

Stock and Dairy.

Color of Shorthorns.

In some breeds of cattle the color is invariably fixed—as much so as any other characteristic. This is the case with the Galloways and Norfolks, but with the Shorthorns it is quite different, and their color seems to vary somewhat as fashion requires. It is as true of horned stock as of horses that a really good animal cannot be of a bad color; but it is equally true that the color has very much to do in determining the price. It has been held that the richness of the milk is indicated by the color of the cow, and the general testimony to this effect, based as it is on experience, cannot be gainsayed, though we know the milk of Shorthorns may be very rich even when the color is white. And a white steer or heifer does not fall behind one of any other color in early fattening or in the quality of the beef when fattened. However, they who purchase Shorthorns at fancy prices are not influenced by their milking or fattening qualities. Those points that indicate the best qualities they must have, but the purchasers require something more. They must also be of the fashionable color if they are to bring the highest prices. On this subject, "The Color of Shorthorns," Dr. Hickman, President of the Derbyshire Agricultural Society, read at their meeting the following remarks:

Color is at times uncertain in the offspring of the Shorthorn, because no one color has ever been sought for continuously for a long period of time. White, or red and white, is, perhaps, the primitive color of this tribe, but fashion in 1815 demanded white, and subsequently red, and now for the past fifteen or twenty years roan has been in request—this very color requiring a blending of red and white to produce it. A white bull and a red cow will produce a number of roans, in the first instance, but the progeny will produce red or white, or patchy mixtures of the two, according as either parent may have left the stronger bias in this particular. It is because of this variation in color that the admirers of the Hereford or Devon tribe of cattle taunt the Shorthorn as being not only a *parvenu*, but an artificial product—a made animal, with a constant disposition to run off to some one or other individual type of which it is a compound.

Now, notwithstanding that there is a race with the "alloy" of the Galloway in its blood, yet is the original Shorthorn as distinct a tribe as any other of our races, and has, probably, an ancestry as remote; and I am as positive as I am of my own existence, that a uniformity of color, as unvaried as any other class of animals, could be secured in process of time if breeders were unanimous in determining upon one of three colors, namely, red and white, white, or red. So long as roan, which is a compound color, is determined upon, so long will it be a matter of the greatest possible uncertainty what the actual color of the progeny may be. Certainly roan is a very beautiful color, and the variety which leads to make a herd of Shorthorns a most picturesque object in the parks or meadows of a nobleman; but still, this variety detracts from its dignity as a tribe, and lessens its effect when viewed as a herd in the stalls or grouped for sale in the market. I say that this uniformity may be effected, because, even now, there is a kind of unity amid all this variety, for, if we cannot determine what the color of the future calf will be, we can, at all events, predict what it will not be; we know that it will not be entirely black, or have any patch of that color—black—or anything approaching black, which would taint the fair fame of the Shorthorn as assuredly as would a woolly scalp, a flat nose, a protuberant lip, and a dark skin in her progeny, sully the honor of a Virginian lady.

Perhaps there have been more good Shorthorns of a white than of any other color; although it is now very unpopular—unpopular because it betrays dirt and is difficult to keep unsullied; and erroneously unpopular as implying weakness of constitution. It is as hardy as any color. Stick to facts and not to fancies. In what color does nature robe the animals which spend their lives amid the regions of eternal snow? What is the predom-

inant color in the Arctic hare, the Esquimaux dog, and the Polar bear? Of what color are the bodies of nearly all feathers, especially the feathers of all water-fowl occupying cold latitudes?

Again and again have I known a white boar produce all white pigs from a black sow, and *vice versa*; but let it be ever remembered that for such results to follow, the bias, or hereditary transmission of the special color, must be equal on both sides. A white boar, *c. g.*, descended from a black sow by a white boar, when placed with a black sow, would not make so decided an impression upon the color as one which had for many generations descended from a white strain.

Size and Weight of Horses for Breeding.

It is always advisable to select horses for breeding that are a little above the average size, for it has been observed that the offspring are frequently smaller than the parents.

This is the case especially: 1, when the young colts, as it very unfortunately seems to be the rule in the west, receive rather poor care and insufficient food and protection during the first two winters; 2, in years in which the food has been spoiled or made scarce by unfavorable conditions, such as a very wet season, a long-lasting drought, or an extremely cold winter; 3, when the growth of the young animal is retarded by disease.

Further, where common, native horses have been improved by an importation of blood, that is, by a use of thoroughbred or blooded stallions, we find, almost always, comparatively more small and fine animals than large and robust ones.

Besides all this, the demand for large and heavy horses, that are also good in other respects, is constantly increasing, and is always much greater than for small animals. Therefore a breeder will generally do well, and find to his account, to select as horses for breeding (both mares and stallions) none that are of inferior size and weight, provided, of course, the climate, the physical condition of the country, and the quality of the soil do not only permit, but are tending to promote symmetrical development of a big and heavy animal.

Where heavy horses, that are also otherwise well qualified in every respect, cannot be had, except at a great expense, smaller animals have to be chosen; but the breeder has to endeavor to increase gradually the size of his animals, by bestowing upon his brood mares and upon his colts the very best care, by feeding them liberally, especially with oats, and by giving them ample protection against the inclemencies of the weather. By doing this, he will succeed in raising considerably the average weight and strength of his horses, without sacrificing any other good quality already possessed, which latter is so often the case where size and weight are the exclusive aim of the breeders.

