

Leicester Sheep.

The British Islands, that have given to the present civilized world so many different breeds of meat producing animals, have through centuries past developed the different races suited to the localities in which they were bred. Before the era of quicker locomotion very few men ever left home for a day and a night, and when we remember that it was not until the middle of last century that road-making was first enquired into, and not much more over a century ago that the first turnpike roads were built in England and Scotland, and the first decade of the present century was past before the coachingsystem of travelling was inaugurated, therefore the introduction of any new breed of farm animals must of necessity have been slow. At that time there was very little interchange of thought or knowledge of what was going on in the world beyond a certain district. It is, therefore, not surprising that an animal such as the sheep, that is comparatively difficult to transport for any distance, should partake of the character suitable to the soil and surroundings of the country in which they have been bred for so many generations. To Bakewell the flock-masters of the British breeds are indebted, not only to the improvement that has been made on Leicesters, but in the system of ram letting, which has become general in all breeds of British sheep. The marked advantage a master breeder such as Bakewell gained through letting instead of selling, after he had established his own flock, is easily seen, for by this means a ram that turned out a superior breeder was not lost to the flock in which he was produced, his breeder having control of him, and thus obtaining his services when afterwards required. The difficulty which this plan first met is illustrated in the fact that the first Dishley ram was let in 1760 for sixteen shillings for the season, while thirty years later three hundred guineas were received for one ram, and six thousand two hundred guineas for the ram lettings of that year.

The improvement which has been made upon the Leicesters very soon had an effect on the other breeds, and doubtless several of the other sorts have been improved by an admixture of this breeding.

Although the old Dishley Leicester was first to feel the improvement that had gone through all lines of farm yard stock, breeders of late have not been breeding them after their former character, and have branched off on other lines perhaps more suitable for the requirements of the present age. The improved Leicester still occupies a large extent of the most fertile districts of England, and it is also bred in Scotland with equal care and success. It is, of course, in both countries principally confined to the Lowlands or land of pretty good quality. The following account of the modes of management in Roxburghshire on the Teviot and Tweed, may be taken as a fair sample of the system adopted in the several districts in either country, and a good sample, as regards long-woolled sheep in less improved localities:—

"On nearly all farms of any considerable extent what is called a breeding stock of these sheep is kept, and the system pursued is generally the following: From the ewes three successive crops of lambs are taken, the dams being sold off at the close of their third breeding season, or when four and a-half years old. In

general, the whole produce of these ewes is retained upon the farm on which they are bred, a proportion of the ewe lambs when gimmers (or shearlings as we call them in Canada) coming in to take the place of the old ewes sold each year, the wether lambs again are disposed of as fat, many of them immediately after being shorn the first time, and the remainder after being fed on turnips, in the winter or spring of the second year. Not unfrequently, however, upon farms where not as large proportion of turnips can be raised, the whole of the wether lambs, and sometimes part of the ewe lambs, are disposed of at weaning time, and those ewe lambs kept beyond the number required to maintain the complement of the year, are sold when shearlings, generally at about eighteen months old."

The system here detailed prevails with little difference throughout the midland districts of England, modified, of course, by the fact as to whether pasture or arable land is most abundant on a particular farm. The fault that has been found with the English Leicester is that they are not as prolific as some of the other improved breeds, this quality no doubt being overlooked by Bakewell and his followers of that date. From this or other faults they have not been as freely imported of late, while an offshoot known as the Border Leicester is now being more frequently met in Canada, and it is with this kind we are best acquainted. It is claimed that the Border Leicester originated with a cross of the English Bakewell or Dishley sheep, with the Cheviot, and from the appearance and character of these sheep, it is quite probable that such is the case. Others claim that Lincoln blood was infused. However that may be, the Border Leicester is now a distinct sort, having special characteristics of its own, and has been growing much in favor in Canada, and certain votaries of this sort can claim that this breed do not degenerate after a sojourn on this side of the Atlantic. We question if any sort of improved farm stock can stand up with and keep their place any better than this breed of sheep without having recourse to frequent importation of fresh blood. The special points of the breed are: Head well set on, long; broad between eyes, but not up on the crown; not too heavy behind the ears; muzzle open and black; hair on face and legs white and hard, but not so wiry as in the Cheviot, extending well back behind the ears; ears not too large nor drooping; white inside and out; black spots appear sometimes with age; the belly comparatively light, said to carry little offal, giving a leggy appearance when without wool; the wool soft and long, and in little locks; not too open coated. In Canada they have been bred in moderately small flocks, and by the most careful and intelligent class of breeders, and in their hands they have been brought to such perfection that for many years it would be extremely difficult for imported Border Leicesters to obtain a prize at any of our leading shows, when the best Ontario flocks were properly represented. This is partly to be accounted for by the high condition that they are brought out in, and the great care displayed in fitting them for show. Border Leicester rams are used for crossing for getting lambs for the summer trade, there being a great demand for lambs at this time of the year for the eastern markets. This cross also greatly improves the feeding qualities of the ordinary flocks, and is quite popular for this purpose in Canada.

