

The General Purpose Cow.

BY S. NICHOLSON.

(Continued from April issue.)

I have heard it often remarked by breeders of rival breeds that to make heifers overly fat when young would spoil their milking qualities. A theory that I have no sympathy with. I believe that as every part of the animal economy is nourished from the same source that the lacteal organs will not be neglected, but that they will grow and keep pace with the bones, muscles, &c. I will go a step further. I believe that a heifer that is crowded to the utmost, and calves at two and a-half years of age, will give more milk than if she had been fed more sparingly. When we take into account that not one Shorthorn in 500 is overly fed for exhibition purposes, and that one is spoiled as a milker (which we do not believe), it simply proves nothing, excepting their capabilities as a beef producing breed. In other words, if we do spoil one in 500 the 499 cannot be any the worse for it. In every case, with hardly an exception, a cow that comes in fat will give more milk the next nine months than though she had come in lean. This brings to my mind an anecdote that came under my own observation some years ago. A then neighbor of mine, who had one half-bred Shorthorn,—his other horned stock were scrubs of the worst kind,—one fall, being hard pressed for money, and having nothing else to make money out of, concluded to fatten her. The reason he gave was that she was such an indifferent milker she was not worth keeping; but what was his disappointment to find in the winter she was in calf. Seeing him some time after, I asked him if he intended to fatten her: "No," he exclaimed, "she is the best milker I ever saw. I would not part with her on any account." His wife being present, turned on him with: "Oh, you! if you would feed them all the way she has been fed they would all give more than they do." She was right; they wanted more feed.

I say here, most emphatically, that those who preach up the doctrine that the cattle are fed too much, when there is a bare possibility that one in a thousand may be, when the other 999 would give a great deal more, if they were better fed. I say that those who preach that doctrine are disloyal to their country. I believe in liberal feeding for another reason. If we only feed them enough to keep them alive that portion is simply thrown away. What would you think of one of our millers, having just enough steam to run his machinery, but not enough to grind. One would be just as unprofitable as the other. If we increase the feed so that a fattening beast will make a solid gain per day, it is out of this extra feed we make all the profit.

But the revenue derived from the cow in beef, butter and cheese are far from being the only sources of profit. The manure, if properly taken care of, is worth fully one-quarter of the receipts; but the wasteful practice of having the manure every year scattered over a quarter of an acre is a criminally wasteful practice. We might, with as much consistency, leave the butter and cheese exposed to the action of the elements, the waste would be very little greater. I am most emphatic in this. It will not pay without the manure in all preserved. To this end the stable floors should be water-tight, and litter enough used to absorb all liquids. The manure should

be kept in covered sheds, the floor a little higher than the surrounding land. In the absence of sheds, a good way is to pile it in square piles, the higher the better, on slightly elevated ground, well tramped, to prevent too high a temperature. There will then be no waste except a little on the outside. The ordinary mode of making what is called barnyard manure should not be even known amongst farmers. More of the profits of the farm are lost from this source than any other. Manure applied to well-cultivated and well-underdrained land is the best bank in which a farmer can make his deposits. Fire cannot burn it. It is absolutely safe. It will draw a larger interest than any other investment. We can yearly make large deposits on the principal, and at the same time the principal will be growing larger. No class of farm animals is as well calculated to make so much of this valuable commodity as the general purpose cow and her offspring.

The General Purpose Cow.

BY W. KOUGH.

I read with much interest in your April number the paper with the above heading, by S. Nicholson, Sylvan, read before the Dominion Shorthorn Breeders' Association. There are some points which struck me well worthy of commenting on. All cattle men are interested, whether they be producing milk or beef, or both from the same herd. In the course of my experiments during the past eighteen years, many facts have come under my notice. That dairying only must of necessity lead to the slaughtering of all or nearly all the calves at birth is not warranted, for I have reared calves without one drop of milk during their whole lives, when at two years old they were steers as good as were ever in the Toronto market. One of two that I sold in May, 1889, for the London, England, market, which netted me six cents a pound at my barn live weight, never tasted milk, and was pronounced by the purchaser, a large Toronto shipper, as the best he had ever bought. In this case a good beefing and milking Galloway bull had been used.

