

CATTLE BREEDING IN OREGON.

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The Willamette valley is a vast grain garden, but it has been severely taxed by an incessant crop of wheat. The good old church-going farmers of this section spent their Sundays like God-fearing men before whose minds the Divine maxim was ever present: "Six days shalt thou labor and do all thou hast to do, but the seventh is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God." But they forgot to accord any Sabbath day to the glebe beneath their feet. Hence it is no source of wonder to me that many a once fine farm in this region should now be suffering from the double evil of a rickety fence and a Caledonian mortgage.

But west of the Cascade range is the great dairying section of the Pacific coast, in obedience to what I deem a manifest destiny. And you will see that whenever the New England element of population begins to preponderate in the Willamette Valley, Oregon will begin to export butter to California, instead of having to import it for home consumption. Men will not content themselves merely with producing wheat to export to the United Kingdom, but will produce anything and everything that will grow upon a ranch—let us say farm. I never liked that word "ranch," though the 17th day of next February will see me a twenty-eight years' resident of the Pacific coast, of which seventeen were spent in California. But I never liked the word "ranch." It was always associated in my mind with ragged-looking ponies, cigarettos, pantaloons split up the sides, squaws and the natural children of unnatural fathers.

I prefer the "farm" to the "ranch" for that reason. It is English to begin with, and our mother tongue is preferable to a corruption of Spanish. With me the "farm" means a place surrounded with high-formed horses, high-bred cattle, high-minded men and highly virtuous women. It means tidy wives in neat calico frocks and chubby-faced boys in linen blouses, walking off to school with voices as clear as the lark's that are caroling out from the verdant hedgerows their welcome of the spring.

Hence, the want of the country is a producing class that will save all, by

paying cash for nothing that will grow upon a farm. I can show you families who buy their canned tomatoes, beans, peas and corn, as well as their butter and lard. A few New England families I can show you, who make their own soap for laundry and scrubbing purposes; who can put up their winter bacon and lard, and who have their canned corn, peas, tomatoes, pears and plums by the gross. It is the latter class who enrich a country, and the former that impoverish it.

My own idea used to be that it was folly to attempt to breed merely for the dairy alone or for the shambles only. I thought that the prudent and cautious breeder should have his milch cows and his beef steers, also, but my observation of Oregon and her resources teaches me that dairy-farming should be the great object west of the Cascade Range, while breeders of the vast bunch-grass plains should aim to breed for size of carcass, above all other considerations. Of course, I do not urge men to sell their beef and buy butter, east of Mount Hood, nor do I advise the peaceful denizens of Soap creek and the ever-classic Long Tom, to make butter and sell it to buy beef from Ochoco or Harney. But that each of these sections has decided advantages over the other, in the especial points I have cited, no one will deny. Wasco and Umatilla counties have the most grass and least water of any two in the State. Does that look at all like a dairy country?

Again, water is necessary for other purposes than merely for stock to drink. If a man has thirty cows to milk, he needs a stream of water to let them drink and he need not do a day's churning by hand in a year, unless the stream freezes up. An outlay of twenty dollars' worth of lumber and five days' labor will rig a water-power which will not only churn the butter, but also work the butter milk out of it. And wherever a good stream of water can be found to work for a man, he is foolish to work for himself. The Willamette valley has no advantage over the coast section of Clatsop, Tillamook, Benton or Coos in this respect. In fact, the coast section abounds in the white shamrock clover, which is in itself a capital foundation for a dairy. The old logging camps in the vicinity of Marshfield and Gardiner, I have noticed as

being particularly rich in this excellent pasturage.

As to the preferable breeds of cattle, that is a case in which it is hard to decide, especially "when doctors disagree." But my own idea is the Durham, or short horn, exclusively for Eastern Oregon, while the Western section of our State can be utilized for the smaller breeds, such as Ayrshires, Alderneys, Jerseys and Devonshires. The Jerseys and Ayrshires are especially nice to have in hilly locations, such as the vast timber clad ridges between Coos Bay and the Umpqua valley, for they are so active that they will keep fat on walking not less than fifteen miles in a day, which would completely knock a short horn off his legs. And there certainly can be nothing more docile and affectionate than the quaint little Jersey cows, that give such rich milk and occupy no more stable room than a fully grown Newfoundland dog. The man who has what is called a "mountain farm," should have none other, as they are very domestic and hence are less liable to stray off and get devoured by cougars or bears.

But had I a farm right at a foothill slope in the Willamette, my preference would be the Devons, every time. To begin with, they have size above the Ayrshires and Jerseys and give quite as much milk, though it is scarcely as abundant in cream. They are just as hardy and far more beautiful than either of the other breeds, while their beef can not be equalled for quality and richness. Then look at what work oxen they make. Henry Williams, the man who brought old "Belmont" to this coast, once had a pair of Devon steers that he used to show at the California fairs, with and without a yoke. They could walk four miles per hour, and went through all the "ge" and "haw" business without compelling their driver to speak louder than his ordinary tone of conversational voice. I have been in love with the Devon cattle ever since.

Of Alderneys, I can say but little, save that some prefer them to the Jerseys and Ayrshires, and we must not forget the maxim of *De gustibus non disputandum*. Of Holsteins, I never saw but one, a little brown bull with a yellow neck; and never shall I forget my astonishment when told that he had just been imported by Steele Bros., the