

Dowry

Highfield, G'aporth.  
Hermes.

June 26: 1889

Dear Sir

I enclose letters (6)  
received by me from  
your distinguished father  
as I have observed in  
the Press that you are  
anxious to get the  
loan of them.

I also send copy of

my letter upon Shorthorn  
breeding to which he refers.

When I had the pleasure  
of visiting him he told  
me that it afforded  
him great satisfaction  
to have my practical  
knowledge of the  
breeding of cattle

in correspondence with the  
views he has expressed  
antagonistic to long continued  
close interbreeding.

Many persons, he said,  
has told him that he  
was wrong - that he  
merely propounded a  
theory - that their  
experience

Went against his notions.

Rehearsal and

your faultless

blowdowning.

To  
Rt. Darwin by

Down -

## SHORTHORN BREEDING AND TYPE MAINTENANCE.

To the Editor of "Bell's Weekly Messenger."

Sir,—For some months past there has been much discussion in your columns upon the subject of Shorthorn breeding, and opinions have been expressed antagonistic to the present fashion of in-and-in breeding, to the extent latterly practised in the case of "pure" families.

Intimately connected with these questions is that of type maintenance, upon which there is, I humbly think, a good deal of misconception just now, grounded upon a too general disposition to accept as true the views put forward by the advocates of "purity," and persistent in-and-in breeding, the upholding of which largely affects their individual interests.

Mr. Carr, in a letter you lately published, says it has been remarked that if a few persons busy themselves to cry down a certain bull, shrug their shoulders or lift their eyebrows at the mention of his name, they can in this way deter very many breeders from purchasing anything in the pedigree of which the ill-fated bull's name may appear.

If this be true, it is not difficult to account for the fact that the "purity" doctrine, in the maintenance of which so many are concerned, meets with considerable approval.

It cannot, however, be regarded as other than singular in these days, when reason is so anxious to assert itself, even against principles accepted for centuries as truths, that a mere fashion in breeding, which puts a bar to selection, and is opposed to the teaching of able naturalists, should be received off-hand as correct, irrespective of any inquiry into or study of the practice of leading deceased breeders, whose judgment is universally admitted.

An eminent living breeder, writing upon this subject some time ago, said, "Most men are influenced by neither reason nor experience, but entirely by prejudice or fashion, and a short and stereotyped code of opinion, which can be easily learnt and acted upon, saves them the trouble of using their brains."

Before proceeding further it may be well to state, that I regard the preservation of special types in our leading strains of Shorthorns as very important, and as a matter not to be slightly treated. Few things speak more favourably to the eye of a judge than the existence in a herd of a likeness all over. It is an evidence that careful breeding and judicious selection have been adopted, with a view to produce an uniform character or stamp which, in a considerable measure, constitutes the value of first-class animals.

But the notion that this type can be maintained

only by a system of close interbreeding is, to my mind, a grievous error too generally indulged in, to the detriment of the cause of true Shorthorn progress.

Not long ago, there appeared in your "Shorthorn Intelligence," the following observation—"The hypothesis long supported in this department of the *Messenger*, that the peculiar characteristics of a tribe are best preserved by occasional infusions of a new element to maintain constitutional stamina and prompt returns to the original stock, in a pure or diluted state, to produce the desired external properties, seems corroborated by the experience of the closest observers."

I have entire belief in the soundness of that opinion. I think that it is warranted by the experience of the past, and by the state of "pure" herds at the present day.

Will anybody say that the Messrs. Booth, Mr. Bates, or Mr. Bolden did not duly value purity of type, and did not take especial care to preserve it? Assuredly they well knew its importance; but their views as to its successful maintenance, exemplified by the manner in which they bred their cattle, were plainly in opposition to the tenets held and industriously propagated by the advocates of the so-called "purity" of our time.

They were not willing to sacrifice fertility, flesh, or constitution in any unavailing attempts to preserve type; they found that it was not necessary to do so, and accordingly effected the object without deteriorating their stocks.

Bates and Booth cattle being now the most valuable, the Shorthorn public is especially interested in all that relates to those strains; and it may, therefore, be well to make a short reference here to the manner in which the Kirkcubrighton, Kilsby, Walsley, and Springfield herds were bred by their respective owners.

This will, it is hoped, give to those who have not studied Shorthorn history some idea as to the course which these eminent breeders deemed best to adopt with a view to the maintenance of type in combination with the other essential qualities of good Shorthorns.

At the outset of his career, when inexperienced, Mr. Bates desired to breed in rather an exclusive manner, and to follow, in great measure, the example of close in-breeding set by the Messrs. Collier, who had taken up the Teeswater when in a rough unimproved state, and had collected animals few of which were related in blood.

He, accordingly, for some ten years after the pas-

chase of Duchess 1st at the Ketton sale, used Duchess bulls only in his herd, with the exception of Marika 4th and Second Hubback 1431.

The system which had been successful with the Collings was, however, found to be untenable in such a herd as Mr. Bates had formed, and he lost 23 calves in one year solely through lack of constitution.

