

STOCK.

Our Scottish Letter.

September is always an exceptionally busy month in respect of stock sales, and this year is no exception to the rule. Sheep and lamb sales are of course the principal events, but cattle and horse sales are not unknown. Recently the great ram sales have taken place, and we are on the eve of the Cheviot sales at Howick. The headquarters of the various breeds may be stated thus: Shropshires, Shrewsbury; Lincolns, Lincoln; English Leicesters, Driffield in Yorkshire; Border Leicesters, Kelso; Cheviots, Howick; Blackfaces, everywhere in Scotland. The chief sales are held at Lanark, Edinburgh, Perth, and Ayr, but there are also good sales at Glasgow, Oban, Fort William, and Greenock. Curiously enough, Inverness is not so much a Blackface as a Cheviot centre. One of the most remarkable chapters in the history of Scottish agriculture was the substitution of Cheviots for Blackfaces all over the North of Scotland in the early years of this century. Unfortunately, the change was accompanied by such social upheavals as have left their influence to this day, and to them some of the Gaelic settlements in Canada owe their origin. The timid and attractive Cheviot is so harmless an animal that one finds it hard to believe that it was in any way, direct or indirect, associated with the Sutherland clearances, but unfortunately the fact is so. The people were removed from their crofts and small holdings to make way for the large farmer with great flocks of Cheviots, and to this day there are more sheep of this breed in Sutherland than in any other county in Scotland. In reading of these clearances, as they were called, it is impossible not to sympathize with the suffering people; and no one who understands the intensity of feeling of which a Highlander is capable can fail to appreciate his deep-seated hatred of those who were responsible for the deeds of darkness. A Celt is capable of strong attachments, and equally strong animosities, and he does not soon forget an injury. Many of the problems associated with congested districts in the remote Highlands find their root in the wholly unnecessary violence which accompanied the great social revolution in the North. But this is a digression.

Ram sales follow on the lamb sales. The highest average prices this season have been made by crack flocks of Shropshires, Lincolns, and Border Leicesters. The intensified foreign demand for the Shropshires from South America, where the farmers are purposing growing mutton now, has exerted an untold influence on the price of Shropshire rams, and the averages made at some of the sales have been almost incredible. Mr. Mansell's average for 45 rams, on 15th August, was £115s. 6d. each, and in most cases these extraordinary prices were paid by tenant farmers who have to make a living and a rent out of their farms. At the Lincoln sales the average for the seven leading flocks was £32 14s. 6d., and for the best, Mr. Wright's, of Nocton Heath, the average for eleven rams was £46 17s. 4d. The numbers here are much smaller than in the case of the Shropshires, and the truth is, were it not for the Argentine demand for Lincoln rams for crossing purposes, not much would be heard of the breed. The Lincolns are reared for wool, the Shropshires for mutton, but the Border Leicesters are reared for both, and the averages for the crack flocks, having regard to numbers, compare more than favorably with those of the great English breeds. In ring 4, at the Kelso ram sales, Mr. James Swan, the most vivacious of Scottish auctioneers, sold most of the crack lots. Lord Polwarth's is the leading flock, and his average this year for 30 shearling rams was £49 13s. 4d., a figure which surpasses the best Shropshire and the best Lincoln records. One of these sheep was sold for £151 and another for £150; surely high enough prices in all conscience, and, we believe, only excelled once, when £155 was paid at a similar sale, two years ago, for a ram from the same flock. The next best returns were made for Mr. Matthew Templeton's rams. His average was £22 2s. 6d. for 16 sheep. After him comes Mr. John Twentyman, Hawkrigg House, Wigton, Cumberland, from whose flock Mr. Templeton's was founded. His average was the very satisfactory one, for 28 rams, of £18 15s. 8d. These gentlemen are not Polwarth men; that is to say, they do not believe that everything good in a sheep is to be found in the choice of Mertoun flock. The consequence is that breeders who find themselves becoming cornered by too much inbreeding are glad to avail themselves of the strong blood of such outside flocks as that of Mr. Twentyman. Another excellent flock deserving special mention is that of Mr. Thomas Clark, Oldham Stocks, Mains, whose average for 25 rams sold in another ring was £18 2s. The Border Leicester is the great Scottish crossing ram for breeding early lambs from Blackface or Cheviot ewes; and if the breeders would only pull themselves together and found a flock-book, they would have a strong claim to foreign regard, and would soon establish themselves as formidable opponents of these Down breeds. The Blackface is, in a sense which is altogether his own, the Scottish sheep. He occupies more territory and pays more rent than any other breed. Prices for them have not been quite so brisk this year—but yet they are brisk enough: £33 for a ram two years

