

Cattle Suitable for the British Market.

Owing to the embargo which has been unjustly raised against Canadian cattle by the Imperial Government, and also to the very depressed state of the cattle trade generally, it will be necessary for those who are stocking their stables with feeding cattle to exercise the utmost caution in selecting steers to feed. So long as the present restriction remains in force it will not pay to send anything but the choicest animals to Europe.

Heretofore we have been able to reap a fair return upon thin and half-fat cattle, but so long as the present restriction remains in force it will be simply ruinous to ship any cattle except those in prime condition. The well-known feeder and exporter, Mr. Thos. McMillan, at a farmers' institute gave the following description of what a model export steer should be:—

"Apart from the Polled Angus, of which there are very few in this country, the Durham grade generally commands a first place in the butcher's eye. It is a well-known fact that the Durhams have been more largely used for the improvement of other cattle than any other breed, and I think that, so far as experience has gone, it has borne out the wisdom of such a course of breeding, as the Durhams seem better adapted for this purpose than any other breed, owing no doubt to their better ability to transmit their own qualities to their offspring. In breeding and raising beef animals for the British market, they should be of good quality, with soft skins, and as evenly-fleshed as possible. The main points are a good straight broad back, well-sprung and deep in the rib, well filled behind the shoulders, good hams and brisket, short legs, a fine, clean-cut neck and head, with nice and well-set horns. In fact, our advice from the British market are constantly calling for a prime article. During the time this trade has been in existence, our beef cattle have gained a most desirable reputation in the British market, and it is the plain duty of every Canadian farmer to endeavor by a system of selection and judicious feeding, not only to hold that reputation, but to continue to improve it."

He considers that the only way in which this can be done is to make war on all scrub animals. He brands such stock as a positive sign of want of thrift in every barnyard where they are to be found, and reminds farmers that the same quantity of food which will put two pounds of additional weight on a scrub will put three pounds on a well-bred grade. Not only this, but if they wish to attain the desired standard, they must also follow such a judicious system of feeding as will ensure a hardy and continuous growth from the time the animal is dropped until it is ready for the shambles. For although breeding is a great requirement, yet he claimed that a liberal system of feeding will do just as much. The one great point which should be impressed upon farmers is the great folly of allowing young animals to fall away in flesh. There is no mystery or secret in the growth and rearing of animals. Every additional pound weight put on an animal represents so much food, and is a certain cost to the farmer. Whether the animal is getting heavier, losing flesh, or remaining stationary, it costs its owner so much every day; therefore it is evident that the only source of profit from its food is to be found in the increase of weight which we may be able to obtain. Hence the utter ruin which must result, and which does result, from the current practice of allowing cattle to go on bare pasture in the summer and run around strawstacks in the winter. This practice not only retards their present growth, but it so contracts their digestive systems as to render them unable to manipulate their food so profitably when being fitted for the market. And this, too, is the reason which compels many farmers to feed their beef cattle such heavy grain rations when stall feeding them. If young animals were kept and fed properly, they should in a measure be nearly ready for the butcher at any time, and when we know that more gain in weight can be obtained from the same amount of food the younger the animal is, it becomes our duty to furnish our young beefing animals with such full and appropriate rations as will bring them to maturity as early as possible. Every one who knows anything of the nature of animals knows well that while the animal is young and in the rapid stage of its growth, its digestive and assimilative functions are most active; the percentage of waste in its system is much less than after it reaches maturity, and that the older it becomes, even before it reaches maturity, the more food it requires to supply this waste. Therefore it is that the same amount of food will produce so much more weight when the animal is young than afterwards. Hence the advantage of maturing animals as early as possible, as early maturity offers the only safe system of profitable beef production.

Beef animals should be ready to ship to Britain from two and a-half to three years of age, and he had often good two-year-olds which gave fully as profitable returns as any. The only thing in favor of heavy cattle is that they can be shipped for the same cost as lighter ones, so that as long as the quality is there the weight is an advantage, but quality should never be sacrificed for weight, as long as they can be landed in the Old Country from 1,250 to 1,300 pounds in weight.

Canadian Herds and Flocks.

SHORTHORNS AT WESTRUTHER PARK.

Mr. John Idington, the well-known Queen's Counsel of Stratford, has, in addition to his extensive practice, found time to cultivate a taste for farming and the farm's most interesting department, that of fine stock breeding.