It is true this method is a slow one; it will take several generations to make the difference in size very conspicuous, but it has the advantage of requiring only a comparatively small capital to begin with.

The thoroughbred horse excels above all other breeds by the great elasticity, firmness, and compactness of its fibres, by its noble form of body, by the perfect development of its organs of circulation and respiration, and by a very small size of all minor and comparatively unimportant parts. The common horse possesses much less elasticity, firmness and compactness of fibre, has a less elegant and pleasing form of body, and less developed organs of circulation and respiration, but is generally heavier, and to a certain extent makes up in size and weight what it is lacking in intrinsic power and activity; it is therefore better qualified for slow and heavy draught, while the thoroughbred is much better fitted for speed and for travelling over long distances.

Hence, where the superior qualities of both, of the thoroughbred and of the common horse, are harmoniously united in one and the same animal, where, in other words, blood and size, or intrinsic power and weight, are combined, we have a horse that may be called excellent and will answer every reasonable demand. To effect such a harmonious union must be one of the principal objects of the breeder.

It is best accomplished by selecting, first, a large and heavy common mare, with good mechanical proportions, to be served by as large a half-bred horse, with good mechanical proportions, as can be found, and by matching the offspring, if a mare, with a thoroughbred horse. That favorable results cannot be obtained without proper care, liberal feeding, and sufficient shelter, does not need any explanation.—*Chicago Tribune.*

Value of Shorthorns.

The prices realized of late at Shorthorn Auctions appear, in comparison with those which have astonished us this summer, to be almost failures. An average of 40¢ no longer satisfies. The sales of the last few weeks seem no higher than they used to be 10 or 15 years ago. Mr. Wortley, for example, has done in 1875 no better than Mr. Langston did in 1864. But, even so, this does not mean stagnation. On the contrary, it indicates a great advance; for the Sarsden herd, whether better bred or not, was certainly more noteworthy at its date—was better known, and had a higher general reputation among Shorthorn herds than any of those which have been lately sold. And if we go but little further back, the difference is still more striking. The late Lord Ducie was content, at his annual sale of bulls and bull calves, with prices of 10¢, 15¢, and 20¢ a piece; many of them being of strains which now command a fancy price. Such animals would now be worth many times the sum which they then realized; and even where no special or "fancy" strain existed, the old Tortworth prices certainly would not now be satisfactory.

The value of a thoroughbred Shorthorn has risen since then, and two leading explanations may be given of that fact. Thus (1), the price of meat has risen; and (2) the so-called purity of breed is so many generations older; and the power of a male to transmit his character to his posterity grows in certainty, and, therefore, in value, with the length of a good pedigree. If, instead of value, we speak of price, then to these two main sources of the rising value of the Shorthorn we must add the fact that, in consequence of the above-named causes, a much larger number of breeders are now buying Shorthorn bulls.

It may seem a great descent from the lofty 1000-guinea bids of the past season for Duchess bulls and Warlabby cows, to speak of the price of meat; and, in truth, there seems at first but slight relationship between the two. Nevertheless, on the price of meat and the economical value of the Shorthorn as a meat-maker the whole subject hinges. If these Shorthorn prices cannot find a justification somehow in the meat market, they will find it nowhere. Of course when we speak of meat, we include the whole food production of the animal. The milk produce also is included in the relation of the breed to the consumer, on which exclusively, then, as now, we have built the whole justification of the price of Shorthorns.

There is no other justification possible. It is the economy with which the plant growth of the farm can be converted into animal food by this, that, or the other strain or family or breed of cattle, which alone can answer the question—Which of good cattle shall we cultivate? And how meat at 8¢ a pound, and milk at 10¢ a gallon, can justify even a 40¢ or 50¢ average for a beast which may weigh 8 cwt. of beef or produce 600 gallons annually of milk, is the question to be answered. It can be answered without difficulty. These cattle are sold not to the consumer, but to the breeder. A pure-bred Shorthorn cow is never sold until she has ceased to breed, and a pure-bred Shorthorn bull, if he be of decent merit individually, never ought to be. In neither case has the ultimate carcass value of the animal any share whatever in determining price.

It is, in fact, through the Shorthorn bull that the food producer and the food consumer are interested in Shorthorn breeding. It is the demand for bulls that is the true barometer which indicates the prospects of the Shorthorn breeder. Paternity by a well-bred Shorthorn bull means 3¢, or 4¢, instead of 30¢, as the value of the calf. It will, indeed, answer the purpose of the grazier or cow-keeper to pay much more than this for calves or yearlings got by well-bred bulls than for calves or yearlings got by the mongrel brutes one often sees on dairy farms. It may be a most prudent purchase on the part of the owner of a herd of good ordinary cows to pay 50¢, 60¢, or even 70¢ for a well-bred Shorthorn bull; and, as long as a demand continues for sires to be used on the rank and file of the cow stock of the country, it may be profitable for the breeder of pure Shorthorns to give even extraordinary prices for the maintenance of his herd. His clients are so large a body that it will be a long time before his market is overstocked. There are two and a quarter millions of cows coming to the pail every year in Great Britain only, and as the superiority of the Shorthorn breed becomes acknowledged, prices will no doubt, still advance.

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