

STOCK

Crop Prospects in England

(OUR ENGLISH CORRESPONDENCE)

In spite of persistent rains, little sunshine and low temperatures the cereal crop prospects are the best for years. Storms have laid the grain in many places and will make the cost of harvesting greater. The spell of warm weather which has broken the long monotony of cold and wet will do untold good in filling the ears and ripening the grain. Wheat is undoubtedly the crop of the year, with barley a good second, and oats rather a bad third, though in many districts oats will be a fair average crop. Now that the hay harvest has been practically completed the result is far better than seemed probable earlier in the season. Potatoes are promising though there is some complaint of rot, and a continuance of dry, sunny days is needed. Garden produce is abundant, peas being very plentiful and cheap. Cabbages are poor this year. Turnips promise to be a good crop, but mangels are patchy and much in need of sunshine.

Strawberries have paid very poorly and thousands of acres were never gathered. Home-grown apples are on the market and a fairly abundant crop will probably be gathered. Harvesting of all crops will be later than usual, and much depends on favorable weather from now on. If they can be safely gathered the cereals will this year belie the saying "that a late crop is a good crop."

LIVE STOCK CONDITIONS

There is a good demand for beef and prices show a tendency to rise. Mutton, too, is in better demand and sheep are bringing slightly higher prices. Store cattle are not selling well, farmers being reluctant to buy animals for wintering in face of poor hay and high prices for mill feeds. Dairy cows are selling well, and newly calved cows are bringing from £23 to £26. Butchers complain of the scarcity of pigs.

The multiplicity of Britain's sources of food supply is shown by one of the latest consignments to Smithfield market. A shipment of frozen pork arrived from China, and was sold quite readily at from 4½d to 5d per pound, about 1d less than English wholesale. Higher prices would probably have been realized if the inspector had allowed the shipment to be sold in the frozen state, but he insisted on thawing for inspection. Should Chinese pork prove remunerative it is said there are large supplies to be obtained from China, and a big business will speedily be established. On the same steamer was a large consignment of all kinds of frozen game and wild fowl.

SEVERAL AUCTION SALES

Good prices were realized at the auction sale of the Coombelands Berkshire pigs, owned by D. E. Higham. Seventy-eight lots were sold at an average of £6 6s. 8d. The top price was 36gs. for the sow "Polegate Dejanira" sold to W. J. Collinge.

There were 297 entries at the Totnes sale of South Devon rams. The demand was not equal to the supply and very uneven prices resulted.

The best rams brought spirited bidding.

The highest price was 40 gs. for a ram owned by J. S. Hallett's offering. In all 180 were sold, ranging from 4gs. to 40gs. and averaging £9 7s. 10d., nearly a pound less than last year.

Forty-nine Oxford Down rams from the famous Maisey Lampton flock were sold at Cirencester Ram Fair. Bidding was brisk and the total realized was £1,024. A fine ram brought 100gs. after a keen bidding contest; the buyer was G. F. Moore of Bourton.

Suffolk horses were entered in goodly numbers for the animal sale at Ipswich. The attendance of buyers was good and fair prices were realized, foals selling unusually well, making up to 32gs. The highest price was 84gs. for R. Eaton White's mare, "Boulge Dora", sold to G. S. Agnew, Rougham.

PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY

The Bill to create a Parliamentary Secretary to the Board of Agriculture passed the second reading in the Commons without a division. Until now agriculture has had no direct representative in the Commons — as have had other government departments, and this lack will now be remedied. The new office is especially welcome to farmers in view of the many new duties imposed on the Board of Agriculture by the Small Holding's Act. The government are to introduce a Bill creating a Scottish Board of Agriculture.

Another Bill now before Parliament, Mr. Burns' Milk and Dairies Bill has been widely discussed by various associations. Much opposition is manifested to the rigid control proposed for the Local Government Board, and payment of compensation out of local funds is also opposed. A deputation has waited upon Mr. Burns, but he holds out no hope of amendment in these cases.

Vigorous opposition is offered to the drastic clause that proposes to prohibit the sale of milk from any farm where the supply has caused, or is likely to cause, an infectious disease. This is compared to closing a grocer's shop because one tin of some food is found to be bad. There is no objection to a search for the cause of a taint and the taking of reasonable precautions. As the clause stands a medical officer miles away may close a dairy on a report, and stop the whole milk supply from being marketed.

