

STOCK.

A Day at the Smithfield Cattle Show.

BY A CANADIAN.

Having occasion to visit the Old Country some time ago, my friend and I considered ourselves lucky to find our arrangements would take us to London during the Cattle Show week, so that we might combine business with pleasure. Arriving there over night, the break of day sees us stirring, and having regaled ourselves on the inevitable "am and heggis," breakfast rolls, and coffee, we were ready to make a start.

Out into the cold, grey street, where tradesmen of every description are hurrying around following their morning vocations, and we reckon ourselves in luck at having just missed the proverbial pea-soup fog, as it gave us the opportunity of seeing something on our three-mile drive to the North End, where the Agricultural Hall is situated. Hailing a 'bus, we scrambled up on top, for everybody knows London is seen at its best from there; moreover, I was fortunate enough to get a seat beside the driver, who informed me that his horses were importations from America, and that they were largely patronized by the Company as being cheaper than the home market could supply them. "Was he suited with them?" "Yes! As a rule they were tractable and gentle, and once they got thoroughly hardened and accustomed to the work, they gave good satisfaction." "What were they bought at?" "Oh! on an average they brought about £25 (\$125), and real good ones up to £30 (\$150)."

Past Charing Cross we rolled along, or rather squeezed, for the traffic in the congested parts of the city is enormous, and it must strike every thoughtful observer that the circumstances which brought ruin to the demand for a certain class of horse in our own country (namely, electric motor power) will never apparently prove applicable here.

The amount of horseflesh used up in London must be enormous. What strikes the casual observer at first sight is the great percentage of horses over at the knees, and to be accounted for by the slippery condition of the asphalt streets during the greater part of the year. Were the prices a shade better, for the present prices can only leave but a small margin to the breeder and shipper, it would open up a remunerative market in Canada for that class of horse.

On arriving at the "Angel," one of the few remaining hostels which mark the zenith of the old coaching days, before the steam whistle was heard, we leave the 'bus, and make a slight detour to have a look at the Metropolitan Meat Market.

This is held in an immense block of buildings, some 650 feet long by 240 feet broad, traversed by numerous avenues, and containing over 200 stalls or shops for dealers in meat—mostly country killed. Here the wholesaler supplies the retailer, for it must be borne in mind the greater part of the retail butchers in London are merely cutters of meat. By the time we arrived the bulk of the day's business was over—from 4 a. m. to 6 a. m. being the time to see the market at its best, but even then there was still a few straggling buyers getting in their day's supply, and from what we could see they had their choice as regards quantity, for there appeared to be lots of meat held over.

Frozen mutton from Australia hung alongside refrigerated beef from America, then a dozen carcasses of prime Scotch, but unless informed to that effect it would be hard for the ordinary individual to detect the latter from American (Liverpool killed). Quotations for the day for the last named ranged from 3s. 2d. (75 cents) to 3s. 6d. (80 cents) per eight pounds by the carcass.

We then resumed our journey to the Hall, and at last found ourselves at our destination. It is needless for me to give a detailed description of the winners and their outstanding merits, as most readers will have seen reports to that effect already, but will give a few general impressions instead.

The Agricultural Hall is an immense covered-in space, with a wide gallery running round the four sides. These galleries are apportioned to and were fully represented by agents of machinery and implements of every kind, also grain and seed exhibits, besides a host of other advertisements pertaining to agriculture too numerous to mention, but well worth a stroll around. On the ground floor adjoining the main building are the refreshment rooms, dining halls, and offices of the Society, but the magnitude of the main hall is what attracts attention. Here are held the great London Horse and Cattle Shows of the present day, and my informant told me the present building stood on or near where the great St. Bartholomew market used to be held, dating back on authentic record for some 500 years. But to return to the live stock, the first that claimed our attention were the Shorthorns, and fine, smooth, sappy, contented looking individuals they were. The best animal in this class came from the Queen's Home Farm at Windsor—a splendid red roan, showing any amount of quality. This animal was also adjudged to be the best of any breed in the Hall.

But what commotion is this at the upper end of the building? With the curiosity natural to mankind in such a case, we elbow our way into the crowd to find the champion of the show, Benton Bride (portrayed in the February 1st Advocate), complacently chewing her cud, and not taking the slightest notice of the embarrassing attention and comment showered on her by the crowd. She was

an ideal specimen of a butcher's animal, with flesh as hard and firm to the touch as a piece of gutta-percha, and as my friend put it—"a living monument dedicated to high class feeding": of the Polled-Angus breed, weight 1,850 pounds, age two years eleven months. I hear since that on being slaughtered she dressed over 1,300 pounds, or over 70 per cent. carcass to the live weight. She was only exhibited twice last fall, namely, Birmingham and London, and what between cash prizes, value in cups (all cups being redeemable in cash if so preferred), and the price paid for the animal, she netted her owner over \$3,000.

