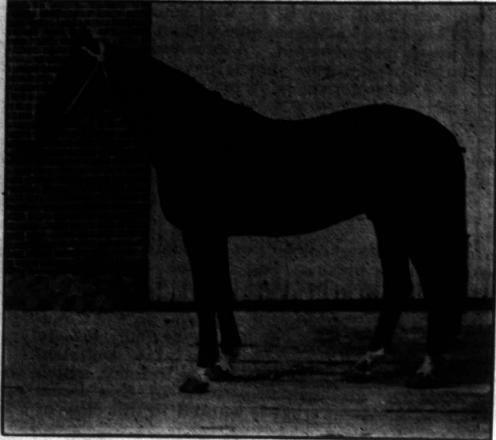


Our Scottish Letter.

AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION — SPRING SHOWS.

The spring season of 1899 will be remembered as one of the worst, or, as we say, most backward, on record. The weather has been characterized by a prolonged and unvarying succession of wintry gales of unusual violence, accompanied by a very heavy rainfall, consequently, although this is the end of the first week in April, there has practically been no seed time. In the south of England and also in Ireland, from all accounts, less humid weather has prevailed, but the Scottish farmer has been having quite a bad time of it. Even on the principle that there has been quite enough rain, and that the clouds cannot always empty themselves on an unoffending earth, the Scottish farmer hopes for a change.



WILEY BUCKLES.

(Thoroughbred.) Winner of First Prize as Stallion suitable to sire Saddle Horses and Hunters.
OWNED BY QUINN BROS., BRAMPTON, ONT.

With the return of spring comes the return of Mr. R. J. Drummond, the chief of the Scottish Dairy Institute, from Canada. Mr. Drummond begins this season with a larger crowd of pupils than ever, and how he is going to get through the season with the limited accommodation at his disposal is one of the things which only a master like himself can understand. Happily there is a prospect of better arrangements for agricultural education being devised before many years are over. Scotland has been singularly unwilling to embark on any enterprise having as its object the furtherance of technical education in agriculture, but now at length that is in the way of being rectified. A scheme has been approved by the Government, and secured the support of Ayrshire County Council, as well as the County Councils of Dumfries, Galloway, Renfrew, Dumbarton, Sterling, and Lanark, for the erection of an agricultural college with farm at Kilmarnock. The scheme includes the incorporation of the Scottish Dairy Institute and the Agricultural Department of the Glasgow Technical College in the new institution, and it will be affiliated with the University of Glasgow. When fully developed and in working order this college will be one of the best agricultural training schools in Great Britain, if not in the world, and now that the work has been taken in hand it is to be hoped success may crown the efforts of its promoters.

The very perfection of Scottish agriculture has been one cause of the apathy with which schemes for advancing agricultural education have been received. In no country in the world is a higher general average of agriculture reached than in Scotland, and the issue is seen in the fertility of many hills and mooses, which in other parts of the world would be left in a state of nature. This is conspicuously seen in the counties of Peebles and Selkirk, where mountains are under arable culture, which a century ago were moorland. The altered fiscal conditions of our time, the keenness of competition from abroad, and the consequent low prices of produce have rendered a continuance of the policy of "breaking" rough land unprofitable, and only in very rare instances does one hear of such work being now undertaken. In Ayrshire an interesting movement is in vogue for the conversion of rough boggy land into timothy meadows. This seems a very sensible policy, and the account of two cases of reclamation embodied in the "Transactions" of the Highland and Agricultural Society for this year will doubtless stimulate others to follow the example of the farmers who tell the story. Several well-informed agriculturists argue that the dairying of the future will be "dairying without roots," and whether that be so or not, it can only be by the extension of the system of laying down land in timothy meadows.