Although this work has been taken up partly by way of recreation, if one may be allowed to judge by the surroundings Mr. Idington is turning his farm to profitable account from a financial standpoint.

Westruther Park, the seat of this breeding establishment, is within one mile of the Stratford G. T. R. Station, and visitors can get to the farm and back between trains, and yet have ample time to inspect the herd.

During the late summer extensive additions have been made to the buildings; among the improvements Mr. Idington has erected a stock barn, which is one of the largest in the vicinity.

The building is frame with stone basement, and the latter has evidently been planned for the comfort and thrift of the animals domiciled therein. In addition to large windows admitting plenty of light, the walls are ten feet high, by which abundance of air space has been secured.

A silo and root cellars are conveniently arranged, and now a system of waterworks is being perfected by which a constant supply of this essential may be at command at all seasons of the year.

The farm contains two hundred acres of land, which, through feeding stock extensively, is now in the most productive condition, to which the past season's crops attest. These yielded most abundantly, the hay and grain being remarkably heavy and far beyond the average, showing the advantage of plenty of manure and careful cultivation.

The formation of the present herd of Shorthorns was commenced some ten years ago by the purchase of Lady Mitchell, by "Fifth Earl of Antrim;" this cow afterwards produced one of the champion steers shown at Chicago. Three years later, or in 1886, several of the most popular Bates families were added. These consisted of imported Duke of Holkar V., bred by the Duke of Devonshire; the Lally Barrington heifer, Lally of Colonus; the Darlington heifer, Viscountess Darlington, and Verbena of Colonus. The first mentioned has proved a most successful breeder, having produced five heifers in succession. Later on a grandly-bred Bates-topped Waterloo was purchased. Several exceedingly good things have been bred by crossing the highly-prized Waterloo and Barrington families, it evidently being the aim to blend the characteristics of these together and gain the substance of the former and retain the milking qualities of the latter. At the recent sale at Bow Park several important additions were bought and placed in the herd. These included a Barrington, an Oxford, a Roan Duchess, and Imported Isabella II., that was so well known in the show rings of recent years.

The herd now contains something like sixty head of pure-bred Shorthorns, among which are several young bulls which should find purchasers in the near future. We understand that Mr. Idington wishes to dispose of several heifers, as the herd has outgrown the accommodation he has at his command. As the farm is so convenient of access, and the herd a large one, intending purchasers should not fail to visit it before making their selections, and we venture to say they will not regret the time spent.

By looking up the advertisement in another column you will find what is offered for sale.

MR. W. G. PETTIT'S SHROPSHIRE, SHORTHORNS AND BERKSHIRES.

pure-bred stock is Mr. W. G. Pettit, of Freeman, Ont.

His stock farm is divided by the Toronto & Hamilton branch of the G. T. R., and is about two miles east of the Burlington Station. It is, therefore, most conveniently situated for the fine stock trade.

At the time of our visit Mr. Pettit had eight young Shorthorn cows, all sired by The Premier = 6114 =, a bull of one of the Sheriff-Hutton families, bred by Arthur Johnston, of Greenwood. These cows all show good feeding and milking qualities. The stock bull now in use is Grand Fashion = 15401 =, bred in the same herd as that previously mentioned. He was got by the Imported Sittytton bull "Hospidar" = 2703 = (51400), dam Fashion VII. = 6091 =. After carefully looking him over, together with his first crop of calves, we came to the conclusion that Mr. Pettit has a bull that he will retain at the head of his herd as long as he can be used to advantage. Four young red roan bull calves, from cows of the Mina family, were a choice lot and should not be long in finding customers.

The flock of Shropshires, which at the time of our visit numbered eighty-two head, was started in 1889, when twelve ewes were selected from the flock of J. P. Phin, Hespeler. The next year an imported ram, bred by William Thomas, was purchased. This sheep had won first at several important shows in England that season and also won first in his class at Toronto.

Four imported ewes, two of which were lambs bred by T. & S. Bradburne, and claimed by judges who ought to know to be as good as ever crossed the ocean—this lot was imported in 1892 by

Robert Miller, of the firm of John Miller & Sons, Brougham. The present stock ram was also purchased of Robert Miller, and was bred by T. & S. Bradburne, and was a first prize winner in England. Both the above-mentioned rams, we were told, are closely connected in breeding with two of the most celebrated rams on the continent, to wit, Blue Blood Yet, that has been so successful in the flock of A. O. Fox, Oregon, Wis., and winner of second at the late Chicago show, and the Bradburne bred Kingston, winner of third at this year's Royal Show, England, and that afterwards succeeded in winning first in shearing class for A. O. Fox at the World's Fair.

