase, and unless the London County Council introduce further restrictions, it looks as if the high total of 1904, namely 862, will in a short time again be reached. The entries this year numbered 625, against 593 last year. The three sections of the show—a grand increase over 1906, namely, stallions 14, mares and fillies, 13, and geldings 5; the totals for the three sections being respectively 356, 243, and 26. As to quality the high standard of the Society was maintained, and probably in the young classes it has never been so marked.

Their Royal Highnesses the Prince and Princess of Wales visited the show on the second day. The visit took place when the judging of the championships was in progress, and the public, who were present in large numbers, gave the Royal visitors a most cordial reception. After the awarding of the championships had been successfully got through his Royal Highness descended to the judging ring and presented the cups and medals to the various winners.

Visitors to the show could not help being struck with the vitality of Shire horse breeding. The Agricultural Hall is being taxed to its utmost to provide accommodation for the horses, while the number of visitors year by year seems to be increasingly larger. All the stands were crowded, and there were no idle spectators, but by men who take a deep and genuine interest in horse breeding.

That the exhibition was a good one was strikingly brought out by the championships, which created in the amount of interest. The first special was a cup for the best young stallion, not exceeding three years old, and it must be admitted that the award was easily given to Tatton Dray King, belonging to Earl Egerton of Tatton, the first prize winner in the three year old class.

The cup for older stallions was won by Birdsal Menestrel, a bay, seven years old, that has had a fine career in the showyard, and has already proved his value as a foal getter. This horse is the property of Lord Rothschild, but was bred by Lord Middleton, in Yorkshire. The judges found some difficulty in picking out the reserve, but eventually it was won by Lord Winterstoke's Ravenspur, the first prize winner in the under 16.2 class. This mare, it may be remembered, was purchased at his Majesty the King's recent sale for £4,125. The Society's Gold Challenge Cup of the value of \$500 for the best stallion of the show, was won by Lord Rothschild's Birdsal Menestrel.

The mare championships also yielded keen competition. The cup for the best mare was secured by Mr. R. Whitehead's three-year-old Peak Dolly. The mare cup was won by Stolen Duches, an exquisite bay mare of beautiful quality, shown by Messrs. Forshaw & Sons, of Newark, the winner in the class of mares of five years old and upwards and standing over 16.2.

The gold challenge cup, value £250, for the best mare or filly, followed this award. Messrs. Forshaw & Sons having no difficulty in repeating their victory.

THE HACKNEY SHOW

The Hackney Show this year was particularly remarkable for the large number of foreign breeders and buyers who visited the Agricultural Hall, Islington. The attendance of English followers of our nation in the class was greater than ever before, while the

number of potential buyers from the Continent was remarkable. Many foreign representatives were present, not only purchasers officially representing their respective Governments, but dealers from Brussels, Milan, Vienna, The Hague, Paris, Berlin, Spa, Lisbon, and Naples, who desired to purchase, if possible, harness horses, single or double, for their patrons. All of the European languages were to be heard around the ring, and good business rewarded the English breeder.

The judging of the championships in the Hackney breeding classes was the plum of the show, and the noteworthy feature of this section of the show was the sweeping victory of the celebrated stallion Rosador. This horse is now



The Prince of Wales in the Judges' stand at the London Shire Show.

fifteen years of age, but he wears wonderfully well, showing no trace of any staleness and moves like a champion of the breed. Undoubtedly Rosador is the first horse of his type in the world at the present moment. He is the property of Mr. F. W. Buttle, of Kirkburn, Driffield, by whom he was bred. He is sired by Danegaty and has been, and is, equally successfully as a sire as in the ring. Rosador won the championship for the best stallion in the show, and the special prize of £15 and silver cup for the best stallion of four years old and upwards.

The runner-up for the supreme championship was Mr. Arthur Hall's Gynmathorpe Performer, the winner in the three year old class, and of the special for the younger stallions.

The mares and fillies were of good character and stamp, and in this respect considerably better than the colts. The championships in the female section were therefore the more interesting as being a more open question. The special of £10 in cash and a medal for fillies not exceeding three years old was captured by Bilington Majestic, a chestnut of massive quality, belonging to Mr. Alex. Bowie, of Colnbrook Bucks, the reserve card falling to Sir Walter Gibbey for Lively Bewesing, bred at the Elsenham Stud.

The older cup for mares was a very near thing between Hawsker Rosina, a chestnut by Rosador, belonging to Mr. A. W. Kieckling Adbolton, Nottingham, and District Maid, by the same sire, and the property of H. Kieckling, of Nottingham, of Regiate—the first and second prize winners in the over 15.2 class. Hawsker Rosina had rather more substance and was certainly a better goer of the two, and was awarded the first place. These two mares occupied the same respective positions for the female championship cup.

In addition to the champion prizes set out in the catalogue Sir Lees Knowles Hart, the president of the Hackney Horse Society offered a special championship prize for the best stallion or mare in the show, and this resulted in another win for Rosador, while Hawsker Rosina was chosen for the reserve champion.

Rosador, it may be mentioned, is an old championship winner at the Hackney Show, for on two previous occasions—1897 and 1899—he has secured the supreme award.

In the Harness Classes the £50 challenge cup for the best stallion shown in leather resulted in a victory for Administrator, belonging to Mr. W. B. Tabbs, who had already left his mark in the breeding classes, while the reserve went to Baron van Voort's Diplomatist, who is also better known as a sire than as a carriage horse.

Interest in the harness classes culminated in the competition for the special prizes. The first of these was for the best mare or gelding not over six years old, and of varying heights, and was of the value of £25. The highest total prize winners ranging from 14.2 to over 16 hands and great popular interest was taken in the competition. The award lay between Mr. Dove's black gelding, the Wing of the King, bred by Mr. William Scott's bay, Blood Royal. Both of these horses gave magnificent shows in the ring and there was little to choose, but Mr. Dove's King of the West scored as regard buck action, and secured the prize. Then followed the gold medal for the best harness mare or gelding in the show, thus embracing harness horses of any age and size. The best of these was declared by the judges to be Mr. Walter Winan's Coker's Rosador; but this was by no means a popular win, the ringside critics preferring Mr. Dove's King of the West, who got a rousing cheer as he made a tour of the ring. There can be no doubt that Mr. Winan's horse is the most valuable from a market point of view and for this reason the judges are to be congratulated upon their impartiality.

BIRMINGHAM BARN SHOW AND SALE

The annual Spring Show and sale of Shorthorns at Bingley Hall, Birmingham, has for many years past been one of the features of the agricultural year, and that it has not lost any of its attractions, but, on the other hand, is more popular than ever was proved at this week's fixture, for the entries then totalled 775, a record number; whilst considerably over 200 other animals had to be refused as exhibits owing to lack of space.

Practically all the well-known breeders of Shorthorns were represented, and the quality all round was of a very high standard. No fewer than 500 bulls were entered, and these, as usual, came in for chief attention; but the females of which there were a little over 200, with 41 calves, met a good trade. The attendance at the sale was very large and included buyers from all parts of the United Kingdom, as well as numerous foreign representatives, the Argentine buyers, as usual, being strongly in evidence.

The best price in the female section