

THE RED POLL.

A BREED WITH POTENTIALITIES.

THE Red Poll, or Norfolk or Suffolk Poll as they were formerly termed, are one of the most interesting races of British cattle. Opinion is divided as to their origin and antiquity. By some the breed is regarded as indigenous to the district it now occupies in England, where the Suffolk Polls, or Duns, have existed from time immemorial. One writer has traced the breed from the time of the Norman invasion, while others believe that it sprang from Galloway Poll cattle introduced in the eighteenth century, probably soon after the Union of England and Scotland, when numbers of cattle were driven every year from Galloway and elsewhere from the south of Scotland into Norfolk and other parts of England. Again, a Norfolk authority—while admitting the probability of the Galloway Polls in the main being their progenitors—claims part of the credit of the breed's origin for an old native race which existed previously in East Anglia. This much, however, is certain: that the Red Polls are improved editions of a breed known to early writers for their deep-milking qualities, while being credited at the same time with a capacity to furnish, under good feeding, excellent-quality beef. Red Poll cattle have in the past been more remarkable for their milking than for their beef qualities, and at the present time there are individual Red Poll cows of such a distinct dairy type that the possibility of making these cattle highly profitable milking-stock by breeding according to a pedigree of performance is most encouraging. It is impossible to supply definite information as to their milking-capacity, owing to very few herds having been systematically tested. But many cows are credited with giving annual yields of 10,000 lb. of milk, testing in the neighbourhood of 4 per cent. of butter-fat.

At the last London Dairy Show the winning Red Poll cow gave, under the adverse show-yard conditions, 136 lb. of milk in two days, the fat-percentage ranging from 2.72 to 3.34. The second-prize winner gave 96 lb. in the forty-eight hours, the test ranging from 4.40 to 3.87 per cent.

The thirty-five cows in the Tring Park herd of Lord Rothschild gave in one year a milk-yield of 249,078 lb., an average of 7,116 lb. The fat-percentage is not furnished.