Considerable powers are to be conferred on the medical inspector, who is to be appointed by a local council of whom a majority may be dairy farmers. It is objected that such an inspector could hardly do his duty impartially. The suggestion is made that inspectors should be under the control of the central authorities.

YORKSHIRE SHOW AT BEVERLY

This year's Yorkshire Show deserted the larger towns of the county and was held at Beverly, a typical agricultural town, in the East Riding. The entries of stock were about an average of recent years, and most of the well known exhibitors were represented. Horses were a capital section. Amongst the cattle, Shorthorns were excellent, especially the females, though fewer in number than usual. Sheep were in greater number and unusually fine — the East Riding Wolds being well to the front. A marked feature was the extensive display of implements, seeds, manures, etc. The live stock entries totalled 688, smaller than usual owing to the absence of

pigs, which were kept out by the B. of A. regulations.

The Shire Society's medal for brood mares was won quite easily by Tom Kay's "Ridgeway Forest Queen." In close competition, Arthur Hall's "Copmanthorpe Performer," a splendid goer, headed the Hackney stallion class and took the Society's medal. Lord Middleton's bull calf, "Birdsall's Croesus," took the Shorthorn Society's special prize.

Superb weather favored the show, and the attendance was moderately good. Next year's show will be held at Leeds.

NATIONAL SHOW IN WALES

The Welsh National Show had grand weather for the fixture. The principal feature of the show was the good quality of the ponies. Heavy horses were rather poor, Hunters were few, but Hackneys were a good class. The Prince of Wales' Challenge cup for best cob of the old Welsh type was awarded to a brown cob stallion, "High Stepping Gomar 2nd," owned by Evan Davies, Lampeter.

Shorthorns were of average quality. The special for best bull was secured by F. Miller's old bull, "Royal Duke," with Sir Richard Cooper's "Silver Mint 2nd" in next place. Welsh cattle were few in numbers, but of fine quality. The Society's medal went to the University College of North Wales.

Herefords were the strongest cattle class. The breed special went to Taber's bull, "Rob Roy." A close second was the King's bull, "Admiral."

The sheep section was well filled, native breeds being present in great force. Pigs were few in numbers.

SUGAR BEET PROPOSITION

Englishmen are greater consumers of sugar than any other nationality, but none is produced in England, though large stretches of land are eminently suited to the culture of sugar beets. Germany has made a wonderful success in the production of beet sugar and experiments prove that beets, carrying a higher percentage of sugar than German grown, can be grown in England. Steps are being taken to remedy this lack of sugar production and at Sleaford in Lincolnshire the movement has progressed so far that a site for a factory has been secured, which has capital railway facilities. Contracts for 1,300 acres of beets have been signed and when the guarantee reaches 3,000 acres capital for building the factory is ready.

An interesting feature of the scheme is a proposal that the beet growers shall share in the profits after a certain dividend has been attained. The company offers 14s 6d. per ton for beets, and one grower claims an average growth of 17 to 18 tons per acre, and has grown as much as 25 tons. Another grower claims that English beets carry 17.3 units of sugar against 15 units of foreign beets.

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The boycott of English meat started by the butchers in May has fallen flat, and farmers are able to dispose of their beasts without any warranty. It is said that the butchers are awaiting the coming in force on January 1st, next, of the new order regarding tuberculous animals issued by the Board of Agriculture.

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Foreign trade returns for July were more favorable than for many months. Imports increased by £3,547,573 over July, 1908, and exports of British and Irish produce increased by £1,781,515. The largest item of increase in imports was for wheat which was £1,500,000 more. Butter and meat showed declines. Manufactured articles accounted for the increase in exports.

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The future of live stock breeding was the theme of an address by Sir Gilbert Greenall, a director of the R. A. S. at the Warrington Show. Sir Gilbert claimed that it is difficult to say how long we shall have pedigree stock in Britain. The burdens put upon land, the breaking up of many large estates, and the cutting up into a general system of small holdings of our large farms, would put an end to pedigree stock breeding. If we were to have the country cut up into small farms, where were stock breeders to go? They would have to go abroad, where they would not be interfered with. Sir Gilbert is unduly pessimistic. If small holdings mean ruin to pedigree stock breeding, the breeder has many generations to prosper in at the present rate of progress in acquiring small holdings.

F. H. WILSON



WHERE THE SHEAVES FALL EAST — HARVESTING ON JAMES HAYDEN'S FARM IN THE LACOMBE DISTRICT.