

always looking bagged full. They looked better right along, and it is my opinion that they made a decidedly greater gain, but I don't know. Such is my experience, to which you are welcome for what it is worth.

Middlesex Co., Ont.

THOMAS BATY.

Herefords on the Range.

To the Editor FARMER'S ADVOCATE:

SIR,—Since the cattle trade is again looking up those who have considered the "old cow" as the most profitable bovine property are now in the front rank with large numbers of serviceable mothers of beef. The long-horned Texas steer is rapidly becoming extinct upon the Western ranges. He served his day and generation well, but as he refused to mature until fully grown, he has been pushed aside by a more progressive race, which can be made prime at any age from six months up. The type required by cattlemen to-day is the short-legged, blocky, early-maturing, mellow-fleshed ones so characteristically embodied in the Hereford.

Color in cattle is their most valuable token of truthfulness of breed, their strongest evidence of stability and potency in transmission. It matters not what a Hereford bull may be mated with, the offspring will bear a white or mottled face; and this characteristic marking has won for the "white faces" a favorite distinction in the stock markets of America. Buyers and feeders alike have learned by experience that behind that white face there is a form which will meet their requirements. It is a guarantee that the bearer when "weighed in the balance" will not be found wanting.

No one with any real knowledge of the history of the Herefords and their developed, fixed capabilities will question their right to supersede all other breeds on the range, where their whole life is one of continual rustling for grass, which is their sole subsistence. Their notoriety as grazers has been a marked feature in their nature ever since the foundation of the breed. On the range their thrift and rugged constitution make them the ideal cattle for profitable ranching, capable of getting fully ripe on grass alone, a quality which no other breed possesses. They are equally available at earlier ages for shipment to the feeders of the corn-growing States. Some ranchmen have taken exception to the white faces on account of their length of horn, and have tried the polled breeds. Now, when an Angus or Galloway steer is made prime he makes a wonderfully good carcass of fine quality, but when in a half-fat or unfinished condition the flesh is somewhat blue and coarse-grained; so the rancher who ships his cattle to market in this shape finds them unsuited for him and prefers to dehorn the horned bullocks—they are then gentle and easily handled. No other breed of cattle, with the exception of the Galloway, possesses such an abundant growth of curly, mossy hair, which protects them from the winter blasts and enables them to rest comfortably outside in some sheltered exposure even when zero weather prevails. Those who have seen only old Hereford cows, which have grown "patchy," might assume that the entire breed possessed this undesirable feature, but such is far from being true. These are days of "baby beef." The massive 2,000-pound steer is no longer sought after, but the neat, tidy, evenly-fleshed, little 1,400-pound bullock stands as the modern beef type in the eye of butchers and packers; and a well-fed two-year-old Hereford steer approaches this standard more closely than any other breed or combination of breeds. They lay on flesh evenly, the high-priced cuts are well-fleshed and firmly packed, the once characteristic light thigh, by careful breeding, is being let down and filled out, as was exemplified in the Hereford steer, "Jack," which won over all breeds at Madison Square Garden last fall. A prominent Shorthorn breeder of Ontario pronounced him beef from "lugs to heels," and the best yearling steer he had ever seen.

Cows which produce more milk than is required by their calves are not desirable on the range, and this fact has prejudiced ranchmen against some strains of Shorthorns. Cattlemen on the plains cannot give a cow which has lost her calf but very little attention, and a ruined udder ensues if she be a milker of any note. On the other hand, Herefords produce milk of good quality and sufficient quantity to raise their calves well; thus it is better for the cow and also for the calf. They are excellent mothers; the calves are dropped strong, lusty fellows, are soon on their feet, and require little attention if parturition has been normal.

The many excellencies of the white faces are not confined to range conditions alone, by any means. In the stall they lay on flesh rapidly. In the feed lot they invariably get to the top. In conclusion, I wish to state that just recently I saw a bunch of fifty Hereford cows and heifers brought in off stalk fields, where they had been pasturing all winter, in good condition for immediate marketing. The other day I helped load a car of young bulls, from six to ten months old, which averaged within a trifle of \$100 per head. They were shipped West to go on a large range. TOM C. PONTING, Moweaqua, Ills.

Our Scottish Letter.

