

greater part of their own living. If fed grain, it will be a benefit to them. Ducklings should not be allowed free access to the ponds or runs of water until three weeks old, except when hatched later, say in June or July—the time when hatched in their wild state. Although in their natural state ducks get a great deal of animal flesh, no kinds of poultry will do without with less inconvenience.

GEORGE GLEN, in *Field and River*.

Early History of the Guernseys.

The origin of the breeds of cattle so widely known as Channel Island, seems to be uncertain. They have long been the race they now are, and the memory of man runneth not to the time when they were new to the islands. Mr. Geo. Torode, who is familiar with the traditions of his people, says his father supposed they came, originally, from the adjacent French coast, from near Issigny, a place still famous in Normandy for remarkable butter, and your correspondent was disappointed in not finding time to visit that part of France, to see if a corresponding breed existed there.

At Rouen, we saw a steer of remarkable beauty in a drove, self-colored, with a look something akin to the island breeds, but we were unable to find from what province he came or what stock he represented.

A writer in the valuable work "The Cattle of Great Britain," states with great confidence that no cattle of the Alderney (as all cattle of the kind are misnamed in England) (1) character are to be found in Normandy, and he gives the authority of the late Fisher Hobbs for believing, on comparison with a vast collection of cattle at the International Exhibition in Paris, in 1855, that they have been bred from some of the Swiss mountain cattle.

Per contra, Mr. Torode's partner exhibited a Guernsey cow at this fair, and won a superb gold medal, now an heir loom, and fifty guineas with her in the dairy competition; and she was purchased by the Emperor Louis Napoleon, for fifty guineas. He had, of course, the opportunity of seeing the cattle examined by Mr. Hobbs, but seems not to have changed his own opinion regarding the origin of his own breed.

The cattle now on Mr. Torode's farm are descended from the famous cow alluded to, and are of her lineal descendants, and a worthy one has come recently to America, Mr. Torode wishing to have the strain in the country whence he anticipates a great demand on the island herds.

A very elaborate series of volumes on domestic animals was issued in England in 1841, and illustrated at great cost by large plates in color. It treats all the Channel island cattle as Alderneys, but the two specimens illustrated are in color and every characteristic Guernseys.

A most interesting history and account of the island and cattle is given, showing that for over 900 years the people have been remarkably protected in their ancient customs and conservatism; retaining to an unusual degree their own laws, and managing, as they still do, their own concerns in a very independent way, although, despite their French tongue and associations, they are among the most devotedly loyal of all England's possessions.

Among other deviations from English ideas, the inheritance by primogeniture does not hold, but in accordance with the Norman laws of succession, property is equally divided among children, and this has been adhered to until the farms and fields have been subdivided to their present minute areas.

Among other legislation peculiar to the island, many laws

(1) This may have been true, forty years ago, but thirty years ago, I imported Guernsey heifers, and I can answer for the superiority of them in size and form to the Jerseys was then well understood, the generic name "Alderneys" may have been in use, among inland people, even later.

have been enacted having in view the perpetuation of the purity of the breeds of cattle, and most sturdily have these regulations been enforced, even when temporary advantages offered very great temptations to permit evasions.

In 1789 a law was passed by the insular legislature forbidding the importation of any "cow, heifer, bull or calf," under a penalty of 200 livres and the forfeiture of the boat and tackle which should bring them, and a further penalty of 50 livres on any sailor on board who should not inform of the importation.

These laws were from time to time amended, and always in the direction of more severe isolation from mixed breeds. Returning to a paper on the "Cattle of Great Britain," we quote: "We have said at the beginning of our article that Guernsey-men will not tolerate admixture into their breed of cattle, even from the neighboring island. In this respect the Guernsey people are much more exclusive than the inhabitants of the larger island of Jersey; and it is this exclusiveness which is their boast and pride. It may be, and indeed is, the case that the breeds of the other islands derive advantage from their mixture with Guernseys; for instance the old and well-known breed of Alderneys, which is now nearing extinction, has by this means become assimilated to the Guernsey. But, like the Arabs with their horses, Guernsey has ever kept, and boasts of her determination still to keep, her breed of cattle distinct and separate, and hence the law is made equally binding on the importation of cattle from the sister islands as from foreign parts."

Thus writes an authority, and there is no question that from whatever source the valuable traits of these cattle have been derived, they have been kept pure and made fixed by the persistent care they have had from Guernsey-men.

The volumes issued in 1841, conclude in referring to these cattle by saying that the Guernsey has great affinity to the races of Normandy, and the Alderney to certain breeds of Norway, leading to the conclusion that the intercourse with the north which followed the subjugation of Normandy, introduced Scandinavian cattle. It will be seen that authorities differ, and as centuries have involved the questions in obscurity that traditions have evidently not survived, it is not likely that more will be known of the origin of the best protected cattle in existence.

All the care of the island cattle usually is confided to the women of the families, and their gentle hands make affectionate animals. They move their tether-stakes four or five times a day, lead them to water, and milk them three times a day. The milk is set in stoneware jars about one foot in diameter, and the same depth. It remains in those jars until it is sour and nearly solid, and then the cream and sour milk are churned together, and golden butter results; but the best butter made in especial cases is by varying this treatment to the extent of skimming the cream and churning it alone. The leaves of the huge Guernsey cabbage are used for wrappers for the prints, and nothing can be more beautiful than the brilliant yellow pats nestling in the deep green leaves, when they are brought to the stone market-house in St. Peter's Port, where as many good things are offered as in any favored city by any sea. — *Fernwood, in Country Gentleman*.

CORRESPONDENCE.

My dear Jenner Fust,

The enclosed is the list of potatoes I planted this year; quantity planted in the first column, yield in the next, and ratio of yield to amount planted, in third column.

All were planted in the same ground, a light sandy loam, and all were manured in a precisely similar manner in the furrow, and were allowed to remain until ripe. The English sorts which I imported were from Sutton & Sons, Reading; they did not reach me till late in