old, and £75, £72, £71 and £60 for single shearling rams are prices at which men can do far more than live. Some of the more notable averages have been: at Lanark, Woolford's, 7 rams, £26 8s. 7d.; Glenbuck, 20 rams, £21 0s. 3d.; and Cadzow, Boreland, for 20, £13 17s. 6d. At Edinburgh the Cadzow's, with 20, made \$15 6s. 3d.; and Overshiels, a very noted flock, with 60 rams, made £21 6d.; Woolford's, with 13 rams, made £12 3s. 5d. At Perth the best average was £18 2s., made by Glenbuck, for 32 rams. It is generally considered that rearing rams for the sale ring cannot be made profitable under an average of £5 per head. If this be so, rather many of the breeders of Blackface sheep this year will have cause to regret their so limited use of the castrating knife.

Aberdeen-Angus sales have recently taken place at Kippendavie, Ballindallock, and Pitpointie. The averages have not been within a considerable distance of those realized at the sales two years ago, but, on the whole, they were very fair, considering the quality of the stock. At Ballindallock only one animal entered the three figures, and at the other two sales none were so favored. The averages were: Kippendavie, 29 of all ages, £20 8s.; Ballindallock, 41 of all ages, £35 5s. 9d.; Pitpointie, 63 of all ages, £20 3s. 10d. The principal Shorthorn sales will not take place until October, when there will be sales of first-class stock from such noted herds as Dunglass, Collynie, and Shethin.

Clydesdale matters begin to show some signs of revival, and Mr. Robert Graham, of Graham Bros., Claremont, has taken away a small but really first-class shipment of good horses. Next week we will have a great sale at Polmont, when a selection from the studs of Lord Polwarth, and Mr. David Mitchell, of Millfield, will be put before the public. How prices will go then will be a good index of the state of feeling in Clydesdale circles. Lord Londonderry holds a large sale next week.

SCOTLAND YET.

British Columbia Provincial Exposition.

The Maritime Province of British Columbia, with its healthful live stock climate, is pushing well forward in all lines of fine stock. The Provincial Exhibition just passed at Victoria surpassed important shows in much older Provinces.

Horses of many pure-bred classes were well brought out. The following breeds had representatives, some of which had well-contested sections:—Clydesdales, Shires, Carriage, Thoroughbred, Standard-bred, Roadster and Cleveland-bay.

The cattle exhibit surpassed anything of a like nature previously seen in the Province. Shorthorns, Jerseys and grades were the strongest classes, while Holsteins were fair, and Ayrshires present, but few in numbers.

The swine display was not large, but some good Berkshires and Suffolks were shown. J. T. Wilkinson, Chilliwack, it will be remembered, took a shipment of good ones from Ontario last year, from which the most successful Berkshire herd at the Victoria show was drafted. The exhibition of fat pigs was exceptionally good.

In sheep, Southdowns were most numerous, among which were several Ontario prize winners, imported into British Columbia by Mr. Wilkinson. Lincolns, Oxfords and Shropshires were out in good numbers, and were of nice, uniform quality.

Potatoes for Stock.

Potatoes can hardly be expected to rise above a comparatively low figure this winter, because of the very good crop in this and other countries. This will lead to their use as stock food upon many farms where they are grown. While they answer a good purpose when fed to cattle and even horses, more profit is derived from their use as hog feed. In this connection it is a fact worth knowing that they should in all cases be boiled, which process renders their starch more easily digested, which would otherwise be largely lost by escaping assimilation in the animal economy. Before boiling it will save fuel and time to have them pulped. It is also well to add a quantity of peas or barley to the mass, which will not be lost and will add a very desirable flavor. And if one has a supply of pumpkins, a few cut up among the potatoes before boiling will still improve the flavor and quality of the food. As they cook quickly, they need not be pulped, but simply cut in chunks.

Keep Up the Quality.

A thoughtful walk through the sheep exhibit at any of the larger stock fairs cannot fail to show to many a sheep breeder that there is something wrong with his flock management. The ideal sheep can only be obtained by constant improvement. By the use of a good thoroughbred ram on carefully selected ewes, a gradual improvement must be made, while carelessness in these matters must result in a gradual deterioration.

When making sales, whether for breeding or block purposes, the best ewes should never leave the farm. It is better to have a less number of sheep of a quality that, with good feed and care, will return a fair profit, than a large number of scrubby nondescripts, which never yield a paying dividend.

Did it ever occur to our dairymen readers that it takes about the price of 175 pounds of butter to keep a cow for a year?

The Western Fair.

HORSES.

The exhibition of horses could not be called fine. In fact, in many of the sections every good animal and some unworthy ones received prizes.

