

STOCK.

Impressions of Agricultural Britain.

One's impressions of a country are liable to be somewhat one-sided. More particularly is this the case if he is in that country but for a short time, and is devoting that time to a special purpose. Hence, in making a few notes on the agricultural conditions of England and Scotland as they appeared to me, the reader must understand that upon the only two occasions upon which I visited these countries my interest was primarily in live stock.

After all, setting aside such territory as some parts of our own West, where the soil possesses its virgin fertility, and those few belts where fruit flourishes, one sees no better indication of a country's or an individual farmer's prosperity than the live stock which feeds in the stables and fields. Agricultural England and Scotland without its flocks, herds and studs would hold a very different position from that which it holds now; and the world has not been slow to recognize this, for the one who visits the stock-breeders of our motherland meets men from the leading countries of the Continent, men from South America, men from Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, United States, Canada, and even from the distant Orient, all in search of horses, cattle, sheep, swine, and even the smaller classes of domestic animals, with which to improve their live stock. One naturally enquires what has led to England's supremacy in this sphere?

Climate has done much. A country free from extremes of heat and cold, where animals can be kept out of doors the greater part of the year, a country where copious rainfalls maintain good pasture, is naturally adapted to the raising of the best and most healthy specimens of farm animals. But in addition to this, whether it is due to his environment, to his national characteristics, to the influence of heredity, or a mixture of all these, the British farmer seems to have a natural love for animals of all kinds, and, moreover, he has that stick-to-itiveness which, perhaps more than any other quality, is necessary to make a successful live-stock man.

He who has studied the history of breeding in the British Isles, not only derives a positive pleasure, but learns the greatest of all secrets of Britain's live-stock supremacy when he sees the very same herds and studs and flocks which he had read or heard of as existing long years before. And when he tries to buy some of these animals he learns still more forcibly the premium these Old Country breeders put upon strains of stock noted for their excellence in their fathers' and forefathers' time. In conversation, lately, that king of live-stock breeders, Wm. Duthie, said, in substance: "One of the most striking things I notice in following the progress of live stock, as recorded in its agricultural press, is the continual change of men who are recognized as the stock-breeders of America. New men are always an acquisition, but it bodes ill for the ultimate establishment of a uniform prepotent class of cattle when so many men drop out of the business after but a few years' experience of it and before they have been able to accomplish much. It is the man—and you have some of them—who works away all the same in good as well as in bad times who will ultimately have the best herd." We sometimes talk lightly of British conservatism, but in stock-breeding we need more of it.

In this connection I could not but wish that among the farmers generally in our country there was as great a realization of the value of good breeding mares as there is among the Old Country farmers. As far as my experience went, it seemed almost impossible to buy first-class breeding females, unless the owner had others of the same strain with which to perpetuate its excellencies. Fortunately, however, so far as I can hear, our horse-breeders are learning this lesson, and it does not take much of a prophet to predict that when it is fully learned we will not have the trouble we now have in finding high-class horses. Our agricultural revenue will increase, too.

I was greatly struck, especially at the Highland Agricultural Show, with the intense interest taken in the judging, and also with the large proportion of most shrewd judges among the onlookers. Not only the farmers and breeders whose interest in such matters one can understand, but men of other professions and vocations seem not only interested, but busy, what is being done in the show-ring. When one sees no less a person than the King himself at the stock at the Royal Agricultural Show, and no less a dignitary than the Very Reverend Dr. Gillespie, recently Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, taking charge of the stock exhibit at the Highland Show, he begins to realize the premium that is put upon live-stock matters in that country. By the by, in his inimitable collection of Scotch stories, re-

cently published, Dr. Gillespie very humorously depicts the intensity of interest of at least one man, of the vocation he belongs to, in live stock, as follows:

At one of the local Christmas Fat-stock Shows in Dumfriesshire a pawky elder was exhibiting a fat bullock, when, much to his surprise, he discovered that the minister of the parish was also showing an animal in the same class. Before the cattle entered the judging-ring the following conversation was overheard: Pawky Elder—"Man, judge, it'll never dae for the like o' me to be beaten by a minister. A' tell ye what, man, if a' get the first prize a'll send ye a bacon ham." Judge—"Hoots, mon, gang awa' wi' ye! The



Shropshire Two-shear Ram.

First prize, Royal Show, 1905. Exhibited by Mr. R. P. Cooper, Berkhamsted.

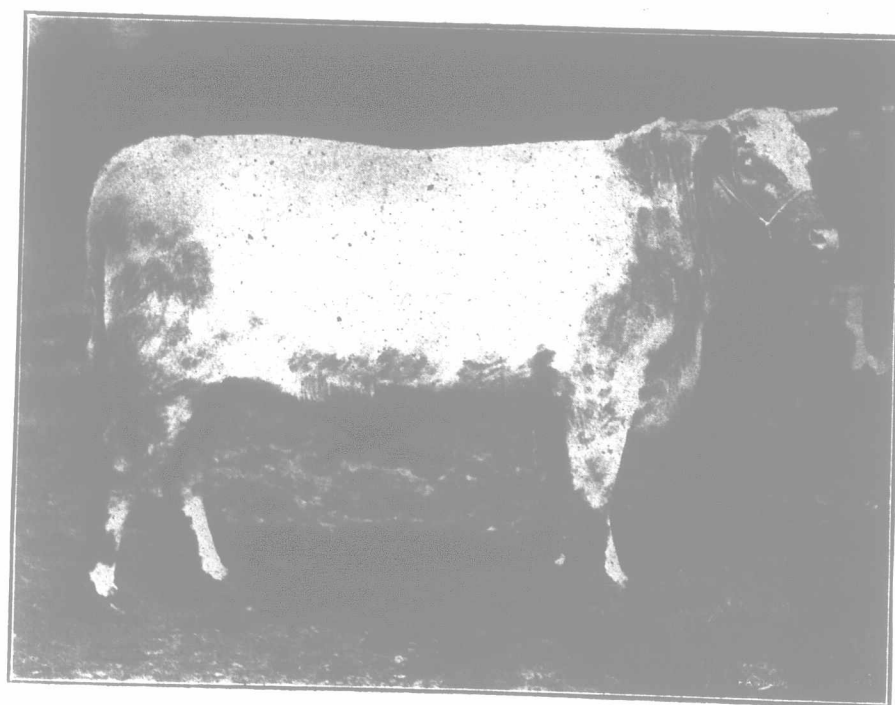
minister's a gentleman, for he has promised me a whole swine."

