

### Our Scottish Letter

These are quiet days in one sense, and in another they are anything but quiet. Farming operations in a normal season would have been regarded as well forward for this date (April 5), but this year on account of the war and the scarcity of labor, Spring work in many places is in a very backward state, and between absence of an adequate supply of labor of any kind, and a defective quality of labor when there is a supply, the arable farmer is very much perplexed. Nor is the flockmaster much better off. Shepherds are quite as scarce as capable horsemen, and many a flockmaster who had long since discarded the toilsome vigils of the shepherd in lambing time is again in harness. In East Lothian, where farms are generally large and it pays for the master to superintend with his coat on, many masters are compelled to doff their outer garments and bear their full share of the manual labor. These are the minor yet serious disadvantages of a state of war. If these were all war would not be regarded as such a very terrible thing. But these things have a reflex influence on the conduct of the campaign. I am not one of those who believe that this war will come to a speedy termination. I am not impressed with the ostentatious parading of Germany's needs. If she were in straits for food and munitions of war she would not be proclaiming the fact on the house tops as she is doing. The very ostentation of her statements should lay them open to suspicion. We, that is the British Empire, had better make up our minds that in order to secure "victory as usual" we must strain every nerve, and that Nelson's watchword, "England expects every man to do his duty" means at present, not alone every man in the Navy and every man in the Army, but every man on the arable field and the pastoral grazing, every man engaged in growing food or manufacturing munitions of war, every man, every woman, and every boy and girl, who can do anything to keep the wheels of industry moving at their maximum speed.

A new phase of this question has been entered on. It has been crystallized by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, in one of his happy phrases, "We are fighting three enemies, Germany, Austria, and Drink, and of the three the last is the worst. Hence we have the extraordinary spectacle of men who are known to be no teetotalers—like yours truly, standing on prohibition platforms and demanding that the nation shall follow the example set by the King and Lord Kitchener, and banish strong drink from their tables during the period of the war. One who has been a life-long total abstainer and an adherent to and apostle of the well-worn maxim, "Total abstinence for the individual and prohibition for the State," naturally feels glad that the principle advocated is recognized as the only sound principle in the present emergency. If it is so, and no one has expressed any doubt on the subject except those whose pecuniary interests are at stake, then it must be so at any time if the best is to be made of the labor of men, and happiness is to be secured in the homes of the toilers. It is indeed a melancholy fact that, while our gallant soldiers are fighting a life and death battle in France and Flanders, and our brave marines of every grade, including the most heroic of all the mine-sweepers, are risking life in the North Sea and the Dardanelles, the industrial classes at home should, through their drinking habits, be working fewer hours in a week than under normal conditions, and adopting the policy of "cag canny" even when working. To what a depth of baseness and idleness will men not sink when they become the slaves of drink, and devotees of debauchery and pleasure! Let not men dream that they are doing anything heroic when, during the time of war, they forego drink. Those of us who have always foresworn it are not inclined to boast; we have only done our bare duty, and thus are but unprofitable servants.

The agricultural labor question occupied the attention of parliament before it rose. The Prime Minister intervened at an early stage as well he might. So far as Scotland is concerned his own constituency of East Fife is feeling the stringency as much as any part of the country. It is not easy to be silent when one sees three and four pairs of horses standing idle in the stable and no visible means of having them employed. Crops cannot be sown or planted under these conditions, and it is miserable pedantry to urge objections against the employment of boy labor under such circumstances. According to the compulsory clauses of the Education Act it is not permissible to employ boys aged from 12 to 14 years, yet in many cases such boys, especially in the country are in a position to render most active help on a farm. Many, like the writer, have done so, and are quite unable to discover that they suffered thereby. And in any case the times are so abnormal, and the necessity for growing as much food for man and beast within our own borders as we may, so eloquent, that it is the very least trifling to advance educational theories as an objection to the employment of such labor. It appears to be left to the discretion of School Boards to determine what

should be done; the only thing necessary is to give breaches of the letter of the statute during the present distress. A war policy can never be the constant experience of this country. Great Britain's every interest is peace, but in order to peace there must be security, and that there could never be while Prussian militarism dominated and threatened where it did not dominate Europe. Therefore, we are in for a big job, and the educational advancement of the theorist can wait.