In looking over this flock we remarked that the young ewes in Mr. Pettit's flock were larger and better than the original sheep he had purchased, but when we consider the high character of the rams he has used, it is a condition of things not surprising.

We understand that some Berkshire swine of equally good merit have been introduced since our visit, and we hope to have more to say of them in the future.

Our Scottish Letter.

This is the period of the fat stock shows. Mountains of beef whose limbs groan under the loads which they have to bear are everywhere to be seen, and prizes are going the rounds. The three great English shows are those at Norwich, Birmingham and London. Good shows have also been held at Inverness, and other places in the north of Scotland. So far, and indeed altogether, the results have been pre-eminent in favor of Scotland, Scotchmen and Scottish-bred cattle. The crowning honors at all three English shows have been gained by Aberdeen-Angus heifers. Mr. Clement Stephenson, a well-known veterinary surgeon in the north of England, has taken the honors at Norwich and Birmingham. He is an enthusiast for Polled cattle, believes in them all the time, and will have none other about his farms. His motto is "black but comely," and nothing white in the way of live stock is to be seen about his place. The heifer owned by him is named Bridesmaid of Benton; she is a sweet, level-fleshed animal, and beat strong fields at both Norwich and Birmingham. Last year she stood first and champion Scot at Smithfield, but was defeated in the final by a blue-grey cross-bred ox, owned by Sir John Swinburne, Bart., from the same county of Northumberland. She is about two and three-quarters years old, and weighs 16 cwt. 3 qrs., and in rotundity of form, firmness of touch, and levelness of flesh, she is difficult to surpass. The success of this heifer was not less marked at Birmingham. The field there was stronger even than at most of the other shows, and Bingley Hall was filled with a fine selection of monster fat cattle. At Inverness, on Thursday, the last day of November, the public were favored with a view for the first time this season of the magnificent Aberdeen-Angus heifer, Pride of the Highlands, owned by Mr. J. Douglas Fletcher, of Rosehaugh, Ross-shire. This heifer is of the same age as Bridesmaid of Benton, and weighs 1 cwt. or 112 lbs. heavier. She is admitted to be the most stupendous piece of beef ever yet produced by the A.-A. breed, and was not difficult to recognize as an out-and-out champion, which would take honors in heavier competition than she met in the northern capital, where she was champion. She is wonderfully sweet and level, with the greatest quantity of the best quality of meat ever seen in a fat heifer. Her pedigree is first-class. Her sire was Governor of Ballinelloch. At Smithfield show in London during this week she met the best fat stock of all the leading breeds, and having first secured the championship as the best Scot, she was left to fight out the championship with the best of all the other breeds, and defeated them all. The judges who made this award were Mr. Clare Sewell Read, a very popular English agriculturist, and Mr. Peter Dunn, Hull. They had no hesitation whatever in making the award of the 100 gs. cup in Mr. Fletcher's favor. There were at London three exceptionally fine specimens of A.-A. heifers: Pride of the Highlands, Bridesmaid of Benton, and a lovely heifer named St. Bride, owned by the Marquis of Huntly, and winner of first prizes at the summer show at Aberdeen and at Birmingham. St. Bride was one year older, but the same weight as Bridesmaid. Possibly in a breeding stock show St. Bride would have beaten the others, as she was marvellously well-modelled, and very sweet and evenly balanced. It may be claimed without arrogance that no other breed could have sent out three such specimens from its exhibits in the Royal Agricultural Hall at Islington. St. Bride and Bridesmaid were both shown in the out-classed stock, and there was a stiff fight between them for first place. St. Bride weighs exactly the same as Bridesmaid, so that she gave nothing in return for her extra year's keep. Consequently she was to this extent handicapped, and Bridesmaid of Benton was preferred before her.

Mr. J. Douglas Fletcher, of Rosehaugh, who bred and owned the Smithfield champion of 1893, Pride of the Highlands, is an extensive land owner in the Black Isle, across the Moray Firth from Inverness. His place at Rosehaugh is one of the sights of the north of Scotland, and he is continually spending money on improvements. He has several farms in his own hands, and keeps a choice Clydesdale stud, and herds of Aberdeen-