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Omnium rerum, ex quibus aliquid acquiritur, nihil est agriculturâ melius, nihil uberius, nihil homine libero dignius.—Cicero: de Officiis, lib. I, cap. 42.

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WHAT IS A HEREFORD?

The chief points to be looked for in a good Hereford are, first, that the colour should be a distinct red, not too dark or too light; white face, mane, breast, and belly white, end to tail; and white legs as far as the knees and hock, sometimes running up the flank. The bull should have a good masculine head, not too long, broad between the eyes, which latter should be large and prominent, but with a mild look about them, denoting docility and equality of temper; the horn should be of moderate strength, springing straight from the head. The cow's head should be much the same, but finer, and her horns should have a mane and turn upwards slightly; they should be in both cases of a foxy white, although they are occasionally tipped with black; the nose should be a pure white or flesh colour. The bull should have a good rise of crest, deep sloping shoulders, well-developed brisket, straight back and belly line, wide loin, good springing ribs, moderately broad hips, tail well set on and falling in plumb line to the hocks; the hind-quarters should be long from the hip back; the thighs, which are a very important point, should be large and full, showing plenty of width across when you stand behind, and should be well meated to the hocks; the whole carcass should be set square on good short legs standing well apart, and be covered with firm flesh of good quality, and a mellow hide of soft but not too fine hair, giving the impression when you touch it that it will stretch to any extent; but the test of

"touch" is extremely difficult to explain in words, it can only be learnt by practice.

There can be no two opinions on the question of what Hereford cattle are—they are most undoubtedly a distinct and pure breed of great antiquity. Their early history is like that of many others, rather shrouded in mystery; but it is generally allowed that there has been a breed of cattle red and mostly with white face and markings for at least 200 years in the county of Hereford and the neighbouring counties. The late Mr. T. A. Knight, of Downton Castle, who lived in the last century, and who was a great authority on all matters of antiquity, besides being one of the most celebrated of early breeders of Hereford cattle, asserted that Lord Scudamore, who died in 1671 introduced cows of the red with white face breed from Flanders. There was also a breed of cattle known in Herefordshire that were "white with red ears," and so far back as the tenth century it is recorded that there was a law of fixed compensation to be paid for injury done by one prince to another at 100 white cows with red ears and a bull of the same colour; but if the cattle were of a dark or black colour the number was to be 150. Speed records, "Maud de Brebois, in order to please King John, who was highly incensed against her husband, made a present to the queen of 400 cows from Brecknockshire, all 'white with red ears.'" These facts were collected some years ago by Mr. Thomas Duckham, the late editor of the

Hereford Herd Book, and they are accepted as being correct both in this country and in America, where the breed is so fast increasing in popularity at the present time.

From these records I think it may be fairly considered to be proved that the Herefords of to-day have sprung directly from the old breeds of the district, the old grey Hereford coming from the white cattle with red ears, and an occasional white Hereford has cropped up as an additional proof of this. In 1857 there was a white Hereford shown at the Birmingham fat stock show. Some of the old light greys were almost white. I know at the present time several Herefords of the finest blood, that are nearer white than red, although it is a well known fact that they have never had a stain of any other breed in their pedigree.

Are not the present Herefords a mixture of these cattle that were known as far back as the tenth century (being "white with red ears") with the Flanders cattle, imported by Lord Scudamore previous to the year 1671, which were red with white faces? The first-mentioned were usually the largest, but with great quality and good touch; the grey were wonderful feeders, and of a medium size; while the red with white face usually were the smaller cattle, finer in the bone, and altogether more taking to the eye; so fashion by degrees excluded the others, and now the red with white face reigns triumphant.

However, breeders do not object to an occasional bit of tick or mottle appearing