

the Ayrshire indebted to them for her noble qualities. Be these things as they may, it is sufficient for us to know that the blending of some of these strains with the hardy and rugged cattle of the Northern hills did produce a cow possessing all the superior qualities of the other dairy breeds, with a hardness of constitution belonging to herself alone.

The vigorous constitution, the activity, and, if you will allow the term, the buoyant disposition of the Ayrshire cow, render her the poor man's cow quite as much as the fact that she yields such large returns for the cost of keeping. Yet these very qualities so redeeming, I fear, have sometimes been abused even by admirers, and a knowledge of their powers of endurance formed into an excuse for ill-treatment and neglect, while the peculiar intelligence and buoyant disposition, so susceptible to kind treatment and capable of development into, if not almost human understanding, at least bovine appreciation and gratitude, have been by abuse perverted into obstinacy and treachery. For with the cow, as with the child, the most amenable and tractable disposition may by injudicious treatment become most malignant.

Although the introduction of the Channel Islands cattle and the Holsteins, and their adoption by the wealthier classes of cattle fanciers, have stimulated Ayrshire men to look to their laurels by taking better care of their cows than formerly, yet there are so many owning Ayrshires who, through the pressure of other business and the force of habit, neglect their cattle, that our "bossies" often have not a fair chance to show their sterling qualities. It is evident that a man who pays a fancy price for a fancy breed, because it is fashionable, will be better able and more likely to protect and care for it than his less fortunate brother who may find, despite his ambition, that "chill penury does repress his noble rage, and chill the genial current of his soul." But habit has a great deal to do with our lives, and sometimes you find a man like yourself consulting his own interests by attending to the animals which a beneficent Creator has bestowed on him. But we want more than this from men like you. We wish you to publish herd and individual tests to show the whole world what the "wee" Ayrshire managed to do when fairly and squarely treated. Reliability in breeding is one of the very commendable features of the Ayrshire. By reliability I mean a certainty of having cows come in when required, as well as their prepotency in stamping their progeny with their own qualities. I have an Ayrshire cow, from the Yuill herd, not seven years old that has given birth to six calves, all alive now, that is a calf for each year, three of them being males and three of them females. The males I sold, but kept the females, all of which calved last spring, making in six years from a three weeks' old heifer calf, without counting the progeny of her young males, ten head of registered cattle, but four of these are females forward in calf, so that in less than seven years Blanche of Devon will in all probability become a family of fourteen. I speak of this, not through selfishness nor a desire to parade the performances of my stock, but because the Ayrshire has sometimes been wrongfully and maliciously charged with sterility.

We are indebted to Mr. Winslow, of Brandon, Vt., and Mr. Drew, of Burlington, Vt., for an exhaustive statement of tests made by them. In a ten-year test of a whole herd of from ten to sixteen cows, Mr. Winslow's average was something over three tons of milk per year. Mr. Drew gives a statement of testing his herd of fifteen cows during the month of June. A number of Mr. Drew's cows were but two-year-old heifers. The herd was on grass alone, and still the average for the month was nearly 1,000 pounds, having a cream percentage which varied from twenty per cent. in a two-year-old cow to thirty per cent. in a fully developed cow. We have several individual tests of 1,200 or 1,300 pounds for Ayrshires. I am aware that these results may appear small when compared with a test of a single cow given by Prof. Dean as 2,000 pounds in one year; but this last test was made at an experimental station in the United States for the purpose of showing what a cow could be made to do under the most favor-

able circumstances, and even then, to a man like myself, untravelled and unread, the story is like the Behring Sea difficulty—a little fishy. Gentlemen, do not imagine that I would for a moment insinuate that any person connected with the weighing or even reporting was dishonest. By no means; but there is such a chance for mistakes, and we cannot always readily locate an error or tell who is to blame. I once heard of an innocent-looking minnow working its way into a farmer's milk can, and the much-abused farmer never knew whether to blame the cow or the fish.

I believe Ayrshire men do not let their light shine as they should, if they desire to successfully compete with the breeders of other classes of cattle. In many agricultural papers we find all other popular breeds boomed, but not a word for the Ayrshires. A Yankee, speaking upon the improvement of stock, was once asked by a hearer what he had against the Ayrshires. He replied: She is a very fine cow, but her breeders seem afraid that some one will find it out.

