

A PEEP INTO THE COTSWOLDS. CIRENCESTER AND THE ROYAL AGRICULTURAL COLLEGE.

Almost all the year round, and especially during the summer and fall seasons, there is a constant stream of holiday-making visitors to the shores of the Old Land. Doubtless many among your readers will this year help to swell the throng, and to such, thus happily situated and who have leisure to wander at will, a visit to Cirencester, in the County of Gloucester, will amply repay them and form a pleasing feature of an enjoyable trip.

Cirencester (shortened form "Ciceter," or in the quaint vernacular "Zizziter") is situated well up in the breezy Cotswold hills. From points of vantage in the upland country around, magnificent views are obtained of the beautiful Severn Valley, and of a country varied by hill and dale, nestling with thickets and leafy woods, and sparkling with the clear waters of running streams and limpid pools. Nearby Father Thames has his source in many streamlets that fall from the Cotswolds to pursue their course united to the sea. The landscape is enriched by some of the most beautiful parks in England, and altogether presents a scene of beauty of a like that can be found but in the Home Land. The town itself is an ancient one. A fortified town in the days of the early Britons, and a center of considerable importance during the occupation of the Romans, it offers a delightful field for research to the lovers of antiquity. Evidences of the Roman occupation are abundant. Portions of the old Roman walls and buildings, fragments of sculpture and specimens of the decorative and useful arts are still extant. Its residential importance in those days is attested by the discovery of beautiful tessellated Roman pavements, many of which have been preserved almost intact, and some of which are hardly rivalled in excellence of beauty and design by any that have been discovered in important Roman stations, either in Britain or abroad. Roman coins and lesser relics continue to be dug up almost daily. The history of the place from then on to more recent years affords a fascinating study, but space forbids us even to attempt a slight sketch. The modern town lies at the meeting of four or five perfectly straight highways, old Roman roads transformed. Like all other old English towns, it is full of quaint and picturesque spots, each with its own peculiar charm, that lift the mind from its habitual channels and carry it back in pleasurable fancy to the stories of the olden days. The parish church of St. John the Baptist is a stately pile, with an imposing tower. The church, altered, enlarged and beautified at various times, still shows in its varied architecture the distinctive styles of the successive ages through which it has passed. The interior ornate decorations of the church, the stalls of the chancel, some beautiful grained stonework, the ancient settings of some of the stained-glass windows, all alike are worthy of close inspection. An old full peal of twelve bells, in the key of D, to which has lately been added a thirteenth, in the key of C, are rung in scarce rivalled melody of tuneful sound.

But to many readers of this paper, by far the most interesting building will be the Royal Agricultural College. First mooted in 1842 at a meeting of the Cirencester and Fairford Farmers' Club, the discussion of "The Advantages of a Specific Education for Agricultural Pursuits" gradually resolved itself into a movement of national interest, and culminated on March 27th, 1845, in the grant of a charter for the Agricultural College, with H. R. H. Prince Albert as patron. Under this charter, Henry George, Earl Bathurst (who had offered a four-hundred-acre farm on a long and favorable lease), became first President. The following account is taken from local literature:

"The building of the College was begun in April, 1845, and was so far completed as to receive students in April, 1846. The College stands on an elevated site just outside the southern boundary of Lord Bathurst's beautiful park, to which the students have access, while the south front commands extensive views over Wiltshire. Within the walls accommodation is provided for the residence of eighty-five students; there is a commodious dining hall; a museum of the same dimensions, rich in specimens illustrative of the lectures on veterinary surgery and practice, geology, mineralogy, and botany, chemistry and practical agriculture; and a theatre and sundry class-rooms for the delivery of lectures. Various alterations in and additions to the College, in the shape of private studies, etc., have been added for the accommodation of a class of students resorting to the College willing to engage them; and an excellent common room. Contiguous to the College, but in a distinct building, has been formed, out of an old barn, one of the best chemical laboratories in England. A portion of this has been fitted up with all requisite appliances for the use of the chemical professor and his assistants; the remainder is adapted for the use of students. Biological and bacteriological laboratories and handsome out-students' room have been added in recent years. The farm buildings are on a large scale, and stand about a quarter of a mile from the College. There is a veterinary hospital, under the management of the veterinary professor, fitted up for the reception of all animals requiring operations, or treatment for disease, accident, or other ailments. The public are invited to send animals for treatment before the students. The dairy, erected by the College in 1885-6, is a model institution of the kind, for teaching dairying in all its branches, furnished with the best appliances, and supplied by cows of milking breeds. The Botanic Garden was laid out during the professorship of the late Professor James Buckman, and considerably improved during the time that the present director of the

Royal Gardens at Kew (Sir W. T. Thisleton-Dyer, F. R. S.) held the professorship of natural history.

"From 1865 the direct management of the greater part of the farm has been separated from that of the College, and been in the hands of a tenant, who has been an old student of the College, and who, in consideration of a capitation grant, gives every facility to students in studying the details of the farming and the management. The present tenant, Mr. Russell Swanwick, has held the post since 1867, and has made a name throughout the world, for the R. A. College Farm and himself, as a breeder of Berkshire pigs, Cotswold sheep, and Thoroughbred horses. Forty acres immediately round the College are retained for experimental purposes, and for the use of the dairy herd and a small flock of sheep, composed of representatives of different breeds.

"In 1849, and again in 1870, supplemental charters were obtained, and in March, 1880, Her late Majesty the Queen was pleased to confer the title of 'Royal,' and to command that henceforth the College should be called the 'Royal Agricultural College.'"