Another effect of the altered fiscal conditions has been to excite unusual activity in the analysis of systems of manuring. On the virgin soils of the Northwest the farmer can afford to despise the value of manure, but in an old country it would not be far amiss to say that the whole science of agriculture consists in a knowledge of the economies of manuring. Notable experiments are being carried out by individual farmers at centers all over the country under the control and supervision of the Glasgow and West of Scotland Technical College,

and it is a tribute to the efficiency of the staff of this College, under Professor Wright, that they are now being asked to undertake experiment work as far east as East Lothian, and as far north as Perth and Fife, while the whole of the west and southwest of Scotland is being laid under contribution by them. Similar work is being done by Dr. Somerville in connection with the Durham College of Science in the north of England, and there is every prospect that the Yorkshire College, now under the superintendence and control of one of Professor Wright's first assistants, Professor Campbell, will soon be abreast of all the others. The most valuable work in respect of suggestiveness so far has been done by the Durham College, but Glasgow has been a close second. The general result of all this experimental work has been to teach farmers how to manure economically, to show them by ocular demonstration how money may be saved, and also how money may be lost. The value of this experiment work was long viewed with scepticism, but a change is coming over the mind of the average farmer: he is reading more, observing more closely, and generally understands better what farming economically means. It is quite impossible to give a resume of all the experiment work done during the past six years, but the full accounts published amply illustrate its significance. These reports are not circulated broadcast at the expense of the Government, but have to be asked for, and when somewhere about 3,000 of last year's report from the Durham College have had to be issued in this way, the proof is conclusive that advanced as the agriculture of Great Britain has been it has not yet reached its terminus.

The agricultural and commercial world here is at present somewhat agitated over the proposals contained in the Food and Drugs (amendment) Bill, promoted by Government this session. The object of the Bill is to protect the consumer, but its opponents allege that it is designed to protect the farmer. No doubt if the frauds aimed at are put down genuine agricultural produce will be in better demand. But this is not the primary object of the Bill, and it is significant that amongst its keenest supporters are wholesale butter merchants in London. The Bill is received with general favor, but one omission in it excites strong animadversion. Mr. Long has not embodied in it any prohibition of the artificial coloring of margarine to resemble butter, and he refuses to accept any amendment having this as its object. His attitude of antagonism is all the more remarkable from the fact that the Select Committee, who enquired into the subject, strongly recommended that this prohibition should find a place in the measure. It is argued that margarine is a perfectly wholesome and honest product, and it should no more be made penal to color it than to color butter or cheese. Further, it is argued that to prohibit the coloring of margarine would destroy the trade in margarine. Opponents of coloring regard this as tantamount to an admission that margarine can only be sold profitably when made to resemble butter, and, therefore, that its sale deserves to be stopped. To the ordinary intelligence this appeals as strong reasoning, and the Central Chambers of Agriculture has made a strong remonstrance to Mr. Long on the subject. Whether he will lend an ear to their entreaty seems at present to be doubtful, but possibly wiser counsels may prevail amongst his advisers. It is understood that the coloring of margarine to resemble butter is forbidden in continental countries, and these only manufacture the colored article for the benefit of the unsophisticated British workingman and his wife. Whether these worthy persons will allow themselves to be fooled much longer by the astute foreigner remains to be seen.

SPRING SHOWS.

The show season has fairly commenced, and at Castle Douglas yesterday there was a capital display of Clydesdale horses and Galloway and Ayrshire cattle. In the horse section there was again an unbroken succession of victories for the produce of the Messrs. Montgomery's Baron's Pride 9122. The first prize females in every class but one were got by him, as was also the first prize yearling colt. Besides these, the second prize three-year-old filly, the second and third yearling fillies, the second two-year-old colt, and the second and third yearling colts were by him; in fact, the show was practically a Baron's Pride exhibition. The best animal in the field not got by him was the champion male, a two-year-old entire colt, got by Macgregor 1487, and owned by Messrs. Montgomery. This is a horse of remarkable weight and substance, with excellent feet and legs. He was bred by Mr. Robert Frederick, Drumflower, and has been named after his farm. It is some time since a horse of equal weight and substance, with quality, has appeared. Two English exhibitors have got hold of several of the choicest of the Baron's Pride females. Mr. Herbert Webster, Morton House, Fence Houses, and Mr. Thomas Smith, Blacon Point, Chester. The latter owns the champion mare, Empress, first prize three-year-old, and Jeanie Deans, first prize two-year-old; and the former owns Lady Douglas, the first prize brood mare, and Lady Victoria, the second prize three-year-old, a massive, bonnie animal, like a breeding mare. Mr. Alexander Guild owns the first yearling—an attractive, showy youngster. He also owns the unbeaten yearling of 1898, Maid of Athens, a filly with beautiful fore feet and pasterns, which will not likely be shown until the H. & A. S. Show at Edinburgh. "SCOTLAND YET."