A Dismal Spring.—Farmers here are not having a good time. Spring has been abnormally backward, and rain has been falling heavily almost every day. There is no proper seed-bed, and, what is worse, no immediate prospect of improvement. The early potato growers on the Ayrshire coast were caught before half through with planting, and others are in no better predicament. The outlook is by no means bright for the future, but for the present prices alike for beef and mutton show an advance. Generally speaking, breeders, feeders, and dairy farmers have a fairly good return now, but of course there is nothing like the profit secured in days not so long gone by when prices were much higher and farming was one of the paying trades. The wheat grower has experienced extraordinary vicissitudes. In November prices were tending upward, and quidnuncs prophesied that an English average in March would be 40s. per quarter, with a top quotation on Mark Lane of 50s.; but alas for the prophet! we have an average of 27s. and a top price of 30s. in the third week of March, and no immediate prospect of a change.

Bimetallism.—Attention has been directed to the extraordinary fact that such prices should prevail while our fellow citizens in India are starving and pestilence stalks through their land. The bimetalists say this is due to the monometallic standard of the Latin Union, but I must admit that I have been unable to follow the train of argument which leads to this goal. The apostles of a dual standard in money are extremely active, and held a successful meeting in Edinburgh a few days ago, when before an audience of over 200 a spirited debate took place, showing both sides of the question. The subject is certainly attracting more attention than formerly, and has come within the sphere of themes which are treated seriously. This is a step in advance, but it is very doubtful whether it can ever mean ultimate victory for the dual standard. A country like Great Britain, which is so largely a creditor of other countries, cannot afford to abandon the gold standard, and the fact that the free coinage of silver means an advance in the price of staple commodities renders it hopeless to expect the support of the industrial classes to any scheme involving a dual standard.

The period of quiescence in the sheep world is over, and everywhere shepherds are busy with the lambing. So far reports are favorable, but the excessive rainfall is calculated to awaken serious forebodings in the breasts of flockmasters.

A lively discussion has been going on for a long time on the subject of Blackface wool. It arose from a lecture delivered in Muirkirk, by Mr. James Hamilton, of Woolfords, Carnwath, one of the most successful breeders of Blackface sheep, in which the fashion for strong long wool was defended and advocated. Many manufacturers and wool merchants condemn this kind of wool, and the discussion has broadened out until it finds exponents in Bradford and all over Scotland, as well as in England and Ireland. It would not be easy in the narrow compass at our disposal to explain the matter in dispute. Briefly, the difficulty lies here: Breeders claim that long, strong, dense wool is the best protection for the sheep on high, exposed soils—in some cases from 2,000 to 3,000 feet above sea level. They say that such wool weighs heavier and clips a heavier fleece than the thick, soft, shorter and denser wool which it is admitted is most in demand by manufacturers, and sells for more money per pound than the fashionable wool. That is so much from the standpoint of wool alone. The feeder of Blackface mutton says he can fatten a sheep with the shorter, thicker, softer wool much more speedily than one with the other kind, and on the whole this is not denied. The fact of the matter is the various parties to this debate discuss the question from the standpoint of their own interests. The best judges are those who look at the question from all sides, but it is hardly possible to find such in a business of this kind. Practically the end of the matter is that the public give by far the best prices for rams carrying strong fleeces, and so long as they do so it will be the duty of flockmasters to breed such.

Breeders of Border Leicesters are moving in the direction of founding a flock book, but there is an unfortunate lack of enthusiasm amongst them, if not latent opposition to the proposal on the part of some of the best-known breeders. This is very shortsighted policy, and all the more to be wondered at in view of the success which has attended breed societies and pedigree registers in connection with all other classes of stock. The Border Leicester occupies a good position amongst sheep as a very useful animal for crossing purposes. The produce of the B. L. ram and the Blackface ewe is in this country called a cross-bred, and the produce of the B. L. ram and the Cheviot ewe a half-bred. The distinction is arbitrary, but useful, and I have also sometimes thought it was due to a latent recognition of truth in the theory that the modern Border Leicester was partially molded or developed from Bakewell's Leicester by means of the Cheviot. Be that as it may, the Border Leicester bears a much closer resemblance to Bakewell's Leicester than do the English Leicesters of the present day, which are not without an affinity to the Lincoln. The Border Leicester is the one Scottish breed likely to develop an extended foreign trade, and in view of this the lack of enthusiasm in regard to a flock book is much to be regretted.

