

now found in many places; but on the part of the farming community at large, it must be confessed that there has not been that spirit in improving their own stock, by encouraging the enterprise of the importers of well-bred cattle, which might have been expected.

In endeavouring to improve our stock of neat cattle, we must be governed in our choice of individuals to breed from by the quality of those within reach, the best of which, especially of the male animals, should always be obtained. If the farmer does not go to the expense of purchasing highly-bred heifers or cows, he should at least take the pains to select and preserve the best of the native or common ones, as a foundation for an improved stock, and obtain for them the best bull within reach. By pursuing this course, and slaughtering or rejecting as breeders all the inferior young animals produced, a great improvement will soon be effected.

It is frequently a subject of inquiry, which of the different varieties of cattle are the most profitable? This must depend a good deal on the particular purpose for which they are required, whether for the shambles, the dairy, or the yoke, as well as on the climate and the quality of the land where they are to be kept. Different varieties have also their advocates, as much perhaps from mere partiality as from any peculiar intrinsic merit. In order to afford the farmer who is desirous of effecting improvement, but may perhaps not have a sufficient acquaintance with the subject, an idea of the requisite qualities of a good animal, whatever the breed, we may allude to what graziers and breeders call the fine *points* of an ox; and in this we prefer making use of a good authority—the Rev. W. L. Rham (article “Cattle”)—“There are certain forms and appearances, which are either anatomically connected with a perfect conformation of the body, and especially of the organs of respiration and of digestion, or which are constantly associated with the peculiar qualities of certain breeds, so as to be proofs of their purity. Of the first kind are—a wide chest, well-formed barrel, strong and straight spine, hip bones well separated, and length of quarter; all of which can be proved to be essential to the perfect functions of the body. Small and short bones in the legs give firmness without unnecessary weight. A thick skin, well covered with hair, ensures proper warmth; and its soft, loose feel indicates a good coat of cellular substance underneath, which will readily be filled with deposited fat. All these are indispensable points in an ox which is to be profitably fattened, and, whatever be the breed, they will always indicate superiority. Other points, such as colour, form of the horns, shape of the jaw, and setting on of the tail, with other particulars, are only essential in so far as experience has observed them in the best breeds, and as they are indications of pure blood. The eye is of great importance; it should be lively and mild, indicating a healthy circulation, with a gentle and almost indolent temper. An animal that is not easily disturbed will fatten rapidly; while one that is restless and impatient will never acquire flesh. Among the ancients, a deep dew-

lap was considered as a great beauty in an ox. In some of our best breeds there is scarcely any. The rump of the Freyburg cow rises high towards the tail; while a straight back, from the neck to the tail, is indispensable in a well-bred British ox.”

Among the improved breeds introduced into Canada, the Short Horns, or Durhams, are perhaps the greatest favourites, and are most extensively known. They are also probably the most profitable for general purposes. In colour, they are generally light, sometimes quite white. The horns of the pure-bred animal are quite short; sometimes, in the finest bulls, a mere tip on each side of the forehead. In the carcass, they combine every point which has been mentioned as essential to perfection. They are perfectly hardy, bearing all the variations of this climate quite as well as the native breeds, and returning, with fair keep, as great a weight for the butcher at three years old, as the common cattle do at six. A prejudice has sometimes existed against the Durhams, on the supposition that they were indifferent milkers; but the contrary is in reality the fact, the purest Durham cows having proved to yield a large quantity of milk, or, speaking technically, to be very *deep* milkers.

Next to the Short Horns may be classed the Ayreshires: they are indeed by some breeders preferred to the former, although their right to be considered as a distinct breed has been frequently disputed. They resemble the Durhams very much, except in point of size, and are hence sometimes supposed to have originated from a cross of that breed with some smaller variety. Although not so handsome an animal as the Durham, they have very good qualities, being very hardy, and excellent for the dairy or the shambles.

The only other improved breed well known in Canada is the Devon. In colour they are invariably a deep red, with a bright eye, fine head, small bone, glossy hide, and fine long horns. They are a very handsome breed, and, though smaller, are by some preferred to the short horns. The oxen are excellent for purpose of draught, being very active, and walking almost as fast as horses. The cows are of good quality for the dairy, the milk being of superior richness. The Devons fatten easily, and their flesh is of superior quality.

These are the most important British breeds well known in Canada; the other principal varieties, as the Hereford, Sussex, Leicestershire, Teeswater, and others, not being much known. It is to be hoped that ere long the importance of paying attention to the breeding of improved cattle will be more fully appreciated. There is now, perhaps, scarcely any section of the country in which a more or less well-bred bull, of one or other of the improved breeds, may not be found at no great distance; so that there is at least the opportunity of making improvement, if it is but made use of. Many of the common cattle of the country are of very good quality as milkers. By selecting the best of these, and obtaining the services of a well-bred bull for them, and paying greater attention in regard to proper care and feeding, the