

MARCH 16, 1911

paupers, will not be fulfilling its obligations if it does not do all in its power to secure the ratification of the proposed agreement.

Without going into any detailed discussion of the case, it may be remarked that the bringing forward of innumerable objections to the reciprocity agreement, some absurd, and others mutually contradictory or inconsistent, leaves one quite ready to infer that the real objection is not mentioned, and that it will, moreover, not bear much exposure to daylight. Prophecies of the immediate and irreparable ruin of practically every industry in both countries have, in some quarter or other, been made; and if the arguments advanced in support of such prophecies are not characterized by extreme lucidity, the deficiency is, apparently, made good by warmth and color of language.

It is to be hoped that we shall be permitted to at least try the new agreement, and see how it works. If, as certain parties predict, it is a huge mistake, and will ruin our country, we shall probably find it out in time to rectify our error; and if, on the other hand, it will be a good thing for us, the sooner we get it, the better. In the past we have survived, and even prospered in a measure, under virtual exclusion from the markets of the United States; and it is more than possible that the sun will still shine when those markets are once more open to us.

Brant Co., Ont.

W. C. GOOD.

Huron County Appropriation.

We all like "The Farmer's Advocate" as a weekly visitor, with its good reading from cover to cover. It is losing no ground, but gaining popularity with its readers. We like its sentiments on the reciprocity question, and hope the great leaders of our country will not be bluffed by the big opposition arguments in some of the papers against freer trade with the United States. It is what farmers and consumers have been wanting and waiting for for many years. We are relying low and watching results, but are determined to stay with it. It has come to the time when farmers are considering their own interests ahead of partyism. We like "The Farmer's Advocate" because it is the farmer's friend in a great many ways. We are pleased to note some valuable points on fruit-growing, and this is the season of the year we need instruction on the culture of all kinds of fruit and vegetables, corn, tobacco and beans, as this part of the country is well adapted for these, as well as grain and stock raising.

SUBSCRIBER.

Huron Co., Ont.

Agricultural Banks for Britain.

The British Government scheme for some form of agricultural bank is making progress. Some time ago, Lord Carrington promised that action would be taken in the matter, and recently he has been conferring with leading bankers, whose advice and co-operation are needed.

The Board of Agriculture seems favorable to some plan to be worked through the great joint-stock banks, which would do away with the need of any central bank.

The suggested plan is for banks to lend to local credit or co-operative societies, and these societies would pass on the money to individual farmers.

Co-operative action has made capital progress in the last two years, and already one large joint-stock bank is lending money liberally on co-operative security.

HORSES.

The Shire Horse.

Up to the middle of last century, the Shire stallion was, generally speaking, a ponderous animal, weighing up to 2,300 pounds, and often had but very little action. About thirty-five years ago, however, activity became an important requisite, and from that time until now special attention has been paid to the legs and feet, whilst at the same time the general formation of the animal has also received greater care. Thus it will be seen that at the present time the Shire horse has not only better legs and feet, but that he stands much more correctly on them than formerly.

It is now universally acknowledged that, to have good action, it is necessary to have the hind legs well under the horse, with hocks fairly close together; it is found to be much easier to get these perfections in the smaller animal than in the larger one, so that breeders are usually apt to put quality before quantity. At the present time, however, it is generally acknowledged that the real commercial value of the Shire horse is his weight, power of resistance, and also ability to move dead weights. It is well known that only weight can move weight, consequently the aim and requirement of the present day is to have a horse not under 17 hands, to weigh not less than 1,500 cwt. when he is at full growth, with

proper legs and feet, and showing a good quantity of silky hair, with all the quality that can be had consistent with the before-mentioned requirements.

The value of Shire stallions and mares has enormously increased in the last twenty-five years. It was formerly a very rare occurrence for a stallion to sell for more than £100, and it was not until after the formation of the studbook that prices began to increase. Since that time, it has not been a very uncommon thing for stallions to make up to 2,000 guineas, and mares up to 1,000 guineas. This is due, to a very great extent, to the fact that registration enables breeders to know which line of blood produces the soundest and best animals. It is only by these means that breeders are enabled to ascertain with any degree of certainty which animals will likely reproduce themselves. We may confidently expect that, as the breeders of Shire horses have now agreed as to what the type of the Shire should be, the improvement which has taken place in the breed in the last twenty-five years will be as nothing to what will be seen in years to come. Thirty years ago, it would not have been believed that such perfection and early maturity as is seen in animals now exhibited could have been arrived at in the time.

