

COW HOUSE.

The convenient arrangement of the cow-house is of importance both to the owner and to the cattle kept in it. Those built of stone or brick would be best for Canada, as the most desirable temperature can be maintained in them. They should be lofty, at least from eight to ten feet from the floor to the loft, in proportion to the size of the house, and the number of cattle kept together. The most convenient and economical arrangement is to have two rows of cows with their heads towards each other, though, perhaps, this is not the best arrangement. We copy a description of a cow house from the "North British Agriculturist," which gives a very good idea of what a building for this purpose should be:—We conceive it to be a very bad plan to keep too many milch cows or breeding stock in one house or enclosure, and whether many or few ample ventilation is necessary. Air and exercise are also necessary for the health of young stock and cows in calf, unless when the weather is very severe. Where a large number of cows are kept in cities for the supply of milk alone, they seldom keep the cows for more than a year or two, and their confinement is not of so much consequence, as these cows are not kept for breeding. In ordinary circumstances, however, we think that air and exercise are actually necessary for young and breeding stock, and that without both these, neither the cattle nor progeny can be preserved in a perfectly healthy condition.

ON THE FORM OF A COW-HOUSE OR BYRE.

In erecting a cow-house, it should be so arranged that it should stand convenient for the rest of the steading, particularly as to the straw-barn and boiling-house. The exposure should be south or west; the situation should be airy, dry, and level; and the whole should be so arranged that the cardinal virtue, cleanliness, may be easily and fastidiously followed out.

The size of the house must be regulated according to the number of cows to be kept—here, however, there is a necessity strongly to impress the importance of not *overcrowding*. Overcrowding is the most common, and in its effects the most fatal mistake in dairy management. Where the numbers are to exceed twelve or sixteen, there should be erected additional cow-houses, corresponding to the numbers intended to be kept.

On most dairy farms the common practice is to have one row of cows in the cow-house, with their heads close up to the wall, and a passage behind them. A more convenient form of byre for twelve or sixteen cows, is to have the building so wide that it can commodiously hold two rows of cows—the stalls should be so arranged that the cows can be tied up with their heads to the walls, leaving a free passage in front of the cows for the purpose of feeding. The passages at the head should be so wide that a wheel-barrow can be pushed along with food.

The building should be one story high, lofty, so as readily to admit of a free circulation of air. The walls may be of stone and lime, or brick, as may be found most convenient. In England some prefer one of the sides to be formed of wood, so as to admit of its being partially taken down during summer for coolness. There should be three doors on one side, two for passages in front of the cows, and one for the cows to enter; opposite this latter door should be another for the purpose of removing the manure.—This gives three doors in front, and one at the back. The level of the doorways in front should be a little raised above the level of the outside. A byre, to hold twelve ordinary sized cows, should be made 34 feet long, with a breadth of 24 feet, giving a breadth of stall to each cow of four feet. The length of 34 feet will allow of two passages in front of the cows of four feet each, two stalls for food of two feet each, two of seven feet for standing-room for the cows, two gripes of two feet each, a passage between the gripes of four feet; three feet may, however, be sufficient.

If sixteen cows are to be kept, the breadth of the house must be increased. It will then be necessary to have a double roof with supports in the middle of the byre. These may be of iron to save room.—Double roofs are seldom to be met with in farm offices. We consider this a great error, and often arises from a mistaken economy in having narrow buildings. These are almost always inconvenient, and the additional mason and wright-work in most cases more than counterbalances the work, &c., required for a double roof. The height of the walls should not be less than eight or nine feet. The doors should be wide, four to four and a half feet.—Above the doors should be a window, framed so as to be easily opened and shut by a rope. The form of the floor is important. The fore-feet of the cow should be slightly, but only slightly, elevated above the hind feet; the difference should not exceed three inches. The whole floor should be flagged with flag-stones or flooring-bricks. The depth of the gripe should not exceed four inches. These directions are important to avoid abortion, and their necessity will be apparent to those who have studied the incipient causes of this malady. The slope of the gripe should be sufficient for allowing the urine running off to the outside; either to be collected in a tank or to be thrown upon the dung heap. The roof most commonly used is tile; a better covering is reeds, straw, or slate. There should be more than two openings in the roof, for the purpose of ventilation. The wall should be plastered in the inside. This is wholly overlooked in the erection of byres, and adds considerably to the difficulty of keeping the walls clean. The loss of a single cow annually, valued at £10, will more than meet the expense involved in the erection of a proper cow-house. Tenants will, in general, only obtain these, however, by an arrangement in their contract.

The whole cow-house, out and in, should be kept