The Yorkshire Longwool, that were at one time the most extensively imported and bred, are to be found in different sections of the country; and although they were crossed with both Lincolns and Cotswolds by a good many Canadian breeders, in order to obtain a heavier fleece, still they are to be found of much the same character that they were twenty-five years ago. Several small but select flocks of them are to be found in the county of Kent, where they have been bred for twenty-five years without having any new infusion of foreign blood, and they still retain plenty of size and vigor.

Queen vs. William D. Richardson.

To H. Wade Secretary of the Clydesdale Association of Canada, Toronto:—

DEAR SIR,—We beg to return you herewith the form of pedigree signed by William D. Richardson, and to advise you that in accordance with your instructions we caused information to be laid against William D. Richardson, of Vandorf, in this county, before Justice Wingfield, for the breach of the Agriculture and Arts Act of the Revised Statutes of Ontario, Chapter 39, Section 85, which provides that "any person who wilfully signs any false pedigree intended for registration in any Herd, Flock or Stud Book, or who presents to the Secretary or other officer having charge of the register, for the purpose of having the same entered therein, any false or spurious pedigree, knowing the same to be false or spurious, shall, upon summary conviction thereof before any Justice of the Peace, be liable to a penalty of not more than \$100, and not less than \$25 for each pedigree so signed or presented by him." The defendant was duly summoned and appeared for trial before Justice Wingfield on the 15th ult. The defendant gave evidence on his own behalf, setting out that this was the first pedigree he had ever given; that a man called F. M. Tuckett applied to him on purchasing the mare Gip to sign this paper; that he (Richardson) explained to Mr. Tuckett that he was not the breeder of the animal, as he understood it, but that Tuckett said it would make no difference; that the names of the second, third and fourth sires were not in the form of the pedigree when the same was signed by him, and that the second sire was named therein as Glenochie. The whole drift of the evidence of the defendant went to show that Tuckett had changed the name of the second sire from Glenochie to Gleniffer, and had inserted the names of the third and fourth sires, Victor II. and Bay Wallace, after the defendant, Richardson, had signed the pedigree.

With reference to the statement that he was the breeder, the defendant had more difficulty in explaining; but he said that he had signed this statement upon the representation of Tuckett that it was all right. The defendant also swore that he did not know for what purpose this pedigree signed by him was to be used, and that he understood from Tuckett that it was to be used by Tuckett either in the United States on selling the animal, or possibly for registration of animal with two crosses.

After argument of counsel for the prosecutor and defendant, the Justice gave judgment finding the defendant guilty, but suspended sentence meanwhile, but required the defendant to pay costs forthwith.

The Justice was evidently impressed, as we certainly were, with the view that Tuckett was the man chiefly blameable, and the defendant, being somewhat of an innocent character, had been induced to sign this paper which has occasioned all the trouble.

Yours truly,

(Signed) C. HOLMAN & Co., Barristers.

[It has not been in our province to chronicle the evil doings of our stockmen, but this is just as imperative as the history of the great benefit they are conferring on the country at large.—ED.]

Want of success in farming generally comes through careless treatment of live stock. Neglect of stock and neglect to shun partizanship in politics have ruined thousands of farmers.