The agricultural shows of England, especially the Shire Horse Society, held in London each year during the months of February or March; and the Royal and County Shows, have had a great influence on the advancement of the Shire horse, but perhaps nothing has done more in this direction than the Foal Shows held in different parts of the country. Noticing what poor use tenant-farmers were making of the breeding capacities of their mares, which in many cases were noticed to be exceptionally good breeders, and as many of the best Shire horses were, and had been for a considerable time, bred by small farmers, these foal shows were started in the autumn months each year, and by this means many foals have been sold by small tenant-farmers at from 50 to 200 guineas each.



A Champion Shire Stallion.

Besides the noblemen and gentlemen who have been the supporters of the Shire horse mainly to benefit their neighbors and tenant-farmers in their districts, there are many others who have kept studs of Shire horses purely as a business, and have done much to enhance the pecuniary as well as the real value of the Shire horse. First amongst these may be mentioned the late James Forshaw, of Carlton-on-Trent, Newark, who was recognized by all breeders as one whose opinion and experience was of great value. It is stated that, from the commencement of this stud, later carried on by the firm of James Forshaw & Sons, over 3,000 stallions have been handled and owned, and a large business done in mares and fillies. Mr. Forshaw, Sr., is reported as having said that his experience told him that almost all the best strains and the best blood among Shire horses breed back directly or indirectly to Dick's Matchless (1509), which was one of the first stallions travelled by Mr. Forshaw. A very famous horse was None Such, winner of a great many prizes at leading shows, and sold when thirteen years old to go to Canada, said to be the first pedigree Shire stallion to cross the Atlantic.

It will be generally admitted that the most successful blood of all has been that of Lister's Lincoln (1245), sire of the noted Lincolnshire Lad (1196). It is curious to relate that, when Lincolnshire Lad was travelling in Lincolnshire, the celebrated Scotsman, Lawrence Drew, was there buying mares to mate with his famous Clydesdale horse, Prince of Wales (673), in order to breed Clydesdales of a type which he believed to be the best. He was taken with Lincolnshire Lad, and, having bought him, he sent him into Derbyshire, where he became the sire of many celebrated animals, but the most important of his sons was Lincolnshire Lad II, the chief of whose sons was that wonderful horse, Harold (3703), which was one of the grandest and most impressive sires of the breed in his day.

Harold (3703) was the London champion horse in 1887, and the sire of Rokeby Harold (15313), champion at the London show in 1893, the only yearling colt up to that date to win the championship. He was again champion in 1895 and 1896; and Markeaton Royal Harold (15225), another descendant, was champion in 1897. This wonderful horse, Harold, was the sire, between 1893 and 1900, of more winners in stallions and mares than any others. Perhaps his best son was Lord Middleton's Menestrel (14180).

Another horse of great quality was William the Conqueror. In one year he was the sire of Lord Wantage's Prince William (3956) and Lord Rosedale's Hitchin Conqueror (4458), two of the most successful and impressive stallions of the breed. Hitchin Conqueror is said to have been the sire of more sound progeny than any other horse of his time.

Driving.

Judging from what one can glean from casual observation, very little attention is paid in rural districts, to the manner in which horses are driven. In fact, the subject is treated as one upon which no instruction is necessary, or one about which there is little, if anything, to learn.

Young people of the farm just take to it, as they take to many other everyday things that must necessarily be done, with practically no instruction from anybody. That they get along in some sort of a way, there is no doubt, as they manage to do their work and get about.

This would lead one to inquire if there is anything much in driving, or whether it is a subject worth studying and cultivating a knowledge of.

As a matter of fact, there is a good deal to learn about it, and the difference between a slipshod driver and an expert one is immeasurable.

One has only to take an opportunity of observing the difference in the performance of the

same horse when driven by an uncultivated driver and then by an expert one, to realize that there is much to learn about driving.

This is pretty generally recognized when the object is to bring out the speed of a horse; but when style and action are aimed at, the expert driver can cause a perfect transformation of an animal, when compared with a performance given by an unskilled one.

There is undoubtedly such a thing as an aptitude for driving. Some persons could never become really skillful drivers, no matter how much they cultivate it, as they are temperamentally unfitted for high-class work of this kind. They might become fairly good drivers, but never experts. There is something about the nervous organization of some individuals that gives them a delicacy of touch, or what is called "good hands," as applied to drivers, that confer upon them a special aptitude for expertness in driving.

It can be explained in the same way that some people are light on their feet, and can readily become easy and graceful dancers. They may be heavily built, and show no evidence from their make-up of the likelihood of their being light-