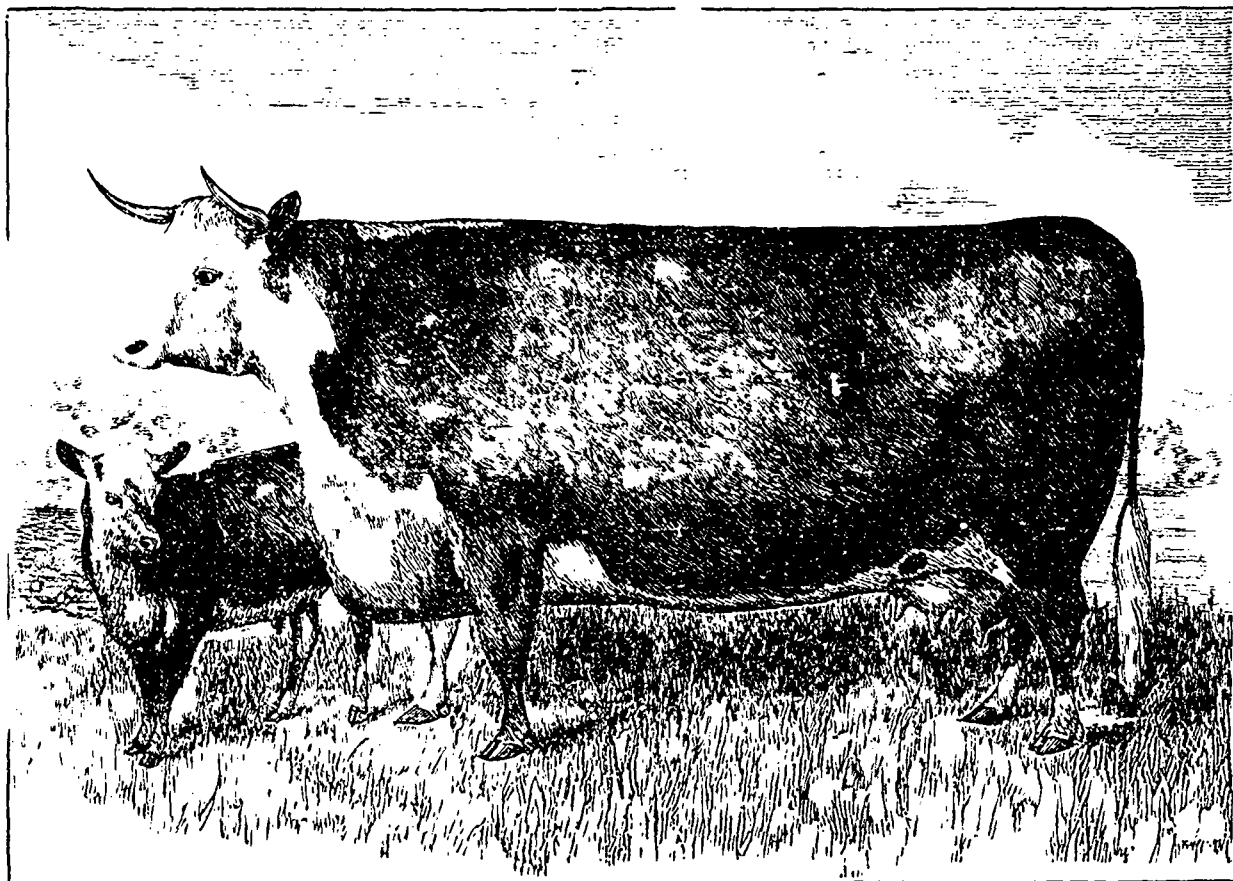


wheat-growing in favour of fodder crops for the soil. It is, of course, to be borne in mind that nearly all the witnesses examined before the Commission are partisans on the ensilage question, and some of their statements, therefore, should be received with caution. For instance, we imagine that few hunting men will be convinced that ensilage is good for their horses by the statement made by the Vicomte de Chezelles, to the effect that he had fed a hunter mare on that fodder and on nothing else since October, and that she was in excellent condition. (1) The Commission has now adjourned until the autumn, and it will no doubt be a matter of general interest to agriculturists of this country to learn that Mr. Ellis Lever, of Bowden, Cheshire, referred to in the report

shortly be published in a cheap and popular form, so as to place the work within the reach of the agricultural classes of this country.

WHAT IS A WEED?

A LONG discussion has been carried on in the columns of the *Agricultural Gazette* as to the laying down of land to grass. I have ventured to point out that "land will lay itself down," if it is only let alone, but that we can greatly hasten the process by sowing the refuse seed from our haystacks and haylofts, and I have asserted that if the sward so obtained is only grazed with cattle the first two summers, and oilcake



HEREFORD COW, LUCY, 1258, owned by William Constable, Beecher, Ill.

of the American Ensilage Congress as one of the early pioneers of ensilage, is engaged collecting evidence from most eminent and practical authority, both here and abroad, as to the advantages of the system. Mr. Lever has for a long time persistently advocated the system of fodder preservation adopted by Mr. Goffarts, which has proved so signally successful in America, France, and also in this country. On Mr. Lever's authority it was stated at the recent New York Congress that the number of silos erected in this country within two years was upwards of 700, and at the present moment they are nearly double that number. The result of Mr. Lever's researches, the object of which is to show what are the most profitable crops, and the simplest and best form of silos, will

given to the beasts while so grazing, the result will be in a very few years as good grass as it is possible for that land to produce.

Now a few days ago my head shepherd came to me and begged that the hay in certain fields should be stacked therein, and kept specially for the sheep this next winter; and as I knew these fields to be full of wild flowers, or "weeds" as arable farmers would term them, I was rather amused at the request, for it fitted in surprisingly with my own theory for grazing land—that there is no such thing as a weed.

Two of the fields which were specially bespoken for "sheep hay" were old meadows never broken up since the days of Adam, very wet in spots, and very dry in other spots, and filled with wild flowers of every sort (I counted over thirty), many of which are looked upon as most unmitigated weeds. Nevertheless, the hay was beautifully fragrant. It was cut

(1) I fear she would not stand long "below Harrow with the Queen's;" with the Fitzwilliam in a sharp burst from Bythorn Toll-bar; or with the Quorn from any covert. A. R. J. F.