

The Shorthorn Herdbook Standard.

Much trouble and inconvenience is being experienced by enterprising importers of Shorthorn cattle owing to the adoption by the American and Canadian Shorthorn Breeders' Associations of a rule requiring that in order to be eligible to record in the herdbooks of these organizations animals must trace on the side of both sire and dam to recorded English Shorthorns whose ancestors in all their crosses trace to animals recorded or eligible to record in the first twenty volumes of the English Herdbook. This rule, as amended, was adopted by the American Association in 1889, and by the Dominion Association about the same time, in order to make the standards for North American records from that date uniform and interchangeable if need be. The object of the regulation was evidently to afford some protection in a commercial sense to American breeders, restricting the field for selection by shutting out of the record British-bred animals having in their pedigree crosses by sires born after 1873 (the date of publication of volume twenty), with not more than five crosses by registered bulls. The English Herdbook Association still admits to registry, under careful supervision, animals with that number of crosses, and the acknowledged success of the breed in the land of its origin is pretty good evidence that no serious mistake has been made in adhering to the rule.

The absurdity of the American ukase as a pretense for elevating the standard of quality is well illustrated by a reference to the fact that the champion bull at the Bath and West of England Show last month, whose portrait appeared in the last number of the ADVOCATE, is ineligible to registry in the American and Canadian Herdbooks, not because he is a five-cross bull, but because some ancestor, born, it may be, for aught we know, six months after the date of publication of volume twenty of the English Herdbook, had but five crosses of high-class registered bulls in his recorded pedigree, though there may have been several more back of that which could not be traced by name. John B. Booth, of Killybeg, one of the most intelligent and successful of English Shorthorn breeders, had so little veneration for length of pedigree that it is said he used to cut off the tail end of the lineage of his cattle, leaving only the crosses by bulls of his own breeding, and stating his conviction that four such crosses were of more value than twice as many of average individual and ancestral excellence. It is indisputable that in many cases the meanest Shorthorns can boast of a pedigree as long as the moral law, and it not infrequently is seen in leading English show-yards that the blue-blooded aristocrat with a long-tailed pedigree is downed by the plebeian beast tracing through five crosses of registered bulls to a foundation strong in Shorthorn blood and of vigorous individuality.

The restrictive rule in question is second cousin to that of the directors of the American Shorthorn Association imposing a tax of \$100 as a registration fee on animals imported after January 1st, 1901. Both are of too narrow gauge for the progressive spirit of the twentieth century. We believe a large majority of the breeders favor free trade in registered stock and would vote for wiping them both off the record, as well as some other hampering, vexatious and unnecessary restrictions for which the stockmen are not responsible. If the directors of the Associations interested cannot agree to go the whole length of accepting the British rule for British cattle, there should surely be no hesitancy in accepting the compromise which has been proposed, namely, to advance the date of closure to 1885, corresponding to Vol. 32 of the English Herdbook, and to make the rule automatic, advancing the date year by year, a modification which would involve no sacrifice of the original principle, if it is regarded as such. The idea is that English cattle coming on record for the first time in 1885 are quite as well entitled to registration in American records in 1901 as those first recorded in 1873 were entitled to registry on this continent in 1889, and that the mark should be moved up this year to 1885, next year to 1886, and so on from year to year as the volumes of the herdbook are published. It is an eminently sensible, reasonable and practicable proposition.

The published market reports of prevailing prices for beef and dairy cattle, mutton sheep and hogs, and for horses as well, constantly show the importance and advantage of improving the breed and the quality of stock in all these lines. The animals that bring the highest per pound or per head are almost invariably those that show improved breeding, and they sell readily at the higher figures, while often the inferior and ill-bred go begging for buyers at the lower prices, and they cost as much to raise as the better class. The remedy is to be found in the use of good pure-bred sires.

Our Scottish Letter.