Barrenness and abortion—common results of very close breeding—became painfully frequent, and there were only 12 females of the Duchess tribe bred in 22 years.

Mr. Bates was then compelled to get a new cross, and bought Belvedere 1768, whose blood he thoroughly incorporated with that of the Duchesses, and with the happiest results.

He subsequently tried hard, though without success, to induce Mr. Whitaker to let him have his bull *Frederick*; and he sent five of his best cows for service by the celebrated Norfolk 2377. At a later period Mr. Bates used bulls bred from the Matchless cow, so well known as the progenitrix of the Oxford tribe, and this blood he infused over and over, as he did that of Belvedere.

The Messrs. Booth in the same way took crosses from time to time, and mingled the new blood to a considerable extent with that of their old stocks. In the herd at Studley the bulls *Alison* 14 and *Plot* 496, bred by the Collings, Barley 1768, Arnhp 1838, and others were used. At Killyberk the use of Mr. Mason's Matchless 2081 was attended with success—such cows as *Parwell* and *Martini* being his granddaughters—while the old Cherry blood was introduced through Buckingham 3793, who proved an extraordinary sire.

Lord Lieutenant—a bull of Mr. Bates's—was another selected as a suitable cross, and his son Leonard 4210, well sustained the judgment of Mr. Booth as to that selection.

At this period the same bulls were used at Killyberk and Warley, and hence what has been said of the one herd may be held to apply to the other.

Somewhat later, Mr. J. Booth bought from Lord Carlisle a bull descended from the *Isabella* tribe, called Lord Stanley 2069, who had several crosses of other first-rate blood upon the Booth early pedigree.

The use of this bull, too, was happy in its results, as his daughters, *Birthday* and *Ladythorn*, were respectively first prizes at the Royal Shows at Southampton and Shrewsbury.

There is evidence in their portraits, which have been fortunately preserved, that they were of genuine Killyberk type.

Not only were these famous cows themselves winners, but they were in their turn the dams of winners. *Birthday's* daughters, *Gem* and *Genuine*,

are stated by Mr. Carr to have been extremely beautiful. He says—"Gem was described by Mr. Booth as having been much like *Queen of the Cosmos*, and possessing very sweet forequarters. It is said that Sir Charles Knightley—and England could boast no higher authority, nor one more studios of fair proportion—considered her the *no plus ultra* of Shorthorn excellence."

It may also be added that *Birthday* (a daughter of *Birthday*) and her calf were some of the very highest-priced lots at the Killyberk sale in 1832.

There were other well-known products of Lord Stanley, among which were prominent the winners at the Yorkshire Show, named *Alba* and *Modish*.

The latter was purchased by Mr. Barrow, the well-known Irish breeder, but there are, it appears, no female descendants of that bull now in existence.

Messieurs at Warley Mr. Richard Booth was taking fresh crosses by the use of *Water King* 1804 and *Expatriate* 1808, but it appears that he was not well pleased with their produce. There has been, and even yet is, a good deal of argument as to whether these crosses proved useful or the reverse. Indeed it may be, perhaps, regarded as doubtful whether the Warley herd at that particular time needed further new crosses, as it had a good deal of fresh blood pretty recently imported to it. The pedigree of *Crown Prince* 1807, will show this clearly enough—he had the blood of *Matchless*, *Muscatman*, and Lord Lieutenant, and was put to cows inheriting the same extraneous lineage. The fame of the produce is world-wide. His son, Lord of the Valley, whose dam also had the blood of *Muscatman* and Lord Lieutenant in her veins, was not only a Royal winner, but one of the greatest Booth sires in later years, and the celebrated *Windsor* 14013 was by *Crown Prince*, from a Buckingham cow, whose dam was by Leonard. Everybody will, I venture to say, admit that *Crown Prince*, *Windsor*, and Lord of the Valley were bulls of true Booth type, and furthermore that they transmitted this type to their offspring, and were very impressive sires.

Having thus in a cursory manner referred to the system of breeding and of maintaining type which was pursued by Mr. Bates and the Messrs. Booth, it will now, perhaps, be desirable to examine likewise the practice of Mr. Bolden, of Springfield Hall, because his name also is intimately associated with the breeding of first-class Shorthorns, and his judgment is widely respected.

I hope to show that Mr. Bolden, like the great breeders previously named, bred from different strains, and that the infusions of fresh blood proved advantageous.

At the sale of the Kirklington herd, he bought a grand cow of the renowned *Duchess* family—

Duchess grist—which bred at Springfield, Grand Duchess and Grand Duchess 2nd, both by Grand Duke 2nd.

To these noble cows Mr. Holden used Cherry Duke 1878 and Prince Imperial 1899.

The former, as his name implies, was from Colonel Craddock's Old Cherry sort, and Prince Imperial was from a pure Booth cow of the Bates tribe. The produce which thus inherited fresh blood through these sires were not put to a pure Bates bull, but Mr. Holden elected to cross them with Grand Duke 2d 1878, which was descended on his sire's side from the celebrated Warlike cow Farewell, the ancestress of Mr. Booth's Crown Prince 2nd, as well as of the famous prize cows Hope, Charity, Faith, and other noted animals. It may be observed, in passing, that Duchess grist had also been put to Mr. Booth's Leonidas, but she unluckily bred a dead calf.

