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Shutting Out Scrub Horses.

Cable despatches from Pretoria, South Africa, state that the supply of army horses is still lamentably short of the demand, and scarcely a single column can place its full mounted strength in the field. The demand for Canadian remounts, which our farmers have demonstrated their capacity to produce successfully, is therefore likely to continue brisk. Fancy driving or saddle horses and heavy drafters bring good prices, so that horse-breeding is once more on a profitable basis. The horseless-carriage fad, of which horsemen were once apprehensive, failed to materialize, and the bicycle craze is already rapidly dying out. We question if ever the outlook for horse-breeding was better than at the present time, good brood mares being about all that is needed to fill the bill of our special requirements, stallions being imported in fairly satisfactory numbers from Great Britain. The one menace to the industry in Canada to-day is the flood of undersized trash, sometimes called bronchos, from the far Western States, which our absurdly low customs tariff allows to pour into the country. They are not only small, but, as a general rule, vicious and intractable, and used as brood mares will most certainly perpetuate their bad qualities, inflicting untold injuries, from which our horse interests will never altogether recover. Every member of the Dominion Parliament now assembled at Ottawa will see that something must be done to preserve this great industry from this plague introduced by Western speculators. Under reciprocal arrangements, properly pedigreed horses for breeding purposes pass duty free between the U. S. and Canada, but on all others the Canadian tariff is 20 per cent. Of late years, a good many of this Western horse truck has been simply shot and turned into sausage or fertilizer to make room for the more profitable cattle on the ranges, so that they are picked up at \$5 or \$10 per head and run into Canada at a mere bagatelle in the way of duty. The United States, on the other hand, impose a duty of \$30 per head on Canadian horses up to \$150 in value, and over that valuation charge 25 per cent. ad valorem. This is an altogether jug-handled sort of an arrangement, and the Canadian horse tariff cannot be rearranged any too soon if the industry is not to be destroyed. Such horses are not wanted at all in

this country, but if their importation cannot be prohibited entirely, the levying of a \$30 duty would have a wholesome restraining effect, and being simply adopting the American rate, our neighbors cannot surely complain. Our tariff is not like the laws of the Medes and Persians—unchangeable. It is an instrument for raising revenue and promoting our industries by going either up or down, as circumstances may determine. For instance, we admit corn free because to the farmer it is a necessary raw material for our main reliance—stock-feeding—just as iron is to a manufacturer. Then, since we do not want our horse-breeding interests damaged beyond repair, why not shut out the little Western scrub by the plan suggested above?

The Late Thos. A. Browne.

We give in this issue an excellent portrait of the late Thomas A. Browne, whose death, on Feb. 20th, was announced in the last issue of the "Farmer's Advocate." He was born in London, Ont., on May 26th, 1853, being a son of the late ex-Ald. Thos. Browne. As secretary for many years of the Western Fair and of the Ontario Poultry Association he developed great executive ability, and for the last three years of his life he proved to be the most efficient postmaster in the London office. For his many qualities, frank and genial disposition, as well as for his business capacity, he was a most highly esteemed citizen, whose death was a great loss to London, to the Methodist Church, of which he was a member, and to his family.



Photo by Frank Cooper, London.

THE LATE THOMAS A. BROWNE.

Rural School Centralization.

A writer in the Forum, referring to a subject which has been discussed recently in several issues of the "Farmer's Advocate," cites a case of centralizing rural schools in the township of Buffalo Center in Iowa. The system was changed in 1895. For the year ending September, 1894, the township maintained six district schools for six months, with an average daily attendance of 90; for the year ending September, 1900, eight teachers were employed nine months; average daily attendance was 290. In 1894 the total expenditure for all school purposes was \$5.03 per pupil per month; in 1900 it was but \$2.31. Not only has this centralization given rural children a graded school in charge of well-qualified teachers, with a school year increased fifty per cent., and at much less cost, but it has made the pupils more punctual, has brought the attendance from 90 to 290, and has had a tendency to hold the larger boys in school. Speaking generally of the benefits of consolidation, the writer says: "Though they would be unwilling to admit it, many rural taxpayers would more readily adopt a plan to lessen the expense of schools than one to improve them. But when the same plan improves the schools, lowers the tax rate, and raises the value of real estate, the taxpayer ought to support it. In a large number of cases, outlying farms that had been left because parents wanted better school advantages, have been re-occupied—at an increased valuation—since the consolidation of schools has been accomplished. Land has sold more readily and at higher prices. Parents who intended to leave the country for the city have often been retained because the city's best blessing was brought within their reach."