The Herefords were next in order, and a fine, even lot they were, and as an early maturing breed, can hold their own with any.

Nor were the Galloways and Highlanders without their admirers. What with their shaggy robes (the only remaining substitute for the departed buffalo) and their pecuniary value as beef breeds, I fail to see why they should not become popular on the Western prairies. There is certainly an objection to the Highlander as a shipper, but with a liberal use of the dehorner, that might be obviated. The Red Polls, Sussex, and Devons, made a creditable display; but as for the Kerry and Dexter class, although they may be a good general purpose breed (dairy and beef combined), and suited to the mountainous district they are reared on, as butchers' cattle they can hardly be included in the same category as those already mentioned.

The cross-bred section was the last to claim our attention, and, as regards general excellence from a butcher's standpoint, I think they were the strongest class all through. Big, sappy, thick-fleshed fellows they were, red roans and blue roans being the predominating color, showing the excellent results from the Shorthorn-Polled-Angus cross.

I have met quite a few who are prejudiced against this cross, but these cross-bred steers were proof enough to convert the most skeptical, the majority of them hailing from the "land o' cakes," particularly Aberdeenshire, which is synonymous with Shorthorns, Polled-Angus, and turnips. The animal receiving first award in this class was a fine, compact, blocky roan, weighing over 1,900 pounds at the age of two years eleven months.

Taking the exhibit all through, it was well worthy a visit, and, although we went there with high expectation, for it is the cream of the fat stock of Great Britain that meet here, we were not disappointed. With a farewell stroll around the beauties, we tore ourselves away, and retraced our steps homewards after a fatiguing day, feeling that we had not spent it for nothing; moreover, had earned a night's repose.

C. M.

Experience with Dehorning.

In our list of special inquiries sent out some time ago to crop correspondents was included the following questions: "Has dehorning been practiced in your locality; on what classes of stock, and with what results?"

Replies from thirty-two correspondents, writing from twenty-two counties in which dehorning has been practiced, speak of it favorably. Many of them state that it has been practiced on cattle of all ages, of both sexes, with satisfactory results in all cases. Some writers consider the destruction of the embryonic horn by means of caustic a more humane method than that of waiting until the animal is grown up. Where calves have been dehorned between six months and a year old, stubs are apt to grow up again. It is, therefore, wise to allow calves, whose horns have not been treated with caustic while very young, to carry them until they are about two years old. Our Prince Edward Co. correspondent has visited a number of dehorned herds, whose owners pronounced upon the practice as follows: "Dehorning is a good thing." "Just the thing." "I am not afraid to go among my cattle at night." "All cattle should be dehorned," etc. This is about the sort of answers many of our correspondents have given. Wherever it has been tried on vicious bulls, the animals have become tractable and safe. Herds of cows drink at the same trough like so many sheep. Steers are frequently allowed to run loose, and do well, with much less work than when tied in the stalls. The manure made in such cases is very much better than in any other way.

Says one of our Huron correspondents: "We have dehorned cows of all ages up to ten years with very satisfactory results. With the exception of a few seconds during the process of operation, it is not accompanied by much pain, and it renders the animals more gentle and docile. Having dehorned our cows during the milking season we could notice no difference in their flow of milk."

An Ontario man says: "I am raising a herd without horns, by using Gillet's Lye. I have used it for the last two years and have a fine lot of mulley heifers."

An Oxford writer says dehorning has been extensively practiced in his vicinity, as 75 per cent. of the cattle are already done, and none but good results have followed.

From Martintown, Glengarry, we learn that fully one-half of the dairy herds of that section are dehorned, with no apparent bad results.

The above is a fair synopsis of the answers received, which goes to show that the practice of dehorning, wherever tried, is entirely beneficial. Some who have not done it, nor seen it done to any extent, consider it cruel and unnecessary, which, of course, cannot stand beside the testimony of owners of dehorned herds.

Chatty Stock Letter from the States.

(FROM OUR CHICAGO CORRESPONDENT.)

Exporters are doing a heavy business now in both live cattle and sheep. The prices, however, are rather discouraging the cattle shippers, as values need to be hardened a good deal on the other side to let them out at a profit.

Receipts of all kinds of live stock are running lighter than they were. The hog supply holds up better than anything else, but they are not now as plenty in any part of the country as was expected, and there are many sections in Iowa and Nebraska that have none.

