

The Great Smithfield Show

The 1898 Smithfield Show, held at Islington, London, England, December 5th to 9th inclusive, was a celebrated one in the annals of the Smithfield Club (under whose auspices the show is held) as being the centenary show. The event was celebrated in a fitting way. His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales is president of the club.

The show this year was characterized by the success of former years. The total number of entries were: Cattle, 327; pens of sheep, 198; pens of pigs, 122; or a total of 647, or two more than in 1897. When the first show was held at Smithfield, 100 years ago, there were only two classes for cattle and two for sheep; the membership of the society being 113, and the total prize money 50 gs. In the 1898 show there were forty classes for cattle, twenty-nine for sheep, eighteen for pigs, as well as seven carcass classes; the number of members were 1,120; and the total prize money £4,966.

The show of cattle was good and every variety of beef breeds was well represented. The general average of the animals shown was better than ever before, though the winners of the Champion awards were no better in quality than the winners on former occasions. But the rank and file, especially when age is taken into consideration, were better than seen at former shows. One of the noticeable tendencies of the show of late years is the great development for age of young stock. As compared with half a century ago the change in this regard is most astonishing. The abolishing the cow classes and those for oxen of more than three years, except in the mountain breeds, has done away with these old fashioned mountains of fat that at one time were the prominent feature of the exhibition, and has given altogether a more uniform character to the classes in general. The Devons, which are always given prominence at Smithfield, made a good display with the quality excellent. Both the younger and older animals were well brought out. Her Majesty was one of the leading winners in the heifer class. The Hereford though rather weaker in some respects than on former occasions made a good display. In the class under two years, in which seven steers competed, Her Majesty headed the list with a fine steer by Ladas, which won the breed cup. This steer is said to possess the best back and loin with style that has ever characterized a Hereford of his age. In the Shorthorn section, not only were the numbers considerably increased, but the increase came from the district where the best animals are produced, including animals provided by such well-known feeders as Mr. George Bruce and the Earl of Rosebery. It is seldom that three better steers are found together than those shown in the older class. The first was Lord Rosebery's Rob Roy, a massive, level and well finished roan, by Kingleader; then followed Mr. Bruce's Lochineal, a remarkable one, and last came Baron Rothchild's Cameronian, an excellent specimen. In common with other breeds the female class of Shorthorns was weak numerically, though in its small band were included the breed cup winner and the reserve. The Sussex breed as seen at the show have remarkably improved during the past ten years. The Aberdeen-Angus presented perhaps the finest all round display of any of the breeds and once more contained the champion of the show. Very much improved classes of Galloways were shown and included some of the best stock at the show from a butcher's and consumer's point of view. There was a good display of cross-bred cattle, the centre of attraction being the aged steers and heifers. The Champion plate of 100 gs. for the best beast in the show was awarded to the Earl of Strathmore for his Aberdeen-Angus heifer "Juju." This beast, which was bred by the exhibitor, also holds the Queen's Challenge Cup for 1899 valued at £150.

There was a fine display in the sheep department, and every breed for which classes were provided was well represented in point of merit. Leicesters were represented by a few select pens. The quality of the Cotswolds was very fine, though only five pens, one of which, a pen in the lamb class, secured the champion cup in the long-wool section. Lincolns were well represented in point of quality, and fully up to the average in numbers. Kent and Romney Marsh sheep, though not known in this country, made one of the most even and best exhibitions that has ever been seen at Smithfield. The South-downs made the largest entry of any single breed in the show, and the general evenness of the exhibit was fine. The early maturing Hampshire Downs made a fine exhibit. The lamb class of the Shropshire breed was a weak one, but the wether class was headed by a pen of sheep, one of the best of the breed that has been seen for a long while—long, wide, and deep, excellent in type and character, and splendid in flesh and conformation. This pen were breed cup winners, and the first pen of sheep to hold the challenge cup presented by the Prince of Wales for the best pen of sheep. Oxford Downs did not make a large entry. Dorset Horns were cut in average numbers. First and second honors and breed cup went to Mr. McCalmont for a pen of wethers, the best seen at the show for some time.

