

THE NORTH OTAGO AGRICULTURAL AND PASTORAL ASSOCIATION'S  
SHOW, 1885.

THIS show, held at Oamaru, was noticeable for the superior character of the long-woolled sheep, cattle, and draught horses; and, with so many successful breeders in the immediate neighbourhood, it would be rather surprising if the show was not a success. The merinos were all of the strong combing class, bred by the late Mr. McMaster, and met with no opposition. An improvement in the Border Leicester class at the Metropolitan Show was manifest here, as the entries were numerous and the quality very good, including sheep from the flocks of the Hon. M. Holmes, Messrs. Little, Reid, Murdock, and the New Zealand and Australian Land Company. The two first-named were the most successful exhibitors. In Lincolns the Hon. M. Holmes had it all his own way, taking every first prize but one; the sheep were a large-boned robust type, carrying fleeces of wonderful weight and length, and a little strong and coarse. The only exhibitor in the Romney Marsh class was Mr. J. Reid, whose sheep were in the best condition, and showed the best characteristics of this useful and rather neglected breed.

The shorthorn class was a competition between Messrs. Menlove and J. Reid. The quality of the animals was of such a high-class that some difficulty must have been felt in awarding the prizes; the cows were a beautiful lot of high-bred animals that would be difficult to beat at any of our shows. The favourite breed of cattle in North Otago is the Ayrshire, and more than a hundred animals were sent to compete by fourteen different owners, showing that the best-bred animals are better distributed than is the case in other breeds, insuring that spirit of emulation and deep interest among breeders that is so essential to the improvement of any breed. Out of so many entries the quality necessarily varied a little; but, on the whole, it was a good show throughout. The bulls were very even in quality. Some handsome well-bred polled-Angus cattle were exhibited by the New Zealand and Australian Land Company, but there was no competition. These cattle ought to come into more general favour, as they are very hardy; and, though small, carry a great deal of flesh and grow to big weights, besides being unable to damage fences, or each other, in the way other cattle delight to.

The draught horses, as is naturally to be expected at Oamaru, were of a very good stamp, and compared very favourably with those shown at the Metropolitan Show. The Clydesdale breed was a short time ago the favourite; but apparently the tide has turned in the direction of the English shire horse, and it is to be noticed that one stallion in the district is the sire of more than twelve prize-takers. The prize for the best stallion was given to Lord Haddo, a very good-bodied horse, with good bone, but rather lacking in quality; and for the best mare, a two-year-old filly, built on a beautiful model, was placed first.

There was a fairly good show of implements by the chief colonial makers, and the only ones to be specially noticed were some turnip-cultivating machines, imported from Scotland, and exhibited by the Hon. M. Holmes; they comprised a turnip-thinning machine worked by one horse, which has two discs set at the correct distance apart, for working on the top of drills, with eight arms, each provided with hoes at the end, which cut out the surplus turnips as the discs revolve, leaving plants untouched about six or nine inches apart; a drill scarifier with rollers in front of light adjustable mould-boards to work the land before drilling it up; a three-drill plough, to make three drills at once; a light drill-harrow, with two leaves, one to run on each side of the drill but without touching the roots on top; and, finally, a turnip-topper-and-tailer, which lifts the turnips out of the ground at the same time; it is made V shaped, of light bar iron, with the apex of the V upwards, and supported on runners which slide along the bottom of the furrows; between the runners are placed guides which gradually converge, and are knife-edged at their ends, behind these is a curved arm, and behind this again is a sickle-shaped steel share set at an angle downwards, with the convex edge to the front. As the implement is drawn along the drill the leaves of the turnips are gathered between the guides and sliced off by the knife edges, and thrown to the bottom of the furrow by the curved arm, and the share runs just deep enough in the ground to cut the root of the turnip and lift it out on top of the drill. All these implements are said to do their work remarkably well, and, as they are simple in construction, should be made at a moderate cost and come into use among farmers who cultivate their land well for the purpose of growing good crops of roots.

Among the extra exhibits were specimens of the different artificial manures manufactured by the New Zealand Drug Company and the Belfast Chemical Company, including bone-dust, both fine and coarse, superphosphates of lime and guano, and their specialities, blood-manure and Belfast guano.

Wellington, 13th December, 1885.

W. DE G. REEVES,  
Officer in Charge, Agricultural Department.

THE OTAGO AGRICULTURAL AND PASTORAL ASSOCIATION'S EXHIBITION, 1885

THIS show, held on the new ground at Tahuna Park, was a very successful one, for, although the entries were not particularly numerous in any one class of stock, the general quality of the animals was very high. The draught horses were certainly the feature of the show, the entries being the largest and the animals of a superior stamp to most of the horses at any other show.

The Provincial District of Otago carries a very large number of merino sheep, but it only produces four breeders to compete at their principal show, though there must be many sheep in the district of sufficient merit to stand a chance of obtaining prizes. The fine combing merinos were said to be an improvement on the previous year's show, and were a nice lot of well-bred sheep. In the strong combing class the executors of the late Mr. McMaster again took nearly every prize.