Extreme top prices now, compared with one and two years ago:—

CATTLE.	1895.	1894.	1893.
1500 lbs. up.....	\$6 40	\$4 65	\$6 00
1350 " 1500.....	6 35	4 90	6 00
1200 " 1350.....	6 10	4 30	5 45
1050 " 1200.....	6 00	3 80	4 90
900 " 1050.....	5 40	3 60	4 45
Feeders.....	5 15	3 55	4 70
Fat cows.....	5 05	3 40	4 25
Canners.....	2 60	2 40	2 70
Bulls.....	5 50	3 40	4 25
Hogs.....			
Mixed.....	\$1 80	\$1 75	\$7 80
Heavy.....	5 00	4 70	7 35
Light.....	4 75	4 25	7 65
Pigs.....	4 60	4 70	7 25
SHEEP.			
Natives.....	\$5 00	\$4 00	\$6 00
Western.....	4 75	4 10	5 40
Texas.....	4 25	3 65	5 25
Mexican.....	6 00	3 65	5 00
Lambs.....	6 00	4 75	6 35
May Corn.....	54	57	44
" Wheat.....	54	57	44
" Pork.....	12 05	10 95	17 57
" Lard.....	6 95	6 65	11 50

A year ago thirty-three 1,602-lb. steers sold at \$1.20, but the next highest was \$3.90, with most of the beef cattle at \$3.20-\$3.80. Compare that with the present prices when the bulk of the beef cattle are selling at \$5.00-\$6.00.

Fed Texas cattle sold at \$4.00-\$5.15.

Good store cattle are in very strong demand.

A 2,000-lb. bull sold at \$5.50.

Forty-five cattle, averaging 1,674 lbs., sold at \$6.40 to Eastman; were fed by J. B. Keller, Taylorsville, Ill., and shipped by J. E. Lord, Edinburg, Ill. Standard Cattle Co., Ames, Neb. (R. M. Allen, manager), marketed 65 1,494-lb. steers at \$5.60.

C. B. Ekelberger, of Denton, Texas, marketed 19 fed Texans, 1,331 lbs., at \$5.15, also a 1,200-lb. cow, same price.

Cattle are fully 40 per cent. higher than a fortnight ago, and the tendency is decidedly upward. Buyers are holding back, and trying to keep prices from going up too readily, but they are having a hard time doing it.

A buyer for a Boston hog-slaughtering concern, who keeps in close touch with Western markets, thinks hog receipts will decrease very materially during the next six months, and he expects prices to go to \$6.50 before the end of next August.

Armour's head hog-buyer now says good hogs are going to be very nearly as scarce as cattle. Armour is now a strong bull on hog and hog product.

The sheep market is in very good condition. Among the sheep sales were 981 Mexican yearlings, 75 lbs., at \$4.50; 441 yearlings, 91 lbs., \$4.90; and 382 Mexican sheep, 96 lbs., at \$4.30.

White & Son, of Salt Lake City, had in 214 Utah lambs, averaging 90 lbs., that sold at \$5.65; and 187 sheep, averaging 132 lbs., at \$4.60.

A string of 1,082 Western sheep, averaging 131 lbs., sold at \$4.45.

Joe Greenbaum paid \$1.35 for 1,084 Western export sheep, averaging 138 lbs.

A lot of 400 Texas sheep, averaging 82 lbs., sold at \$4. They were straight from the Southwest, and had been fed some on sotol.

Horses are being marketed in large numbers, and are selling better than they were. A nice five-year-old, 1,100-lb. bay gelding sold for exportation at \$175. Poor to good drivers are selling at \$80-\$200, with carriage teams at \$250-\$600 for fair to good quality.

Jug-handled Reciprocity in Horses.

At the recent annual meeting of the Clydesdale Horse Society of Great Britain and Ireland, a request from Col. Holloway, of the United States Clydesdale Association, was read, asking that provision be made for in future accepting American pedigree as a basis for registration in the British book. Secretary McNeill explained that Mr. Wm. Montgomery had bought a horse in America and cabled to know if he would be accepted for the Scottish Stud Book, to which he had replied in the negative, so the horse remained in Canada. A lengthy discussion was evoked, in which Mr. McCaig, among others, remarked that they were in "no hurry to have American horses coming over to this country." Our British friends believe in selling all the horses and other live stock abroad possible, but when the trade turns it becomes a "horse of another color." The matter was finally referred to the council for careful consideration, to be reported upon at a future general meeting.

The usual sale took place at the close of the London (Eng.) Shire Horse Show, when 41 stallions and colts changed hands at prices ranging from 35 to 200 guineas, with an average of a little over 65 guineas. Sixty-two mares and fillies realized an average of 60 guineas, ranging between 30 and 175 guineas. Just two geldings were disposed of at 47 and 48 guineas respectively.