I urge this duty upon you and other extensive breeders like yourself, noted as well for your rectitude in business as your success in breeding: 1. Because your reputation is a guarantee against the calumnies and aspersions of those who, through selfishness or jealousy, may do traduce the merits of the Ayrshire. 2. Because such weak support as amateurs like myself could give would be ineffectual. 3. Because you owe to us farmers and small breeders as customers, to yourself and even to the Ayrshires to whom you are indebted for your present prominent position of wealth and affluence, the defence of their reputation of the animals that have been such a boon to yourself and to your country. 4. We have to compete with men who are urging the claims of the Holstein, an animal fostered in her own country by almost maternal care, and treated as one of her owner's family—clothed, combed and petted much as our buxom spinsters care for their pugs. Also with those who prefer the Jersey, bred and matured on the coast of sunny France, and possessing the same place in the household of her owner as the pig does in the kitchen of my countryman. And, more than this, these men I am convinced keep these animals sometimes for the reason Mr. Bonner keeps his Maud S. and his Sunol, because they are a luxury whose prices prevent the ordinary and middle classes from enjoying them. In conclusion, the advancement of the interests of the Ayrshire is not only our duty from a business standpoint, but also from a patriotic. From a business standpoint, because statistics and the science of dairying has taught us that she is a dairy cow, and fitted by nature to thrive where others would starve, and to yield to her owner munificent returns for the care and expense of her maintenance. In fact, her lofty carriage, sleek coat, slender horn, intelligent expression, clean-cut jaw, slim neck and symmetrical body, give her a majestic presence that commends her to the buyer as well as breeder, and makes her an animal of ornament as well as for use, and, as a poet once said,

"A thing of beauty is a joy forever."

And, gentlemen, if poetry be the language of passion, there is none of the domestic animals better calculated to awaken the loftier feelings of man than the animal whose appearance and use combine the double office of profit and pleasure. It is not surprising that the patron poet of the land of the heather should have penned his loftiest gems in admiration of that beautiful animal.

Sheer patriotism makes it our duty to disseminate in every possible way the blood of the animal whose characteristics, a few of which I have enumerated, render her best fitted to withstand the rigors of a northern and variable climate, and thrive under conditions which the poorest can furnish, and well repay the care and attention which the wealthy and middle classes can supply. Thus may the farmer and breeder render quite as efficient service to his country in his day and generation as the statesman, and that, too, without danger of contaminating his morals by wading through the sloughs of political mire, or sheltering those whom duty should compel him to expose to the avenging powers of justice.

### Practical Points in Stall Feeding a Steer.

BY A MANITOBA FEEDER.

In these days of low prices for all farm products, we must pay greater attention to the marketing of these products, endeavoring to place them on the market in the most profitable form, and at the same time reducing the cost of production as much as possible.

Now, instead of hauling our low grade wheat and barley to market and selling it for half a cent a pound or less, burning our straw piles and leaving ourselves with little or no employment for three or four months of winter, can we not make that wheat and that straw pile walk to market on its own legs, bringing us a good profit and leaving on the farm just what we need to keep up the fertility of our soil, besides furnishing us pleasant and profitable employment during the long winter?

I think we can, by breeding and feeding first-class steers—now, mark you, they must be first-class—no use wasting time and feed on *scrubs*. They must be good grades, sired by pure-bred bulls of some of the beef breeds; I would prefer *roan* Shorthorns; they must have been properly fed during their calfhood and through their first winter. Now, we will suppose we have a bunch of such steers about one year and a-half old; I should tie them up in pairs in comfortable stables, and begin to feed a little chop as the nights get frosty, letting them run during the day, so that they will not loose a pound of grass beef, as it is cheaper to keep that on than to replace it. As soon as winter sets in, tie them up and get them on full rations as soon as possible.

Feed twice a day chop wheat or barley, or both (adding say one-third or one-half chop oats, or even whole oats, for awhile at first), increasing the quantity as they will stand it, which can be judged by their feed boxes and by their manure. Give what hay or chaff or green cut straw they will eat three times a day. They should have at least one feed of turnips a day. Ensilage is, I think, out of question in this country as yet; but turnips can be raised with very little expense, and will be of the greatest service in keeping the steers in right condition, and in enabling them to properly assimilate the dry chop and straw or hay. I would let them out to water once a day, which I consider often enough. Don't forget the salt, which they should have every day. Now feed and water at regular hours; supply a good bed, and keep them clean, comfortable and quiet, and next Easter you will have a bunch of two-year-olds that should weigh 1,200 lbs., and be worth \$45 or \$50 apiece, with which, I think, you will feel well repaid for your labor and feed, besides having a pile of first-class manure left behind.

You should have scales to weigh both steers and feed, and then there would be no guess work, and you could see from time to time just what you were doing.

[NOTE.—Our correspondent (who, by the way has had a good many years' experience in Manitoba), makes a number of excellent points in his letter. Nothing could be more important than preventing the loss of flesh which the steers have gained so cheaply on grass. Proper feeding during calfhood, too, is an essential. The first year is the most important year in the animal's life, and the first six months of that the more important. What is lost at that period can never be regained. Nor does this imply that any "forcing" or "hot-house" system need be pursued. The safe path to tread is a golden mean between starvation and pampering. Our correspondent as a natural adjunct in his work as a feeder directs attention to the need for comfortable housing in winter, the necessity for which experienced men well know; but let no one, therefore, runaway with the impression that something elaborate or expensive is necessarily implied. Some grand stall-fed steers have come out of sod stables, and others cheaply constructed until the owners could afford something more permanent.—EDITOR.]