Canada has been strongly in evidence during the past few days. The Hon. Sidney Fisher is here, accompanied by Professor Robertson, the cold-storage man, with Mr. Hodson, Live Stock Commissioner, and Mr. Grisdale, of the Ottawa Experimental Farm. They are one party, and their common aim is the advancement of Canadian agriculture, but each man has his own department and is striving to attain the common goal by a route peculiar to himself. Mr. Fisher and Mr. Robertson are busily occupied in bringing under the notice of produce merchants the character of Canadian produce, and they have made one notable convert at least. At a meeting of the Produce Exchange, under the presidency of Mr. Thomas Clement, after speeches by the two delegates, Mr. Nathaniel Dunlop, the head of the famous "Allan" line, acknowledged that he had been disposed to regard the theories of Canadian officials regarding the putting down of fresh produce in this country as visionary, but he had been so impressed with what Mr. Fisher and his colleague had said, that the Canadians might hereafter count on his firm as allies in whatever steps they took to land cheese, bacon, eggs, apples or other articles in Great Britain in a fresh condition. The meaning of this I take to be that the steamers coming to the Clyde from the St. Lawrence will be fitted up so as to ensure a continuance of the line of cold-storage accommodation from the center of production in Canada to the center of distribution in Scotland. I should say that from the standpoint of the interests of the Canadian farmer, the present visit of your Minister of Agriculture has unquestionably borne fruit.

In my last letter I gave an account of Canada

and an amount of debate and discussion not commensurate to the advantage to be gained." For myself, I believe the sound, logical policy is the importation of no cattle, but of dead meat; and with the universal adoption of cold storage on board rail and steamship, I cannot see how Canada should not benefit quite as much under this system as it possibly could do by shipping stores. I believe Canadian farmers could feed their cattle prime fat as well as farmers in this country, and the adoption of this universal system of a dead-meat trade would tend in the direction of goodwill amongst the nations.

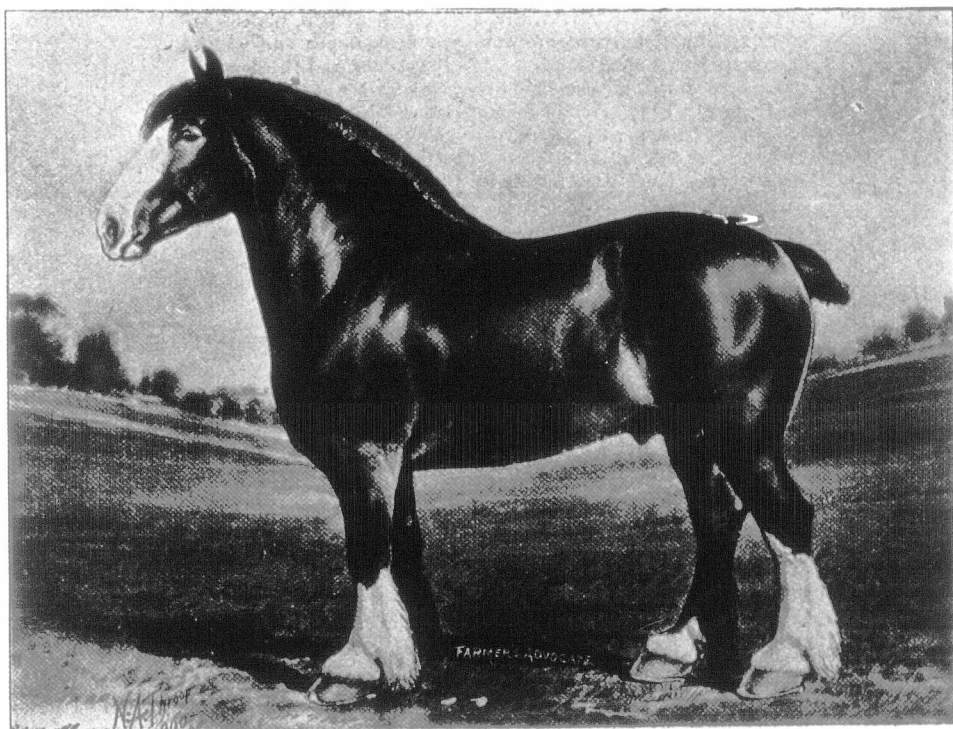
Messrs. Hodson and Grisdale have another job on hand. They are entrusted by Mr. Fisher with a mission to secure good milking Shorthorns qualified to register in the higher grade American Herdbook; Ayrshires with good milking records and robust constitutions; and Guernseys which will demonstrate their utility over Jerseys as general-purpose cattle. I expect they are finding their task a pretty stiff one so far as the Shorthorns are concerned. The kind of Shorthorn they are looking for is precisely the kind of animal which the American Herdbook is fitted to extinguish. The best milking Shorthorns in this country have generally been in the hands of dairy farmers on the Cumberland and Westmoreland dales and fells, who paid little or no attention to pedigree. Their stocks are no doubt quite as well bred as those having long-recorded pedigrees, but, unfortunately, their breeders and owners have not thought this matter of registration of sufficient moment, and for generations it has been neglected. Consequently, the best milking Shorthorns in this country are very largely to be found amongst the unregistered herds. Still, with perseverance, your Canadians will find sufficient of the kind they want, and the introduction of milking

