

Stock.

The Valuable Breeds of Cattle.

Mr. Robert E. Turnbull, at the Derby English Dairy Conference, enumerating the various native breeds of British cattle, namely, the Short Horn, Long Horn, Jersey, Guernsey, Devon, Hereford, Suffolk and Norfolk Polled, Sussex, Aberdeen, Galloway, Ayrshire, West Highland and Kerry, states something of the value of the better known of these breeds that have come under his notice. He says:

"The West Highland, with its wealth of hair, iron constitution and love of freedom is well adapted for its native health.

"The Ayrshire is chiefly bred in the west of Scotland. The cows usually weigh from 750 to 1,000 pounds. The milk is better adapted for cheese than for butter, not only because it is rich in casein, but because the cream globules do not readily rise to the surface of the milk. The skim milk is unusually rich, and calves, therefore, thrive well upon it. The Ayrshire is a very active little cow, and is well adapted, not only for the green hills of West Scotland, but also for the second rate grass lands of England. As a milk producer in a hill country, the Ayrshire is second to none.

"The Guernsey and Jersey breeds have a wonderful capacity for converting grass into butter, and under favorable circumstances the best cows will produce as many pounds of butter in a week as they give quarts of milk at a meal. They require to be pastured in good, dry, well-sheltered fields, and to be housed early in the autumn.

"The little Kerry is a most useful breed, weighing about 700 pounds when in store condition. It is essentially the poor man's cow, for not only can it be bought for a very small price, but it can yield milk and gather flesh where a Short Horn or a Jersey would starve. It does not yield a large quantity of milk at a meal, but it begins by yielding a fair quantity, and it kindly treated and if its wants are attended to, it will milk on steadily for a long period, and when finally fattened off it will usually fetch more than it cost when brought over from Ireland. It should be served by a yearling Short Horn or by an Alderney bull when a Kerry is not available. A good Kerry cow will yield about 420 gallons of milk in the year, and about one pound of butter from ten quarts of milk."

The long horn breed deserves to be better known. No dairy cattle wear better. They are great cheese producers, and are remarkably free from the ills to which most cattle are liable.

Excellent dairy cows are to be found of the Aberdeen, Galloway and Hereford breeds; but, as a rule, more attention has been paid by the breeders of these cattle to the production of beef than to the production of milk.

Among the breeds not spoken of for milk the Norfolk and Suffolk polls, the Devons and their near relation, Sussex, are well known for their good milking qualities and as producing beef of best quality. The Short Horns also are considered in England as among the most valuable of the native breeds as milkers far better as a rule than the Herefords. But this excellence is confined to particular families, as is the case in this country; and here the beef-producing characteristics have, as in the Hereford, been chiefly sought. In the United States, in addition to the more valuable of the British breeds, we have the Holstein-Friesian and the Swiss cows. These are among the most noted of the breeds of the world for milk.

With us cattle have now come to be kept distinctly for a specific purpose. In the great dairy districts East of the Jersey and the Guernsey fairly compete with the Ayrshire and Holstein. In the West the two latter breeds are found in larger numbers. In the hill country of the South the Jersey and the Devon are considered the most profitable. It is more a question of food, perhaps, than climate, for wherever pastures are flush the Holsteins and the Ayrshires predominate for milk, and the Holsteins very much more largely than the Ayrshires. They without doubt constitute the best cows for butter and cheese in the world, and when dry they take on flesh with the best. Where butter alone is the object the Jersey and the Guernsey have no equals, but with the inclination lying decidedly in favor of the Guernsey on the flush pastures of the West. In the United States, therefore, where all breeds have been tried, public favor has settled on the Jersey and Guernsey, and the Holstein and Ayrshire for the dairy, locality having much to do with the choice. Where cattle

for mixed uses are sought, the Short Horn, the Sussex, the Devon, and among polled cattle the Galloway and the Red Polls are favored, and probably in the order named.

Coming to cattle for beef, Short Horns and those grades largely predominate. Next to these are the Herefords, not in any degree second to the Short Horns for beef. Their grazing qualities are confessedly superior, while it is just possible the Short Horns may excel in early maturity. Polled Angus and Aberdeen will probably give the best flesh of any of the improved breeds common in the United States, except possibly the Devons.

The polled herds, however, are not common enough, so that the public have not a chance to judge for themselves. Short Horn grades undoubtedly constitute a larger proportion of the beef of improved breeds found in our markets than all the others put together. Yet the mixed cattle of the country far outnumber all the improved breeds, and will for many years yet to come.

Cattle Buying in Early Days

The early history of this State, as to pioneers, Indian fighters, etc., has been pretty well written up, but there is a class who have not yet given their experience to the world. It is the cattle drovers, who rode and raced over the country and became intimately acquainted with most of the early settlers, and who experienced some strange and startling adventures. A knot of these old-timers was gathered in A. H. Johnson's office the other day, spinning yarns about their trips away back in the '50's, where the only source of supply of cattle for this market were Yamhill, Polk and Benton counties, and the cattle were the wild, untamed, big-horned breed. Drovers would start out from this city, cross over the Chehalis mountains into the cattle ranges, with their pockets full of \$50 slugs to buy cattle. They would reach some farmer's place, wet and hungry, their horses tired out, and ask the farmer, who would be found sitting by the fire, if he had any cattle for sale. "Yes," was the reply, "there's some out on the hills."

"Will you show them to us?" "No; I ain't got any horse. You can go up on the hills and look at them. My brand is a cross and my mark a half cross and a slit on the left ear." So the drovers would race around and "round in" a dozen head, as many as three or four men could drive of such stock; get them down to the ranch, pay \$60 to \$70 a head for them, and then order dinner. This consisted, in almost every case, of some scraps of bacon floating in its own fat, some saleratus bread, and chopped-some tea. There was one place where they used to get pickled spare ribs and pea coffee and biscuit, and this spot is still green in the memory of the drovers.

To get the wild cattle away from their ranges was a hard job, and the drovers could never feel easy till they had them ten miles on the road. The farmer would pocket his slugs and go back to his fireside and leave the drovers to wrestle with the untamed steers. "Once," said one of the party, "I got to the Chehalis mountains with a band of steers. There was about a foot of snow on the ground and no track broken. We got the cattle to the top of the mountains and they would go no further. They broke into the brush in all directions, and were all on the fight. So we had to go back to a farm and stay all night. One of the boys got a bottle of whisky there, and we started out again in the morning. We managed to get the cattle together, except one, who would not budge. We tried every way to start him, and at last Mat got mad and hurled his bottle of whisky at him, striking him in the forehead, and falling unbroken into the snow. The steer did not move, and Mat said he was bound to have that bottle of whisky somehow. So he got the rest of us to ride in front of the steer and engross his attention. Then Mat went a piece behind the brute and put his horse into a run, and as he passed the steer he reached down, caught its tail, and gave it a twist around the horn of the saddle and threw the steer end over end, upon which it trotted off after its companions, and Mat picked up his bottle of whisky, and we started again for Portland."

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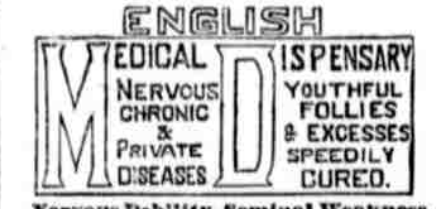
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