

## BORDER SHEEP DOGS.

By Adam Telfer.

I head my article "Border Sheep Dogs" instead of simply "Sheep Dogs" for at least two very good reasons. In the first place, this is the only breed of sheep dogs with which I am really familiar, and in the second, there is practically no other breed competing at sheep dog trials - the entrancing "style" or method of working on sheep, combined with at least an average share of the other necessary working qualities of the Border Sheep Dogs, having almost entirely eliminated the less showy breeds.

We in Northumberland are inclined to resent these dogs being styled Scotch collies, since they have been bred in Northumberland for generations, and only during the last twenty years or so have they, because of their superior qualities in the trial arena, been sent not only to Scotland, the southern English counties and Wales, but wherever sheep dogs are known or required all over the world.

It is seldom realised how necessary a sheep dog is to the shepherd or the sheep farmer in his daily calling. On farms where there are few sheep he may be and often is kept because he is such a delightful companion, but wherever sheep and cattle are kept to any extent, then a sheep dog is a necessary factor.

That being so, it behoves us to have the best kind obtainable, and to rear, feed, train and "run", or operate, them in their special function, as well as we possibly can.

Personally I have long been convinced that sheep dog trials have performed an inestimable service in these respects, since they have stimulated such an amount of interest in, created greater care and regard for, the noble collie, and in every way have raised the standard of treatment and handling.

Only those who have best known and loved their collies can realise how remarkably they repay the care and affection lavished upon them. Have you ever thought how, almost alone of God's creatures, they always show their love and devotion, often in face of much ignorant and even cruel treatment, and how grateful they are for our slightest appreciation and regard? They never forget us, their devotion is lifelong, and they only live to love and serve.