Mr. Nicholson says, "There are four essential requisites, viz.: Robust constitution, sufficiently hardy to stand our Canadian climate, aptitude to fatten and to be a fairly good milker;" and states that "The Jerseys, Holsteins and Ayrshires are out of the race on account of being non-beefers. The Galloways, West Highland and Devons are out by not being adapted for either; therefore the race is between the Shorthorns, Polled Angus and Herefords, and while speaking of the Shorthorn, we wish to be understood as meaning the Scotch or Aberdeen Shorthorn."

Now, in the last question, there is much room for discussion, the assertions are very sweeping. There are few cattlemen who would not take exception to many of them. But, Mr. Editor, your space is too limited and so is my time to discuss the whole subject, so I will confine my remarks to the position to which the Galloway has been consigned. After many years, during which I have experimented in breeds, rearing, breeding and feeding, searching for just the qualities Mr. Nicholson emphasizes, I am certain I have found them all in the Galloway, and that the Galloway bull will impress these qualities on his get whether Shorthorn, other pure-bred, grade or scrub cows, and in nine cases out of ten the produce will be so near the Galloway, and always without horns, that experts will be often puzzled to say which is the

pure-bred and which is the cross-bred or the grade—one cross being enough to stamp the Galloway on the calf. "The robust constitution and sufficiently hardy to stand our Canadian climate," is shown by Galloways and their grades, the latter running out all winter in these parts, and the pure-breds in the Southwest of Scotland not being stabled during the whole year. Galloways will eat bulrushes if they can get nothing else. "Aptitude to fatten," and not only to fatten but to produce well marbled lean and fat juicy meat was certainly shown in the pure-bred Galloways I have shown at the leading exhibitions for four years, and in the grades shown in 1886 and 1887. Marbled meat is what the present taste is demanding, not the pure tallow which has so often taken prizes in live fat stock shows. "Fairly good milkers."—The Galloway cow, Duchess Louise 1067, that I showed in 1886, when suckling her bull calf Robin Adair 2124, gave, for two months, a patent pail full of milk, rich in butter-fat like a Jersey's, each day besides what the calf took, and he got what he wanted. Miss Steele [523] 3292, a pure bred Galloway cow when suckling her bull calf General Gordon 4789, gave two patent pails full of milk, rich in butter-fat, each day for a month, besides what the calf took. Of course there are many Galloway cows who are not such heavy milkers as the above, this is so in all breeds, even to the fancy milking sorts.

Many an Aberdeen man amongst his cattle breeding lore have I heard say that the Shorthorn owes his shortness of horn to judicious use of Galloway blood, and points to the black nose, which sometimes comes in the best herds, as evidence of the old black Polled blood used for the purpose of adding desirable features in the early Shorthorns, and none the less the short mossy fur underlying the outer hair.

Potato Growing.

BY WILLIAM CHAMPION, REABURN, MAN.

In the fall I plow the foulest piece of land I have. As soon as the first weeds show in spring, harrow, and in two or three days ridge. Now fill furrows with either horse manure or old straw stack manure (old straw stack manure is best), plant whole potatoes 15 to 18 bushels per acre on manure. Then ridge back, covering potatoes deep. Leave as rough as possible. When the potatoes are nearly sprouted I harrow the ridges down smooth. If the land is lumpy, roll and harrow until it is fine, and if I take a few different evenings at them all the better, for by this time the potatoes are coming up. Then the ground is perfectly clean from weeds for the present. The potatoes will make a growth of six inches by the time the weeds have nicely started; then I horse hoe, and in a week I set up with plow and smother the last of the weeds. Just before haying I hand weed. One man or boy will now pull all the weeds at the rate of two acres per day. The reason for planting whole potatoes is that in a dry season such as last year the seed will not dry out, and in a wet season will not rot so readily as when cut.

Subscriber, Boissevain, asks:—How is the term thoroughbred used as applied to horses? Practical horsemen and breeders use the term here, as in England, to denote the English blood horse or racer. Others, including some agricultural editors, with less knowledge of horse-breeding, use the term to denote anything pure-bred from a dog to a Clydesdale.