The Nebraska Farmer
January 1877

"Galloway Cattle"
and
"Laws of Breeding"

Courtesy Nebraska State Historical Society

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J. H. PEARMAN.

Nebraska City, Neb., Dec. 1st, 1876.

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At one time these cattle were highly prized as milking stock, but of late years they have been principally bred for beef.

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But few of these cattle have been bred in the United States, and there are none in Nebraska but those belonging to the Agricultural College.

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Mr. H. Culbertson, Superintendent of the college farm, from whom these figures have been obtained, informs us that these cattle have not been heavily grain fed, but, during the grazing season, received nothing but grass.

Those now on the college farm are good specimens of the breed in all respects, and are descended from some of the best ever imported into America. The experience of two years seems to show that they are peculiarly adapted to this climate. Their thick, mossy coat of hair, affords them more protection in the winter than the thinner hair of other breeds; and they are consequently hardier and stand extremes of cold better than others.

This mossy close texture of the hair, also, to a great extent, protects them from the annoyance of flies in the summer. During the time when flies were worst last summer, and all the other cattle half distracted by them, the Galloways were grazing with as much unconcern as though there was not a fly in existence.

Of course experience with these cattle has been too short in time, and too limited in extent, to justify a decided opinion on the question of their adaptation to this climate, but the indications are most favorable, and strongly suggest the propriety and desirableness of more extended experiments. S. R. T.

A Straw.

On the college farm, corn on fall plowed land, yielded fully ten bushels per acre more than that on spring plowed land of same quality. How does this tally with the experience of others?

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It is needless to attempt to cover up the fact that farming is not, as a rule, remunerative, either east or west. The prairie region is no worse than the eastern states in this regard. According to the report of the New Hampshire Board of Agriculture, there are in that State over 2,000 deserted farms so completely worn out and impoverished, that no one can be found to work them for the crop. The immediate gains in mercantile pursuits seem large in comparison with those of farming, but when we consider the risk all who buy and sell must continually take, it would seem the dictate of wise forethought to stick to the farm. S. R. T.

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But in examining horses be careful to remove all impediments to the free access of air.—*Chicago Field.*

Laws of Breeding.

PROF. JAMES LAW.

In the human family, character is the result of action, surrounding influences directly affecting the mind and manner, and becoming a part of the person so surrounded. According to Prof. Huxley, "An idea, or mental impression, passing to the brain, produces a change in the molecular particles of the brain substances. The way thus being broken, subsequent impressions of the same kind are more easily transmitted." There is an economy shown in nature, by which faculties not brought into use—that is, not developed—in time become extinct. Fish in the Mammoth Cave have no eyes. Dr. Joseph Thomas, speaking of Egypt, says: "Of all the trades pursued in this country, the most remarkable is hatching of eggs by the artificial heat of ovens, a peculiarity of Egypt handed down from ancient times. The poultry reared in this way are wholly without the instincts which relate to the care of offspring; the artificial method of hatching, therefore, when once resorted to, soon becomes necessary, and the natural system of incubation is totally superseded."

In an address before the Massachusetts Board of Agriculture, Prof. James Law, of Cornell University, set forth the following important principles for breeding animals:

1. A perfect development, and sound, vigorous health, constitutionally, especially in the generative organs, are conditions of fertility.

2. In the maintenance and improvement of a breed, the truth that "like produces like," that the reproductive germ will stamp upon the animal developed from it the characters of the parent organism, is the backbone of success.

3. We can, in a great degree, at will, produce variations and improvements in breeds, as, by abundant feeding, a mild and salubrious climate, a rich and healthy soil, moderate use, education, stimulation, or selection of desirable qualities; by disease or rejection of undesirable characters and properties; by soliciting the weight of imagination in our favor; by allowing the breeding animals to mix only with those of the stamp desired; by crossing less improved breeds systematically with males of a better race; and by crossing animals faulty or deficient in some particular point with others in which this point is developed in excess.

4. The herding of pregnant high-class animals with low-bred ones, and the resulting attachments between the two races, are to be especially avoided as occasionally affecting the progeny injuriously; strong impressions from a new or unusual condition of surrounding objects are to be equally guarded against.

5. If a valuable female is allowed to breed to an inferior male, she cannot be relied upon to produce pure-bred animals for several succeeding pregnancies. Through a strong and retained impression, through the absorption into the system of living particles (germinal matter) from the fœtus, or through some influence during pregnancy on the ova, then being most actively developed, the good or bad features of the first sire are perpetuated in the progeny of succeeding ones.

6. All breeds show a tendency to "breed back," or to produce offspring bearing the marks of their less improved and comparatively valueless ancestors; hence, individuals of this kind must be rejected from the best breeds, if we would maintain their excellence.

7. Certain races and individuals have their characters more fixed, and will transmit and perpetuate them in greater proportion than others with which they may be crossed. If their qualities are desirable, they prove highly valuable in raising other stock of greater excellence; if undesirable, they will depreciate the value of any stock crossed for many generations. That fixity of type, however, is above all a characteristic of those which have been carefully selected and bred up to a certain standard for many generations, so that in our best, longest established, and most esteemed breeds, we have a most valuable legacy left us by the successful breeders of the past, with which we may mould our inferior races almost at will.

8. While breeding continuously from the nearest relations tends to a weakened constitution, and the aggravation of any taint in the blood to sterility, these may be avoided by infusing, at intervals, fresh blood of the same family, which has been bred apart from this branch of it for several generations. Moreover, the highest excellence is sometimes attained only by breeding very close for a time.

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The Grasses of Wyoming.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE JOURNAL:

Having been a reader of the *Journal* for some time, I have noticed several articles on stock raising and the grasses of the Rocky Mountain ranges. I would ask you for a corner in your valuable *Journal* to speak my mind in regard to Wyoming as a sheep and wool-growing country, and I would like to state here that I can not agree with the parties whom "T. C. J." speaks of in an article in a former number of the *Journal*, in regard to the grasses of the western territories.

Now I have lived in this territory for the past four years, and so far have failed to find any place where the grass has been stamped out, except near some large corral, and that where there was sage brush growing. There was something said, some time ago, about the grass being all stamped out on a range used for sheep by Messrs. Homer & Sargent, who have located on the Laramie Plains, near the hills. I have been

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