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TOWNSHIP OF YORK FARMERS' CLUB.

IMPROVED BREEDS OF CATTLE.

At a meeting of this club on the evening of Wednesday, the 6th November, E. W. Thomson, Esq., opened the discussion by reading the following paper:—

GENTLEMEN,—In addressing you this evening on improved breeds of cattle, I shall briefly bring before your notice the several breeds with which we are acquainted, describing their excellencies, showing wherein they differ from each other, and the advantages that result to the farmer from making a judicious selection of stock to breed from. Before attempting to describe the varieties of the ox kind that have of late attracted the attention of breeders, and with respect to which there exists a variety of opinions, permit me to offer a few general remarks, drawn from different sources, as well as from my own observation. In the *American Farmers' Encyclopedia*, we find under the article Cattle, the following:—

“That the ox has been domesticated and in the service of man from a very remote period, is quite certain. We learn from Genesis iv. and 20th, that cattle were kept by the early descendants of Adam, preserved by Noah from the flood waters. The original breed of our present oxen must have been in Mount Arrarat; and from thence dispersing over the face of the globe, altering by climate, by food and by cultivation, originated the various breeds of modern ages. That the value of the ox tribe has been in all ages and climates highly appreciated, we have abundant evidence. The natives of Egypt, India, and of Hindoostan, seem alike to have placed the cow amongst their deities, and, judging from her usefulness in all climes, no animal could, perhaps, have been selected whose value to mankind is greater.” In nearly all parts of the earth, cattle are employed for their labor, for their milk, and for food. In Southern Africa they are

as much the associate of the Caffres as the horse is of the Arab. They share his toils and assist him in tending his herds; they are even trained to battle, in which they become fierce and courageous. In Central Africa the proudest ebony beauties are to be seen on their backs. They have drawn the plough in all ages; in Spain, they still trample out the corn, in India raise the water from the deepest wells to irrigate the thirsty soil of Bengal. When Cæsar invaded England they constituted the chief wealth of its inhabitants, and they yet form no inconsiderable item in the estimate of that country's abundant riches. According to Mr. Youatt's estimate (who is considered good authority on all matters connected with live stock), it would seem that 1,600,000 head of cattle are consigned to the butcher every year in the United Kingdom, and the value of the entire national stock of all kinds of cattle, sheep and pigs, amounts to nearly £120,000,000 sterling.” An excellent paper on the origin and natural history of the domestic ox, and the allied species, by Professor Wilson (*Quarterly Journal of Agriculture*, vol. 11, pp. 177) may be consulted with advantage by those who wish for more information on this head. The value of the ox to the pioneers of the forest is undeniable, and needs no illustration. Those who have had experience in the clearing of wild lands, can bear testimony to it, and in my opinion, he might be employed on old cleared farms to a much greater extent than he is, with decided advantage. And as to the cow, it is hardly possible to do justice to her value; rich and poor are alike dependent upon her for the comforts of life. Her produce constitutes the main support of many a poor man's family; and if she is properly cared for, the sum invested in her purchase is one of the very best investments that can be made. In Belgium, the cow is an object of the greatest care and attention, and amply repays the owner for that care, for in addition to the milk she produces, she is trained to draw the plough, harrow and cart, and is, on many of the small farms of that country, the only beast of draught employed. This fact is only mentioned to illustrate