In the stern fight at Neuve Chapelle many well-known farmers fell. The 4th Seaforth's, a territorial regiment from Ross-shire, were engaged, under Major William Robertson, of Montegles Farm, a nephew of the late John Ross, the famous cattle breeder and feeder formerly of Mickle Tarvel. Major Robertson was himself a farmer. He fell, leading on his men, so also did Captain Budge, another Easter Ross farmer, tenant of Easter Barichrigh, and many others. Major Cuthbert, the factor on the Ardross estate in Western Ross, was wounded slightly but recovered, and is now in command. Many homes in Ross-shire are in mourning, and up to the time of writing the Government have not published the official list of officers and men who fell in that conflict. We won, but there is a strong suspicion that the toll in men killed, wounded and missing was very heavy.

Perhaps your readers think that I have said enough about the war, but it is not easy to fix one's mind on anything else in these times.

March is always a month busy with horse shows. This year they were all compressed into the first week, with the Aberdeen Spring Show on Wednesday, March 10; so far the very best day we have had in 1915. The show held that day was one of the best ever held in the northern city. The spring show there is mainly, if not exclusively, a Clydesdale event. There are four classes for stallions and two for fillies. The most successful exhibitor this year was George A. Ferguson, Surradale, Elgin. He had first prizes with his aged stallion Gallant Stewart 16603, his three-year-old stallion Victor Dale 18148, and his two-year-old filly Rosalind. He secured champion honors for Rosalind over the two filly classes and the class of yearling colts. The championship of the three older stallion classes went to John P. Sligh's black colt Kismet 18417, which was got by Dunure Footprint out of the Baron's Prize mare Moira. Both sire and dam are Cawdor Cup champions. The show resulted in an extraordinary series of successes for the produce of Dunure Footprint. In a large class of yearling colts all the prize winners except the third were got by Dunure Footprint. The third was by Apukwa. In the two-year-old filly class the first, third and fourth were by Dunure Footprint, and the second was by his sire Baron of Buchlyvie. In a remarkable class of yearling fillies the first, fourth and sixth were got by a Dunure Footprint; the second and third by Apukwa, and the seventh by the useful breeding horse Hillhead Chief. William M. Ritchie, Balcarrin, Oldmeldrum, owned and bred the first and sixth, and sold the pair on the ground for close upon £900. The third prize two-year-old filly was also reported to have been sold for £1,600. A very fine filly is the second-prize two-year-old Verona, owned by her breeder, D. Y. Stewart, Crieff, and got by the famous Baron of Buchlyvie, out of the noted prize mare Veronique. Last year Verona was all but unbeaten. Her dam, Veronique, was also dam of the first-prize aged stallion, Gallant Stewart. She has bred very well, nearly all of her produce being better than the average. She breeds best to a Baron's Prize horse, Gallant Stewart being got by Revelanta.

I do not know whether I mentioned a remarkable hit made by a Scottish farmer resident in England in connection with the late Lord Rothschild's champion Shire horse Blaisdon Jupiter. Thomas Simpson, Rook Tree Farm, Haynes, Beds, hired this horse for 1915 for £100, with the option of hiring him for 1916, I believe at the same money. He advised Lord Rothschild's manager to exhibit the horse at London, which the said gentleman had not thought of doing, as he was of opinion that the stud contained better horses. Blaisdon Jupiter was, however, shown, in the notion that he might be mentioned honorably in the list. He, however, came out first in his class, champion of the senior stallions, and finally supreme stallion champion of the whole show. In the circumstances one is not surprised to hear that Mr. Simpson has exercised his option and hired the horse for 1916. He will make a fortune out of him at 12 guineas a mare, which is his fee.

Lord Rothschild, who has just passed away, was a remarkable man. He was born Nathan Mayer de Rothschild in Piccadilly in 1810. His father was the first Jew in a respectable sense to return to the British House of Commons. Lord Rothschild was the first Jew in a religious sense to be created a peer, and to take his seat in the House of Lords. He was returned as member of Parliament for Aylesbury in 1865, and sat for that constituency for 20 years. In 1885 he was created a peer, and consequently was a

British legislator for half a century. He was a college chum and life-long friend of the late King Edward VII. A zealous patron of Agriculture, and particularly of Shire horses and Jersey cattle, Lord Rothschild was unsparing in his benefactions for both breeds. He exhibited a team of Shire horses in British dominions overseas, and also at foreign exhibitions. His show at Tring in Herts, not far from London, was the chief centre for exhibiting Jersey cattle in this country. There the system of awarding prizes for points in milk production and butter-fat was put into force in an elaborate and exhaustive way. The deceased peer was a man of simple habits, and devoid of anything that savored of ostentation. He was the acknowledged lay leader of Jewish people in Great Britain, and is understood to have been extremely liberal in his benefactions, but refused to make any display of his name. His funeral rites were conducted with extreme simplicity also.