HORSES.

The Mare and Her Foal.

As the season in which the majority of mares give birth to their young is approaching, a few words regarding this important function may not be out of place. As the period of gestation nears its termination, the prospective dam should be carefully looked after. She should be liberally fed on good clean, wholesome food, it being remembered that she has not only herself to nourish, but also an almost fully-developed fetus; and while it is not well that breeding mares be very fat, they should be in good condition; hence, the amount of food given should be greater than for an unpregnant mare doing the same amount of work. As regards working the breeding mares, experience teaches us that the mare that has done regular work or got regular exercise during pregnancy produces a stronger foal than the one that has been pampered and has spent the months of gestation in idleness. The work should be regular, and light; work that requires excessive muscular or respiratory exertion should be avoided. If she be of the lighter breeds, and we expect to produce a foal that will be fast at any gait, I think it is good practice to allow her to go short pieces, say one-eighth of a mile or less, at top speed occasionally, as there is little doubt that the habits of the dam during pregnancy are to a certain extent inherited by the progeny, and short spurts of speed have no evil effect on the dam until the advanced stages of gestation. It may be asked then, if breeding draft mares, why not ask them to occasionally move very heavy loads during pregnancy? This is dangerous, as the excessive muscular exertion has a tendency to produce abortion. In addition to good food in proper quantities, and regular exercise, the mare should have free access to water of first-class quality. As the period of parturition approaches, the work or exercise should be decreased, but not entirely suspended. I have known brood mares on farms to be worked on the plow or other farm implement until symptoms of immediate parturition were shown, and then to be unhitched and give birth to a foal in the field, and in an hour or two the little thing follow its dam to the stable. Still, I do not consider this good practice. For at least a few days before parturition, she should not be asked to perform steady work, but should have regular exercise in the yard or lot. She should be carefully watched. There is a somewhat popular opinion (I might say superstition) that it is unlucky to watch a mare when about to foal, but, fortunately, this idea is gradually becoming unpopular, and there are many reasons why it is wise to keep careful watch. This is the most critical period in the life of the offspring, and often also of the dam, and a little carelessness on the part of the owner or attendant now may be followed by the loss of one or both. If the act (which is essentially a physiological act) be performed in a normal manner, no extraneous interference is needed, but, unfortunately, it is not seldom that conditions are such that human aid is required. Obstacles which are removable, or malpresentations which may be rectified, may prevent themselves to retard or totally prevent delivery. The fetus may be born in unruptured membranes, and if not relieved will suffocate; the umbilical cord may not become disconnected; the dam may be lying so close to the wall or other obstruction that delivery cannot take place, or she may be vicious and lack maternal instinct, and, if not prevented, injure or destroy her foal. In fact, there are many reasons why she should be watched. For at least a few weeks before she is expected to foal she should have a nice clean, roomy box stall, in which there are no mangers or boxes. The stall should be regularly cleaned and a little slacked lime scattered on the floor every day and clean litter given. As the symptoms of approaching parturition (such as the abdomen becoming more pendulous, and as a consequence a falling down of the muscles of the croup and back; often the appearance of a little inspissated colostrum, generally called wax, on the teats; a swelling of the vulva, and particularly an uneasiness and a more or less excited and anxious expression) appear she should be carefully watched. The person to whom she is intrusted should be one of good judgment, and the greater his knowledge of the function about to take place the better. Certain preparation should be made. He should have at hand a knife and a piece of strong soft cord, in case he might be required to ligature and sever the umbilical cord, and he should also have a small bottle of a solution of corrosive sublimate 1 part, water 500 parts. If the mare be nervous, as is sometimes noticed in primipara (mares producing their first foal), and the presence of an attendant appears to irritate or increase the nervousness, he should keep well out of sight, but at the same time be able to see what is going on. He should not be too quick to interfere, should