

JERSEYS AND GUERNSEYS— GRADES.

The great annual sales of the Jersey herds have chiefly passed, and at declining prices, in the average, from the sales of a few past years—the consequence of throwing so many hundreds of them on the market at their tide of prices, and probably more than half the bull calves, not being gilt-edged in pedigree, and out of fifteen to twenty-pound butter cows, have gone to the butcher.

I observe that some of your readers think me opposed to the Jerseys. I am not. I believe in their useful qualities to elevate our common or native cows for dairy purposes into high grades, where they may be made quite as profitable as thoroughbreds, and at much less expense in rearing when pure-bred dams bear a high market value. But no dairyman can afford to buy thoroughbreds at two or three or more hundred dollars each to keep for simply butter-making, when he can rear high grades by the use of a pure, well-bred bull at the same expense that he can a common cow, barring the extra cost of bull service, provided he has not paid an extravagant price for him. Thus he can rely upon an average product of six or eight pounds of butter a week from them for the year—as much as the average of any *full-bred* herd of Jersey cows gives throughout the country, extravagant feeding in frequent cases excepted. The high-priced fanciers can indulge their tastes as they choose without further remark from me.

Yet for myself I have a choice in the Channel Island cows, based partly on information from the island where they have long been bred, and partly from many years' experience, both in England and the United States, of those who have bred and used them for dairy purposes. These are the Guernseys. My own experience with them has been short, and that only in young grade heifers. Four years ago I bought a promising bull, one year old imported inside of his dam (begotten in Guernsey), and she made 16 pounds of butter per week in her best season, although I am ignorant of what she was fed on to produce it. Bred to good grade Short-Corn cow, this bull produced for me about a dozen fine heifer calves, although, much to my disappointment, there were more bull calves from these cows than heifers, all of which went to the butcher at veal prices. The bull turned out badly after two years' service, beginning his use at eighteen months old. He then grew both cross in temper and lazy in service; so much so in the latter as to be worthless, although my herdsman could have managed his temper if he had proved a successful sire. As a result he was fed off and slaughtered at

three and a half years old. Liking the young heifers, and still in hope of further success, I purchased another young thoroughbred Guernsey bull, well descended from an imported cow, and have since used him in my herd to the same class of grade Short-Horn cows, with equally good results in his heifer calves, of which I now have nearly twenty in number, thrifty and promising in growth.

Now, my reason for breeding these Guernsey bulls to high-grade Short-Horns rather than to common cows, of which I have a few very good ones in my dairy herd, is that I wished the dams of my grade Guernsey to be good looking beasts; and as these dams were sired by a thoroughbred Short-Horn bull of good milking stock, I considered them a sure basis for producing good milkers than from common cows, however good they might individually be from the miscellaneous parentage through which they were descended, beside being more comely in form and appearance.

The heifers descended from the first bull have severally come into use, and proved without exception excellent milk and butter-producers, coming in at about two years old, and increasing to ages of four or five years, will prove first-class cows. A word as to their flesh in the beef line. With no extra food in either pasture or winter, a butcher looking over my herd in the pasture a few days ago, offered my herdsman fifty dollars each for a couple of half-bred Guernsey pregnant heifers for slaughter! Of course he was refused, as a hundred dollars each would not buy them. They are perfect beauties, inheriting the Short-Horn shape, with the predominating dairy marks of the Guernsey. This is, of course, a short experience, but so confident am I in its success that, if life and health be spared, I shall rear a herd of cows in their progressive grades of Guernsey blood to satisfy all my ambition in the dairy line. These young Guernsey grade cows, are, every one promising milkers, giving this summer, on grass pasture alone, equal yields of milk, in the average, with a much larger percentage of cream upon it than upon the milk of either of their dams or the common cows, although both of the butter classes are good ones, thus showing fully the superior value of the Guernsey blood for butter and cheese. They may not be so productive as cows of other larger breeds, in quantity of milk. I speak of them only for butter-making, as that is the use I want them for. My heifers, those having their second calves, in several cases have been difficult to dry off. I wish to give them full five or six weeks' rest from milking before the next progeny appears. Common cows frequently go dry for two or three months, of their own volition, before a successive calf is born.

In the English papers (partially copied in the *COUNTRY GENTLEMAN*), I find that several trials with a Guernsey bull cross on Short-Horn cows have been quite successful in breeding first class dairy cows, and I know not why we in America cannot follow their example with equal success. The Guernsey is of equal size to our common cows, quite equal in flesh and, graded with the Short-Horn, prove capital beef animals for the dairy.

In accordance with the adage, "A new broomsweeps clean," my short observation may be too hopeful, and prove faulty in the end, but from the information I have gathered, I think the Guernseys, although as yet few in number compared with the multitude of Jerseys, will soon establish themselves among the highest standards of our dairy breeds. Candor, however, compels me to mention a drawback in the Guernsey bulls. They are inclined to be vicious in temper. My first one proved so, and his successor is no better. A large, powerful beast, weighing 1600 pounds at three and a half years old, has to be thoroughly guarded in his use, and so secured as to be harmless to his keeper. I hear of others which are quiet in temper, as I hope a majority of them may be. The cows, on the contrary, are as docile as any others of whatever breed. My own young ones are remarkably so. I may remark, in relation to their rearing, that a few days after birth they are fed on skimmed milk, and grass in summer until five or six months old, and when dropped in the fall and winter months, on the same kind of milk, with cut hay, Indian meal and mill feed until ready for the spring and summer grazing. They are thrifty, and in excellent condition.

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—In the *Country Gentleman*.

(For the *Journal of Agriculture*.)

The subject of Thoroughbred Cattle has, of late, very properly engaged the attention of farmers almost everywhere.

The thoroughbred or bloodhorse, embraces one class of pure bred horses only; but among cattle, any pure bred animal is termed thoroughbred. In every case, however, an untainted pedigree is requisite, and though the different breeds of neat cattle must, in the first instance, have resulted from admixture, yet the breed having become once established, no admixture is thereafter admissible.

If any one should be fortunate enough, by crossing or mixing any of the present distinct varieties, in such a way that the peculiar features of the original stock shall be obliterated, and a perfectly unique variety established, producing its like in every instance, he will have accomplished the feat of introducing a *new breed*. Many a first-cross has been obtained, possessing qualities superior to