How Shall We Produce the Ideal Bacon Hog?

To the Editor FARMER'S ADVOCATE:

My copy of the FARMER'S ADVOCATE of the date March 1st went astray or went down in one of those fearful gales experienced during the last month on the Atlantic, so that I had to write to a friend to loan me his copy, as to miss one of the series of your interesting journal is very like missing the tawny old port after a good dinner with a few sympathetic friends who are enthusiastic stock breeders. It is not alone the delights of absorbing the contents of the journal or of the decanter, but taking these into one's self invariably leads up to animated and interesting conversation, mellowed and soothed by the benign influence of port and paper.

About the first thing which attracted my notice was the heading of a letter like unto that at the top of this scrawl. "Now," said I to myself, "we shall learn something of value. The writer must know something considerable of the subject, or he would never have asked a question for himself to answer." But once again had we a proof of that saying of some wise man, if not of Solomon, "Blessed is he that expects little and gets much," or of the reverse if that holds good. It is true that Messrs. R. L. Jarvis & Bros. appear to possess one of the most important of qualities for a writer to the press; that is, they confess that they have had no experience of the Yorkshire hog, and therefore, being entirely ignorant, they rightly, and with every confidence begotten of ignorance, proceed to give the most confident opinions about their qualities. The mere fact that they have drawn very largely on their fertile imaginations rather gives piquancy to their lecture. However, to all thinking and practical men this is somewhat of a drawback, save that it increases the desire to learn some facts concerning the subject, and that it enhances in their opinion the many latent lessons within the lines, "F—s rush in where angels fear to tread."

It is true that Messrs. J. & Bros. have had an immense experience, in that they have bred a few pigs each year for eight or ten years, and have tried all the most prominent breeds, viz., Berkshires, Poland-Chinas, Chester Whites, Tamworths, and lastly, the Duroc-Jersey. They have also fattened some fifty to a hundred pigs a year, or just about as many as a friend of mine in Sweden disposes of each week for several weeks in the year. He has gone one better than Messrs. J. & Bros., as he has tried even the Large White pig, therefore he knows a little about it. Some five years since he wrote to me that he had just won nineteen prizes and had a gold medal presented to him for his fine collection of pigs, and had been specially complimented by the king.

Now, let us compare Messrs. J. & Bros.' bold assertions and my friend's facts. The former write that "Yorkshires are the most apt to produce soft bacon," that "they are a large, coarse hog and re-



REFLECTOR 2.071.

First-prize Standard-bred Stallion.

OWNED BY GRAHAM BROS.

quire a longer time to ripen," that they "find it impossible to produce a good firm bacon in less than eight or ten months with Yorkshires," but that "Berkshires will make finer bacon at five months." Let us give my friend's facts: The Yorkshires do not produce soft bacon if fed properly and killed at six to seven months old; that they are not a large, coarse hog if properly bred; that he always sells them off for baconers before they are eight months old, and that no other breed of pigs will produce such fine bacon in so short a time with so little food. This is not the experience of a few days with a few pigs, but he has fattened the produce of sixty to seventy sows for many years, and has tried all the breeds of pigs, and now keeps nothing but Large Whites, which of course are the best in the world. St. Ives, England. SANDERS SPENCER.