The most significant feature that was called to my attention, as far as field culture is concerned, was the unusually large amount of valuable land which is used for grazing purposes. Statistics show that this percentage is increasing every year, a matter which is due partially to the increasing scarcity of labor, to the increasing value of live stock, and to the better knowledge of how to manage permanent pasture. A visitor envies the Old Country farmer his pastures, even if the rain, which makes the grass grow, causes some inconvenience to himself.

Such hospitality as one enjoys over there! I almost feel like mentioning names, and yet, I doubt not that, had I gone into a different part of the country and met an entirely different lot of people, it would have been the same experience. Anyway, I'll always look forward with pleasure to a visit to the Old Country, especially to its live-stock shows and to the homes of its live-stock breeders.

M. CUMMING.

President N. S. Agricultural College.



Lady Amy 7th.

Four-year-old Shorthorn heifer. First-prize and champion female, Royal Show, 1905.

Pleases Young and Old.

When the "Farmer's Advocate" the best selling paper published, with its weekly collection of pure-bred stock, etc., and good, instructive reading, to suit everybody from the young to the old people. My seven-year-old son and the rest of us, can hardly wait from week to week for another for the "Farmer's Advocate" so that a farmer can afford to do without it.

W. J. H. G. Ont.

H. H. PARROCH.

A Breed Society with a Backbone.

The following excerpts from a memorial addressed to the Chairman and Members of the Canadian Railway Commission, indicates that there is at least one association of breeders of pure-bred live stock possessed of a sturdy spinal column, and a determination not to submit to official coercion without a vigorous protest, and, if need be, a fight for their rights:

The Holstein-Friesian Association of Canada has always taken a strong stand in favor of Dominion rather than Provincial records. When this association started a herdbook in 1891, all the other records in Canada were provincial in character, and were maintained under the auspices of provincial departments of agriculture. Although invited to do so, the Holstein-Friesian Association refused to become connected with other associations representing competitive breeds and affiliated with the Ontario Department of Agriculture. From 1895 to 1900 we were constantly agitating for legislation providing for the Dominion incorporation of live-stock record associations, and it was in consequence of our action that the Hon. Sydney Fisher, Minister of Agriculture, in 1900 introduced and put through Parliament an Act respecting the incorporation of live-stock record associations. The Holstein-Friesian Association was the first to solicit and secure Dominion incorporation under this Act, and we maintain that for the past five years we have been in every respect a national organization. We have never asked or received aid from any Government, but have prospered solely on account of the loyal support of the breeders of our cattle in every Province of the Dominion.

Early in 1904 the Hon. Minister of Agriculture, through his Live-stock Commissioner, Mr. Hodson, invited representatives from the various live-stock record associations to meet at Ottawa and discuss a scheme for the consolidation and nationalization of all Canadian records, so that there might be but one recognized record for each breed in Canada. The Holstein-Friesian Association sent delegates to this convention, held at Ottawa in March, 1904, and heartily supported the general principles of the national scheme, after hearing the Hon. Minister of Agriculture outline his connection with the movement.

The convention was unanimous in approval of national records, provided that there was no interference by the Department of Agriculture with the general policy, officers or funds of the record associations.

It soon became apparent that the Live-stock Commissioner, whose actions evidently were actuated by personal cupidity and lust of power, was doing his utmost to drag the association into a scheme under which he would practically have absolute control of their funds and policy. Breeders had trusted the Minister of Agriculture, in spite of their almost universal lack of confidence in Mr. Hodson, but they soon became uneasy and suspicious. The Shorthorn Association, the largest and most powerful in Canada, declared at their annual meeting in January, 1905, that they would not go into Mr. Hodson's scheme.

By a remarkable coincidence, the Joint Freight Association thereupon announced, through Mr. Hodson, that the half rates hitherto given for the transportation of pure-bred stock would be cut off on June 1st,

1905, unless the association accepted the National Record scheme. No complaint has ever been made to the officers of the Holstein-Friesian Association by railway officials regarding the shipment of animals on the strength of improper certificates of registry, and we believe that the same may be said of the other recognized record associations. Mr. Hodson has no special facilities for knowing whether animals are shipped on proper certificates or not, yet he has frequently made statements at meetings and in conversation, indicating that shipments on spurious certificates were quite common. We are satisfied that there is practically no basis for such charges; in fact, we know that his statements in regard to some large breeders were absolutely baseless, yet it is evidently upon such information that the freight officers have threatened to cancel the half rates.

This threat proved a powerful lever in coercing the other record associations when their annual meetings were held in February last.

In addition to this, it was quite evident that these meetings had been packed with men whose membership fees and expenses had been paid by someone, in order to secure their votes for the National Record scheme, and by such methods as these resolutions favoring Mr. Hodson's scheme were put through, and committees, in many cases of Mr. Hodson's own selection, were