At present there are about 200 students, of all nationalities. Some of these may be seen at work on the land under the supervision of the Professor of Agriculture, and practical men in the employ of the tenant of the farm. But many of them are not of so practical a bent. A leading feature of the College education is the preparation for the management of large estates. The system of giant land-owners, so prevalent in England, calls for the employment of a numerous class of responsible land agents, to whom a knowledge and practical experience of every detail in the control and administration of large estates is essential. Many of the largest estates in the country are managed by graduates from the College. In furtherance of this special training, the immense woodlands of the Earl of Bathurst are thrown open for the use of students.

Cirencester is well known as the home of fanciers in poultry, dogs, etc., and the utmost good feeling prevails between the students at the College and the breeders in the town and neighborhood. On the one hand, the students are initiated into the secrets of the show breeder, and on the other hand, they, in return, patronize the shows and spend both time and money in the interests of the various associations.

There is a grammar and technical school in Cirencester, which has taken a forward step in the education of the working agricultural classes, that is well worthy of notice. The County Council of Gloucestershire have added an annual grant of £500 (\$2,400) a year to the endowment of the school, to further a scheme by which farmers' sons and others intending to live on the land and by the land, might receive a sound secondary education, supplemented by a specialized and practical instruction in the meaning of agricultural processes. By means of scholarships, the scholar may climb from the elementary school to the higher institution, and there fit himself for the highest and most responsible positions in agricultural life which the country affords.

A reference to Cirencester would hardly be complete without mention of its position as a fox-hunting center. Such celebrated packs of hounds as the Duke of Beaufort's, "Badminton"; Earl Bathurst's, "Vale of White Horse"; Mr. T. Butt Miller's, the original V. of W. H. pack; the "Heythrop"; "Cotswolds," and several others, all meet within a short radius of the town. For six days in the week one may hunt over a different stamp of country. One day over fine open country, good grass land, low-lying fences, occasional brooks, deep and wide ditches, with coverts small and long runs between; another day over stone-walled country, with grass and plow land mixed; yet again, over land of small enclosures, with fences high and blind, land to tax the powers of the best hunters the country can produce, and so on in endless variety. Hill and dale, well-preserved coverts and long grassy stretches, fence and stonewall, brooks and ditches, all provide a kingly sport to those who happen there during the hunting season, provided one is mounted on a clever, bold horse, in whom good jumping power is an absolute essential. It is a natural sequence that in this district are bred some of the finest hunters in the world.

To those who are not addicted to this royal sport, or who are not present during the hunting season, long drives into the surrounding country will every day bring fresh delights and unfold to them the beauties and glories of a country unsurpassed in nature's charms and romantic associations.

In conclusion I would add, that he who visits the Old Land, in a true spirit of brotherly friendship, will find there, as elsewhere, a people warmly appreciative, rich in local coloring, but, above all, filled with that sturdy honesty and undying love of country and gentle pride of race which pulses with every heart-beat of your genuine Britisher.

CO-OPERATION IN DRAINAGE.

As from week to week we visit different parts of the Province, examining and surveying farms, or portions thereof, that need drainage, we are brought into contact with various phases of the problem as it affects the country at large. Perhaps no phase claims our attention more frequently than the outlet problem. Few farmers are fortunate enough to have a self-contained drainage system; their farms either receive water from or empty water into other farms. Next to the line fence, the drainage outlet is perhaps the most prolific source of disputes, quarrels and lawsuits among neighbors. Why is this? It seems to me it arises primarily from our failure to appreciate to the full the rights of others, and our consequent inability to accord "the other side of the case," a fair, unbiased consideration.

Some of the owners concerned in a certain outlet are indifferent, others are alive to the value of drainage. If the latter class go ahead and construct a drain sufficient only for their own needs, leaving the former out of consideration, and if by and by the indifferent ones, after watching the benefits their neighbors are enjoying, experience a change of heart and wish to drain their land, what shall they do? They have no share in the outlet already constructed, and hence have no right to drain into it. Neither would it be fair for them to carry their drains to the line and empty the water on the farm of a neighbor who had already provided an ample outlet for all the water natural to his own farm, and who had previously invited them to co-operate. The only logical (and legal) thing for them to do would be to construct another outlet drain, paralleling that already laid. This, of course, would mean a double expense, or nearly so, for outlet purposes, and those wishing this second drain must bear the full expense themselves, since it is of no benefit to those who constructed and drained into the first. Surely, in the long run, it would be economy and wisdom to construct one large, common-outlet drain, each paying his proportionate share, and thus having the right to drain into it whenever he might wish. The frequent outcome of the indifference, however, is that no outlet at all, not even a partial one, is constructed, and the whole community suffers. Of course, any owner has a right to institute proceedings under the "Ditches and Watercourses Act," provided the required drain would "enter not more than seven original township lots, and would cost not more than \$1,000" (R. S. O., ch. 285, sec. 5 and 13), in which case the township engineer examines the locality and brings in an award. If he finds the drain necessary and orders its construction, then it must (subject to appeal) be constructed, and each owner will be assessed in proportion to his interest in it, such assessment to be fixed by the engineer. If the drain would pass through more than seven original township lots, or cost more than \$1,000, then a majority of those interested have the right to institute proceedings under the Municipal Drainage Act (R. S. O., ch. 226, sec. 1). If the case falls within the scope of the former Act—and these are the ones with which we are concerned—then



The Royal Agricultural College, Cirencester, England.