

an import duty on wool to the United States of 5d. a lb. — whether the wool was washed or not the duty was the same. It was quite clear that under these circumstances the Americans would buy washed wool which would only shrink 20 per cent., when they certainly would not buy unwashed wool which would shrink 40 per cent. The Bradford Chamber of Agriculture had made an inquiry into the subject, and he believed their decision would be against the non-washing of sheep."

If dirty unwashed wool is offered for sale, immediately the buyer begins to find fault, and to make out that there never was such a filthy lot brought to his factory; whereas, when a nice well-washed fleece is shown, the bright, clear look of the wool fascinates the eye of the manufacturer, and he jumps at the lot in a moment. I have mentioned before in this Journal that when the late M. Amable Demers, of Chambly, allowed me to tub-wash his 60 ewes, Mr. Willett, tweed-maker, Chambly Mills, told him that he had never seen such a set of fleeces since he had been in business.

No! I do not think we will give up washing our sheep yet.
A. R. J. F.

The Escutcheon Theory.

Some months ago, I said, in this Journal, that I was perfectly ready to reconsider my opinion on the Guénon theory, if any one would tell me *why* the position of certain hairs in the perineal region of a cow should be a sign of her milking capacity. Nobody has, at yet, given me the desired information, so my scepticism in this, as in many other matters, remains constant. When I hear such men as Mr. James Drummond, Mr. Thomas Irving, Professor Brown, Dr. Hoskins, &c., &c., &c., say that they have not the slightest belief in the escutcheon theory, and when I find that the American Jersey cattle club has erased the escutcheon from its place among the *points* in the Judges' list, I am confirmed in my incredulity.

I reprint, in the present number of the Journal, two articles, one from an American, and the other from an English source; the former being written evidently by a man who, although he is in a state of vibration, is, still, in search of truth; and the other, by one who looks at the question from a purely philosophical point of view, asking the same question, though in more exact terms, that I have so often asked: what connection can there possibly be between the set of certain hairs on the perineal region of a cow and the quantity of milk she will give, or what indication can this escutcheon be of the length of time after calving she will continue to yield milk? A. R. J. F.

The Guénon System.

EDS COUNTRY GENTLEMAN — Twenty-five years ago I was as firm a believer in the Guénon system as Mr. Blight but observation and experience have convinced me of the correctness of the conclusions to which Mr. Flint arrives, after a careful and impartial survey of the Guénon system. In "Milch Cows and Dairy Farming," he says: "It is safe to lay it down as a rule that in the selection of milch cows, as well as in the choice of young animals as breeders, we should, by all means, examine and consider the milk-mirror, but not limit or confine ourselves exclusively to it, and that other and long known marks should be equally regarded."

I have also noticed, or thought I noticed, that the system, as a test of quality, is more generally applicable to Short-Horns and Ayrshires and their grades, than to Holsteins, Herefords, Devons, Swiss, or especially to the Jerseys. Among these latter, the Jerseys, I have seen many animals whose utmost energies and strength seemed devoted to the incessant pro-

duction of rich milk, but whose mirrors would consign them to Class 3 of "middling and little below middling," if not to Class 5 of "very bad milkers."

I have now two two-year-old heifers which afford a remarkable instance of variation from what I still think is a noteworthy general rule. They are by a registered Jersey bull, a grandson of Pedro; and their dams, granddams and great-granddams, were direct crosses of Short-Horn and Ayrshire, extraordinary milkers, and with the most perfect escutcheons I ever saw. These heifers have escutcheons which would barely admit them to the third class, while their large, well-formed udders and generous yield of rich milk abundantly entitle them to a place in the first class, "very good or extraordinary."

It is also, to me, an interesting circumstance that half-sisters of these heifers, by other Jersey bulls, have the same beautiful escutcheons as their mothers and grandmothers, and prove and promise to possess the excellences which their parentage led me to expect.

I do not understand that my experience materially conflicts with Mr. Blight's conclusions. He admits that he has not found the system infallible, while I still believe that its teachings are worthy of attention. Perhaps the statement of our respective views may draw out others, and so help the readers of the COUNTRY GENTLEMAN to a clearer comprehension of a very important and somewhat complicated subject.

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THE ESCUTCHEON THEORY.

We do not hear so much of this system of determining the milking qualities of a cow now as we did some few years ago. The practice of actually testing the amount yielded by each animal, by weighing at stated intervals and keeping a record has been very much developed since then, so that escutcheons have rather fallen into the background. In the Royal Agricultural Society of England's Journal for 1885 there is an elaborate paper from the pen of an American gentleman, who first published it in the United States, in which all the different forms are given, and a disquisition on the probable causes or reasons for their existence. To our mind the writer has missed the point in this latter respect altogether, and if the basis is wrong, it follows that much of the superstructure is wrong also. The "escutcheon" is the name given to the hair which grows in the perineal region, between the udder and the root of the tail, and in which the whole or part of the hair grows upwards relative to the ground level. On the size and shape of the space covered by this upturned part GUÉNON founded his famous theory about milk yield. But a little consideration will give us some fresh ideas as to what this escutcheon really is.

The hair of mammals, the feathers of birds, and the scales of reptiles and fishes all follow the general line of the body, and point from head to tail, the roots being towards the anterior part, while the free ends point towards the posterior parts. This being so, it is manifest that the hair, &c., on the back must necessarily meet that on the belly at some part of the body, and in an opposite direction. This part is, of course, about the tail or perineum, and in a large animal like the cow, an inch or two, or even a foot, more or less off is of little account. In other words, the escutcheon is simply the hair of the underparts continuing the same direction as the rest, and is not turned up at all with reference to the cow's body, but only with reference to the horizontal plane of the ground. If the cow were to stand up on her hind-legs, the real arrangement of the parts would be much better seen, and most people would be convinced that there is nothing peculiar or mysterious in the direction of the hair, and no need for such absurd