It was at this period considered by many that the owner of the Springfield herd was not adopting a wise course of breeding—that he was in fact spoiling his pedigree, and depreciating the selling value of his cattle. When, however, some years had passed, and the Grand Duchesses were publicly sold after Mr. Hagan's death, it should have been a person of dull intellect who could not have read in that event the triumph of the breeder's judgment, for the average was such as had never before been realized. Two years after many of these animals and their produce were again sold by auction, when Grand Duchess 18th, having the crosses of Grand Duke 2d and Prince Imperial, fetched the highest price ever paid for a female Shorthorn up to that date, viz., \$300 ga.

It is hoped that the foregoing remarks will have explained sufficiently for present purposes the broad and successful course followed by those whose judgment as breeders is now so highly esteemed, and will have shown that it was their habit to take new crosses and then return to the original stock, generally in a diluted state. Furthermore, there are two points deserving of special attention, which have been brought to the knowledge of Shorthorn breeders by the proceedings of these "skilled artists" in the pursuit. Firstly—that although Bates and Booth cattle have different types, such difference was, by the exercise of Mr. Holden's judgment, concealed in the animals bred at Springfield; and, secondly, that the blood of Mason's Matchem and that of the Hartford Old Cherry were successfully used in crossing Bates and Booth stock, and "nicked" well in both cases.

Yet notwithstanding all these facts, we are now told that it would be a mistake to endeavour to follow in the footsteps of these breeders of a past

time, and we must breed in-and-in from a few families for evermore, and not venture to take any blood outside these, lest we should destroy the type.

This type appears at present to be regarded by many as a thing possessing a sort of mysterious existence and created by (so to speak) medicinal breeders, in a manner as it were unknown to men of our time, and utterly beyond our comprehension. Can anything be more absurd than this, seeing that we have got many volumes of Coates' Hard Book and several works of an historical character, all showing us how those breeders arrived at certain results by taking fresh crosses with that sound judgment for which they were remarkable. But now-a-days people talk of altering type, as if it were irrevocable, and even of destroying type by importing new blood, as if it were proposed to cross a Shorthorn tribe with an animal of another distinct race. Enough has already been said to prove that there are no grounds for this modern theory; still there can be no doubt that such views are to a considerable extent participated in, especially by young breeders, and that as a rule the owners of "pure" strains feel anxious that these opinions should remain unaltered. Indeed, the words of our great poet would seem to apply to these latter when he speaks of that "Fear of change which plagues monarchs"—for they are positively afraid to make any change or attempt any innovation upon the fashion which prevails at the present time, and commands its followers to support and maintain "purity" at any cost. Nor can we blame them much for this, for we should remember that we all generally see things connected with our own interests very confusedly, and that our mental vision is impaired on many occasions, so as to render our opinions of little value. Still it is desirable that upon so important a question as that of type-maintenance in our best Shorthorns, so late theories should be allowed to hold possession of the public mind; it is necessary for the benefit of the community, and, as I humbly suppose, for the interest of the Shorthorn breed that the naked truth should become apparent.

No doubt any theory such as that named, the potent existence of which depends upon men's reason and judgment being kept firm, must be crossed, and must eventually perish; but it may last long enough, unless arrested and exposed, to do enormous mischief, and to effect the extinction and deterioration of the great old Bates and Booth tribes, of which we have now so few animals remaining.

Erroneous views upon breeding and maintaining type would appear to have received support from expressions of opinion on the part of Mr. Richard

Booth in his latter years—when his splendid success had given immense weight to anything he said.

Mr. Carr's history tells us something of this, but it must be borne in mind that the great success of the Waraby herd was achieved by the adoption of different principles, and of a different system of breeding to those latterly approved by Mr. B. Booth.

We must reconcile this by making ample allowance for the weakness of old age, and for the vanity which made it irksome to seek new blood from the herds of rival breeders. It is equally our duty to bear gratefully in recollection the eminent services rendered by the late owner of Waraby, and in reviewing his career, as well as that of other dead Shorthorn breeders, we ought to keep before our minds the expression of the Roman satirist,

*— Nam vitæ cæcæ est hæc: optare se est,  
— Quæ vitæcæ optatur.*

April 26th, 1871.

I fear this letter has run to a very unreasonable length, and I shall now end it by stating the conclusions, which, in my opinion, must unavoidably be drawn from a study of the practice of great breeders.

First, that no eminent early Shorthorn breeder has ever been able to keep up his herd for a long period without taking a cross.

Second, that the great breeders possessed herds having special and distinctive types.

Third, that they repeatedly introduced fresh blood.

Fourth, that they maintained these types notwithstanding.

Fifth, that never were their animals better than when the influence of fresh blood was considerable.

I am, Sir, yours, &c.,

A FRIEND TO SHORTHORN BREEDERS.

*J. D. Manning*

*J. D. Manning*