blood may be coincident with the introduction of good breeding cows, producing a calf every year. I am afraid it is too true that an examination of the records will show that many of the best-bred cows in the leading herds have not been very regular breeders, and I take it to be a sound axiom that an uncertain breeder is pretty certain to be a poor milker, and vice versa. During the Bates craze Shorthorns were overbred on a milking line until constitution was bred out of them; during the past quarter of a century the pendulum has swung to the opposite extreme, and cattle have been bred so as to make them blocks of beef and nothing more. But blocks of beef are not wholly consistent with the milking type, and the happy medium here, as in all things else, is best.

From conversations with various visitors from your part of the world, I have gathered that disappointment has followed some of the importations of Ayrshires for which high prices were paid in this country. I can't say that this surprises me, because we are only recovering slowly from the evil effects of absurd fads in the show-ring, which, to a large extent, robbed the Ayrshire of its utility. These fads were due to the popularity of one or two animals owned by wealthy men and leaders of show-yard fashion in their time. Such fads die slowly, and mischief carried on during twenty years or more cannot be undone in a year. The growth of interest in milking records and the standard of quality in milk in respect of butter-fat has done a little to lead breeders to look at something else in the milk cow than a special form of vessel and teats of a particular set and shape. The mischief of our show system, however, is not only this vessel and teats craze, but the folly which accompanies it of putting the show cow dry at an abnormally early date, in order that the fancy formation of the vessel may not be destroyed by the cow fulfilling her own destiny of yielding milk for the use of man. I would be much in favor of passing a rule at all our shows, that no cow having once secured a champion prize should again be shown. This would relegate the good cows to the breeding byre, and instead of retarding it would develop their milking properties. There is an argument for the tight vessel, but it is an argument sometimes more honored in the breach than in the observance. I believe Mr. Hodson and Mr. Grisdale are not looking for the show Ayrshire, but for the Ayrshire dairy cow, and they are on the right track, and should find what they are looking for. There are any number of such Ayrshires in this country, but they are not known except to the man who has to live by the milk trade in one or other of its many forms. The cattle to be selected by our friends are for the Ottawa Experimental Farm, and in all likelihood they will run the gauntlet of a deal of adverse criticism.

"SCOTLAND YET."

The prospect of new and improved stock-yards and market facilities at prominent centers should prove an inducement to farmers to raise more good stock, improving the breed and feeding them so as to capture the best prices. The demand and the prices for the best quality are encouraging.



LAMINATED STEEL 8700.

Five-year-old Clydesdale stallion; winner of first prize at International Live Stock Exposition, Chicago, 1900.

PROPERTY OF ALEX. GILBRAITH, JANESVILLE, WISCONSIN.

in the Glasgow Exhibition. On Thursday afternoon, 20th June, this spacious building was the scene of a splendid reception by Mr. Fisher, at which the Principal of the University, representatives of the corporation, and the leading members of the produce trade in the city were present. Mr. Fisher gave a very fine address, and the result must be a renewed interest in all that concerns Canada amongst the dwellers in the home land. It is no exaggeration to say that Canada has given a totally different idea of the nearest of British colonies to that which formerly prevailed here, and the character of the audience which crowded the hall yesterday afternoon was such as will ensure that the Dominion be thoroughly well advertised. Mr. Fisher is not conducting an agitation in favor of opening our ports to the admission of Canadian cattle as stores, but he is taking every available opportunity of pressing home the fact that there is no contagious disease amongst your cattle, and that if they are to be shut out, it must be on purely economical grounds. If, in order to maintain our own breeds, it is necessary to shut out foreign stores, then, he argues, let us say so, and Canada will not dispute our title to settle our own domestic affairs. But in the name of Canadian agriculture, he very strongly objects to our including Canada in the universal embargo on the ground of disease. Canada, he tells us, has sent in nearly 800,000 cattle since the legislation of 1896 was enforced, and not one case of disease has been detected during that time, or in all that number.

There can be no doubt of the force of this reasoning, but I suspect the answer of those in authority will be something like this: "The present policy was determined on after great deliberation and an exhaustive enquiry; it has been crystallized in legislation, making the embargo on sea-borne cattle universal, and to differentiate between Canada and the rest of the world would entail fresh legislation,