In the cattle world the chief events lately have been the bull sales. All the breeds have had a good

run, and there is a place for each. The highest price of the season's sales was curiously enough made by a Highland bull, bred by Mr. Stewart, of Ensay, in the outer Hebrides. This bull was bought by the laird of Canna, and it is a curious circumstance that this ancient breed should have secured the highest average of any during the spring sales. Of course, their numbers are much less than those of the Shorthorn and Aberdeen-Angus breeds, or even the Galloway breeds, and hence it is easier to get a big average out of them. Highland cattle are in great demand. Everywhere the rich and noble are their patrons, and immense numbers of bullocks and heifers are ever on the move south. No other breed could live on the pasturage which supports them. They are hardy in the extreme, and one of the great aims of their breeders in these days of enforced maturity is to maintain the native hardiness of the race. This is their most valued characteristic and on no account should it be sacrificed. Without hardiness Highland cattle would be in little favor. Any other breed would do as well. But given this merit and they can make a living for themselves and their owners where no other breed could live. Galloway cattle approximate to them in this respect, and have the additional merit of being polled; indeed, it would be no serious misnomer to characterize Galloways as polled Highlanders. Their bull sale is over and many grand cattle were disposed of, but breeders of the hardy blackskins must exercise greater judgment and castrate many more of their cattle than has been their wont in days past. Nothing so much damages a bull sale than a heavy contribution of second, even third class stock. A good steer is worth much more than a bad bull.

Appropos of cattle, there is a good deal of discussion at present on the tuberculin test. Although the experiment stations on your side of the Atlantic have tested the value of tuberculin as a diagnostic agency, a vast amount of scepticism prevails on this side regarding it. Veterinary surgeons differ widely in their opinions as to its merits, and altogether there is urgent necessity for testing fairly and fully its value in this country. Government is very slow to move here in connection with this question, but the numerous discussion societies have given it much attention. Personally I am satisfied that tuberculin is a very accurate diagnostic agent, that it gives a true result in the very large majority of cases, but that it requires to be utilized with great care, and no wise man will condemn it because in a specified number of cases it seems to fail to reveal the presence of disease. It must be very carefully handled, and before it is denounced as a "frost" it ought to be established that the operation of injecting the fluid under the skin was skillfully performed, and that after death the carcass of a reacting animal was carefully and exhaustively examined. A Royal Commission is sitting on this subject at present, and several Scottish witnesses have been summoned to give evidence. One Scotchman, Mr. John Spier, the well-known tenant of Newton, Cambuslang, has a seat on the Commission, much to the chagrin of some organs of English agriculture, which view this as a piece of favoritism. It is not so, but a well-merited recognition of Mr. Spier's pre-eminent position amongst tenant farmers. A self-made and self-educated man, he is a singularly well-informed agriculturist. The amount of work he gets through is enormous, and he is to be congratulated on the position to which he has attained.

Horses are not in great demand, but Hackneys are having a good deal of attention concentrated on them. The recent London show was again an unqualified success, and the chief honors were as usual won by the Denmark blood. Danegelt 174, as in many years past, led the way amongst winning sires, the final combatants for champion honors being his sons Rosador and Royal Danegelt. The tie was contested inch by inch, and in the end the horses were stripped and Rosador won. He is a wonderfully well-made horse with very good action, and his owner and breeder, Mr. F. W. Buttle, Thirkley Manor, Wharham, Yorks, knows how to show him. The champion mare is Orange Blossom, a beautiful animal, but we have seen her looking better. She was hard pushed by her half-sister, Bonwick Belle, both being got by the fine old horse, Connaught 1453. Scottish exhibitors were very successful at the recent show. Mr. C. E. Galbraith, formerly of Ayton Castle, now of Terregles, Dumfries, bred first and second two-year-old fillies, and Mr. James MacMeeken, Carnbooth, Busby, bred and owned the first and sixth three-year-old fillies. These are well-bred animals; one of Mr. MacMeeken's fillies, Lady Compton, securing the junior champion cup for females. Mr. Galbraith was also first in another class with the very handsome mare, Danish Lady, and Mr. Patteson, Laidlawstiel, Galashiels, was likewise a prize-winner.

A great battle rages around the Hackney in Ireland, and a commission is sitting, charged with an investigation into the history of the breed and their utility as general-purpose horses. Many dread the introduction of any blood but that of the Thoroughbred into Ireland, and many witnesses have been examined to settle the points in dispute. It is idle to deny that the Hackney is not a hunter, and equally idle to deny that there are many districts in Ireland in which the Hackney stallion would not be much more useful than a weedy Thoroughbred, which breeds neither good hunters nor anything else.

"SCOTLAND YET."