Pigs made a fair show, though not as large as was expected at the Centenary Exhibition. The quality was excellent, but there were so few in each class that the competition could hardly be called keen. The champion plate for the best pen of pigs at the show went to Berkshires, owned by J. A. Fricker, as also the Duke of York's challenge cup for the best pen of two pigs at the show, bred by exhibitor. The reserve in these two were Middle Whites owned by J. P. Chiswell.

THE BLOCK TEST.

The slaughter test was one of the chief features of the show, and a great many more animals were entered for competition than ever before. These tests started in 1895 with 45 entries. In 1896 they

reached 56; in 1897, 58; and in 1898, 83. The test is confined to cattle and sheep, three classes being for cattle and four for sheep. Thirty-six cattle and forty-five sheep were slaughtered. The animals were all exhibited alive on the first day and were removed for slaughter on the evening of that day, their carcasses being returned and judged on the third day. The fasted live weight, taken immediately before slaughter, was recorded in conjunction with the carcass weight. The following table taken from the London *Rural World* shows the breed or cross of each prize-winning animal, its live weight and carcass weight:

BLOCK TEST, SMITHFIELD SHOW, 1898.

Prize	Exhibitor.	Breed.	Fatted live weight.			Carcase weight.		
			Cwt.	qr.	lb.	Cwt.	qr.	lb.
CATTLE.								
	Steers, not over 2 years old.							
1	Mr. Murray Stewart.....	Galloway..	10	2	2	6	3	17
2	Mr. A. B. Lawson.....	Shorthorn	10	3	18	7	0	16
3	Earl of Rosebery.....	Aberdeen Angus...	11	1	26	7	2	2
	Steers, 2 to 3 years old.							
1	Mr. J. S. Wroth.....	South Devon.	14	1	8	9	1	10
2	Mr. J. D. Allen.....	Shorthorn	12	3	8	8	2	6
3	Mr. R. Stratton.....	Highland Shorthorn Kerry..	11	3	16	7	3	9
	Heifer, not over 3 years old.							
1	Mr. Murray Stewart.....	Galloway..	10	1	9	6	2	13
2	Viscount Fortman.....	Devon ...	11	2	8	7	1	3
3	Mr. W. Parkin-Moore.	Shorthorn Galloway	11	1	25	7	1	18
WETHER SHEEP.			Lb.			Lb.		
	Longwool Lambs not over 12 months old.							
1	Mr. J. McDowall	Blackfaced	120			74		
2	Mr. H. Dudding.....	Lincoln ...	182			106		
3	Mr. A. B. Lawson ...	Cheviot ...	103			64		
	Longwool Sheep, 12 to 24 months old.							
1	Mr. C. T. A. Robertson	Suffolk-Cheviot..	184			123		
2	Sir Walter Gilbey ...	Leicester-Mountain	144			91		
3	Mr. Parkin-Moore.....	Herdwick..	116			75		
	Shortwool Lambs, not over 12 months old.							
1	Mr. S. R. Sherwood...	Suffolk....	164			106		
2	Mr. C. T. A. Robertson..	Suffolk....	165			106		
3	Mr. S. Kidner.....	Dorset....	151			89		
	Shortwool Sheep, 12 to 24 months old.							
1	Mr. L. H. Baxendale ..	Hampshire Down...	219			147		
2	Mr. P. F. R. Saillard....	South down	128			81		
3	Mr. T. F. Buxton.....	Hampshire Down...	194			134		

There is a School of Agriculture at Ghizeh, Egypt. The course of study extends over four years and includes practical and theoretical agriculture and allied subjects, including the Arabic and English languages. Eight hours a week throughout the course are given to practical exercises in agriculture. Each pupil is allotted a plot of land which he must cultivate with his own hands, "the employment of hired labor or assistance being absolutely prohibited." This plot consists of a little over an acre the first year, double the area the second year, and three times the area the third and fourth years. Every pupil is allowed to dispose of the produce of his plot, subject to the approval of the principal. The annual fees for tuition and other expenses are \$75 for day pupils and \$125 for boarders.

The following is an American plan for preserving fence posts: Bore half a dozen auger holes two thirds through the end of the post to be set in the ground. Fill the holes with salt, and drive in plugs to keep it there. I have seen posts that have stood in the ground thirty years that when taken up were perfectly sound, as sound as the tops which had always been kept well painted. They were chestnut posts. Of course one should take off the bark.