Canadian advices announce the resignation of an old friend, Robert Ness, from public offices in Huntingdon County, Quebec. How old a friend Mr. Ness is to the writer may be inferred from the fact that when he knew him first and for long after he was Robert Ness, Jr. Mr. Ness has very many friends in this country. He was a regular visitor for very many years, sometimes making two trips in a season to purchase Clydesdale horses. Although never taking large numbers at a time Mr. Ness was a regular customer and had his own taste and fancy in Clydesdales. He liked the kind he could sell, a sensible business-like way of doing horse trade, and with the short-legged, thick horses that he bought he has always done well. His son, Robert Ness, Jr., has made Ayrshires a study, and if he were here this week he would find plenty to interest him in the splendid lot of 150 Ayrshires which will be sold by public auction at Ardyne, Toward, Argyleshire, on Thursday. This herd is the property of John McAlister, Ardyne, who was born on Mid-Ascog, Bute, and is one of the most expert judges of both Clydesdales and Ayrshires in this country. His cattle are in remarkable bloom, and in spite of the uncertainties begotten of the war he is likely to have a record sale. Mr. McAlister leaves Ardyne for a farm on Lord Shrewsbury's estate in Staffordshire. He thus adds another to the large total of Scottish farmers who find their homes and fortunes in England.

Shorthorns have been selling well this season. At the Penrith sale early in March 144 bulls, mostly yearlings, were sold by auction for an average of £40. These were drawn from herds in the Cumberland and Westmorland dales and fells. The special characteristics of Shorthorns bred in these districts are their milking properties. In this respect they far excel Aberdeen Shorthorns. The dairy buyers in the East of Scotland are almost wholly recruited from the north of England. At the Darlington sale, held about a week later, 77 bulls sold for an average of £36 14s. 6d. These were much after the same character, although in the leading herd in Teeswater that of George Harrison, Gainford Hall, Darlington, Duthie bulls have been used to a large extent. Many fine cattle of Shorthorn character in the north of England are unpedigreed. That is to say, no record of their breeding has been kept. This is greatly to be regretted. The enlightened registration policy of the Shorthorn Society, however, prevents them being altogether lost to the breed. These fine cows can be mated with pedigree bulls, and in the fifth generations they can be registered and numbered in Coates' Herd Book. Every sensible, intelligent man knows that many so-called "Short-pedigreed" Shorthorns are the best and healthiest in the herd book. The foolish policy of those like buyers from the Argentine who discard all Shorthorns, no matter what their inheritance may be, whose pedigrees do not trace to a certain volume of Coates' Herd Book, operates entirely to the benefit of home breeders. It leaves in possession of first-class healthy cattle, well fitted to benefit breeders in any country. One can become pedigree mad, and certainly the craze for certain so-called "families" is absurd to a degree.

Times like the present are conducive to the activity of "cranks." There are many such connected with agriculture. One of the most active and well-meaning is the "crank" who believes the British farmer would be on the fair way to fame and fortune if he only would devote himself to the growing of sugar beet. The leader of this movement is the Earl of Denbigh, and he has associated a number of others with him. Their latest manifesto was read at the Farmer's Club, London, by Mr. Dowling, N. A. The paper is exhaustive but unconvincing. What the English farmer wants to know is whether it will pay him better to grow sugar beet than mangold-wurzel. So far the balance is in favor of the mangold. As it does not pay the Scottish farmer to grow mangold, it follows that it would never pay him to grow sugar beet. On the whole the growing of sugar beet to those who have made a study of the root, and can see their way to making some profit out of its growth. It requires a deep soil

and plenty to clear doubt its and keep scarce it growth bill.

Editor "T"

So much about the columns those who Those who can do so

The

When the

feet by 4

come most

his future

in a busi

The most

the axem

Sometime

dove-tail

ends "V"

so did th

"cornerm

had the

money, wa

bottle fro

vice was

raising of

ship a bo

considered

at the cl

happened

were eage

The men

shingles h

work was

did not re

deserved

structures

associatio

used them

them. S

made the

would sel

the conten

lightning

Settle

with hav

Niagara I

of these a

a 16 foot

ported on

plate at

There are

rafters, b

with the

stud thes

with flim

The more

pound of

rule. Th

puzzle to

often tr

Threshing

hoofs, or

separated

the swing

no fanning

none of t

Tor

Receipts

West Tor

numbered

tle, 340 h

543 horses

in many w

quotations

to \$7.50,

choice but

\$7.25; go

to \$6.75;

\$4 to \$6.

\$6 to \$6.3

\$50 to

Sheep, \$6

\$8 to \$

Hogs, \$9.2

REVIEW

The tot

City and

week were

Cars

Cattle

Hogs

Sheep

Calves

Horses

The tot