CLYDESDALES (imported).

Judge—John Miller, Jr. Brougham. The imported Clydesdale class was not strong in any section, and, on the whole, the quality was not of a high order. In aged stallions just three came out to compete. A strong, brown, well-fitted horse, Craigievar, shown by P. D. McCallum, Forest, was given the first prize. The second fell to Jas. Henderson's (Wellburn) Reformer, a somewhat thinner horse, with grand limbs. Had he carried more flesh his place in the front would have been assured. R. Shaw-Wood's Shamrock was the third horse. The only three-year-old stallion in Toronto was alone here—Grand National by Tanna Hill, shown by Samuel McArthur, Oro Station. He won the diploma for best stallion any age. A solitary two-year-old left the judge an easy task. John Oliver's (Duncrief) Wigton by Wigton Lad has many of the good qualities of his sire. In the three-year-old filly section, J. W. Robinson, St. Mary's, was alone with a strong, good-limbed mare by his Bay Wallace. She was a good mare last year and has gone on well since that time. Two-year-olds were two in number: S. J. Prouse, of Ingersoll, and J. W. Robinson were the exhibitors. Although they are both well-developed fillies, Mr. Prouse's first prize (also sweepstakes) winner had a bit more quality than the other exhibit. Brood mares were three strong. A. B. Scott, Vanneck, showed Kate II. of Congieth, on which he won first prize. She is a strong mare of much quality. S. J. Prouse had the other exhibits—a valuable pair of brood mares. The foals were an ordinary lot. The prize-winners had to be chosen from among the very young ones. The first winner, out of one of Prouse's mares, was particularly sweet. Geo. Duffield (Granton) won second on a nice but thin get of Rakerfield. The third went to S. O. McLurg, Ivan. Just one team came out in this class, shown by W. Duffield, Granton. They are quite a nice pair, but more size would improve them.

CANADIAN DRAUGHT.

Judge—D. McGregor, Brucefield. While this class should improve from year to year, we cannot truthfully say that such is the case. Six stallions four years and over were the first section out. The best four horses bore considerable quality and fair size. The first winner was not hard to find in Blooming Heather by McNeillage, a very sweet horse shown by James A. Boag, Queensville. He was placed fourth in Toronto, in a rarely good section, and took the sweepstakes here without any trouble. Jas. Alsop, Glasgow, had the second prize horse, which resembled his more successful competitor a good deal, but lacked somewhat the same sweet finish of body and limb. The third went to J. A. Mason & Sons, Norwich, for a well-finished, blocky animal. The sections for three, two and one-year-olds just had one for each; but there was not an inferior one among them. W. Wambold's Dandy Boy, the Toronto winner, being the three-year-old, while the other two belonged to Geo. Taylor, Kippen. The three and two-year-old filly sections had each a nice sort of mare, shown by Jas. A. Starr, Pine Orchard. These two full sisters by Ace of Picks were prize winners at Toronto the previous week. Jessie, the older, carried off the mare sweepstakes here. Three yearlings ranging from good to fair contested. The prize list shows how the awards were given. Brood mares were few, there being just two entries present. W. M. Fauld, of Caradoc, had a particularly nice sort of mare, with plenty of size. The foals were a fair lot of four. Three quite good teams came out to be judged. J. W. Robinson had his three and four-year-old daughters of Bay Wallace—a hard pair to beat. They were placed ahead of Hyder & Parkins' team of useful farm horses. James Henderson's pair were good and sound, but they lacked fitting.

AGRICULTURAL OR GENERAL PURPOSE.

Judge—C. A. Paul, Coldstream. This class was made up of a motley crowd, ranging in build from draught to carriage. There were a few nice things among the young stock, but very few that would sell for a decent price. The teams, five in number, were on the whole a fair lot. The judge soon settled the first on a well-fitted matched pair of blocky bays, shown by John D. Campbell, Heather. There seemed to be about three teams upon either of which the second might have safely been placed. The judge settled upon a thinnish pair of useful horses, shown by George Dickie, Hyde Park, leaving at least two exhibitors dissatisfied.

THOROUGHBREDS.

Judge—Mr. Archie Wilson, Paris. This class seems to come out about the same each year. There is always a good show of aged stallions, and the entries in the younger sections are usually sent in by about two or three breeders. The aged stallions were five strong. They were a fine, breedy lot, but too many were too small to make them of service in getting anything but racing stock, for which the demand is very limited in this country. The first prize horse, which also won the sweepstakes, was found in Fitzgerald & Henry's Temple, a beautiful black of medium size, and quality very hard to surpass. Llewellyn Meredith's horse came next in order. He is a sharp, well-