

of this very important industry, and some of the weak features of the importation part of the business, but have said sufficient, I hope, to awaken some interest in this very important branch of the farming business. HENRY D. KEWLEY, Lambton Co., Ont.

### The Selection of Sires.

To the thoughtful man who has given considerable attention to the problem of breeding, the selection of a stallion to which he will breed his mare or mares is a more or less serious question. Of course, when a mare is pure-bred, there should be no hesitation whatever in regard to the breed of the stallion, but his individuality should be carefully studied, as the selection of a sire, even when both sexes are pure-bred, should be largely influenced by the individuality of the mare. The point becomes more complex when the mare is of composite breeding. When the mare is large and heavy, approaching the draft type, with one or more crosses of some of the draft breeds, it certainly is wise to select a sire from the draft breeds, choosing, when possible, that breed of which the mare possesses some blood, but at all events a pure-bred sire of some recognized draft class. Then there are many mares that cannot be said to belong to or approach in general characteristics any recognized class; they are simply good, useful animals, with no well-marked characteristics or peculiarities that indicate their breeding. When a man decides to breed a mare of this kind, the selection of a sire is somewhat difficult, and to a certain extent will be influenced by the class of horse he is desirous of producing, as there are many mares too small to be bred to a draft stallion, that give reasonable promise of producing a useful colt if crossed with a good sire of any of the lighter breeds. If the mare be of fair size and quality, her appearance indicating that she has some hot blood, although we may be unable to trace it, the selection of a sire will depend upon what we want to produce. If we want to breed saddlers or hunters, we must select a Thoroughbred sire; if, on the other hand, we wish to produce roadsters, we select a Standard-bred; if we want heavy harness or carriage horses, we will choose a Hackney or Coach sire. If the prospective dam, while being too small to cross with a draft sire, shows an evident absence of hot blood, there is only one choice, and that is the Thoroughbred. He is the only sire that has sufficient prepotency to overcome the coarseness or cold-bloodedness (if we may use the word) of the mare, and impart to the progeny sufficient energy, quality and ambition to make him a useful light horse. Many serious errors are made in breeding by mating mares of this description with sires of either the light or heavy harness classes. How often do we notice instances when a man with a mare such as described wants to produce a roadster, and breeds her to a Standard-bred; or wanting a carriage horse, selects a Hackney or Coach sire, the progeny in either case being, with few exceptions, a disappointment and often a non-descript. Mares of mixed breeding must have considerable hot blood to give satisfactory results when crossed with sires of the lighter breeds, other than the Thoroughbred, and even here too violent crosses should not be attempted. In fact, one important point a breeder must always keep in mind is to avoid violent crosses. We are strongly opposed to the use of any but a pure-bred sire in any case. As already stated, when the mare is pure a sire of the same breed should be chosen, but, as is the usual case, except with large breeders, when the dam is of composite blood and an impure sire is used the progeny must, as a consequence, be more mixed still; hence, it is always wise to breed to a pure-bred sire. Fortunately, this is usually done; the most frequent exceptions being in the use of carriage sires, many of which, while good individuals, are impure, and, as a consequence, have not the necessary prepotency to be valuable as sires. We think it is a mistake to use in the stud any sire that is not registered in some recognized studbook of his class. A man wishing to breed one or more mares often breeds to a stallion belonging to a friend, because he thinks he should patronize his friend. In the selection of a sire, friendship should not be considered, but the selection be governed by the points already noted. Having decided upon the class of sire that should be chosen, we must not breed to him simply because he is of that class, but carefully consider the mare. If she be just about what we wish to produce, we should select a sire as near to her type as possible, but, as is usually the case, she does not quite come up to our ideal, and, therefore, we should select a sire that is strong where she is weak, or light in the points where she shows hyperdevelopment. If she be too rangy, breed to a very blocky sire; if, on the other hand, she be too blocky, select a rangy sire. If she be too short and upright in the pasterns, select a sire that is long and quite oblique; while if she be too long and oblique, select a sire that has rather the opposite conformation. It is not always possible to exactly suit ourselves in all points,

but we should make the best selection possible out of the sires that are obtainable, always, of course, being very careful to select a horse that is absolutely sound, so far as diseases that have an hereditary tendency is concerned, such as blindness from cataract or amaurosis, heaves, roars, ringbone, sidebone, spavin (either bog or bone), and, in fact, all bone diseases, navicular disease, buttle, shelly hoofs, deep, narrow heels, etc., etc., and also being careful to not breed to a sire that has any well-marked undesirable characteristics of gait, manners, temperament, etc. "WHIP."

### Prohibition of Docking.

A bill having for its object the prohibiting of docked horses winning prizes at exhibitions in Ontario, and ultimately to entirely discountenance docking, was recently introduced into the Local Legislature of Ontario. It was claimed by speakers supporting the bill that the practice of docking was barbarous, unnecessary, and, therefore, unjustifiable. Opponents of the measure ridiculed the idea of docking being barbarous, or even painful. With a few exceptions the different members of the House viewed the purport of the bill in much the same light as other matters of a political nature are viewed, and as the measure did not appeal with equal force to the humane members on both sides of the House, it was "referred to the agricultural committee" after its introduction for the second reading.

The matter, however, was of sufficient moment to excite a certain amount of curiosity relevant to the practice of docking. Horsemen know to what extent docking improves the appearance of a horse, according to present ideas of appearance, and are loath to sacrifice this advantage without justification.

As a rule good horsemen are humane, and the term "docked horse" is synonymous with a "well-kept horse." The barbarity of the practice, or otherwise, simply depends upon the age at which the operation is performed and the skill with which the operator acts. Several segments of bone can be removed from a young colt's tail with scarcely any pain or inconvenience to him, but to an old horse, because his bone is harder, his joints closer knit, his muscles of the tail better developed, and his skin tougher, the operation is accompanied with more or less pain, and, especially so if the tail is "nicked" at the same time. The severity of the pain, however, is slight compared to that suffered by cattle when dehorned.

People with a utilitarian turn of mind will naturally see little justification for docking, but the decrees of fashion, both for man and beast, ignore many principles of utility. The majority of people who set the fashions in horsedom demand a docked horse to-day; to-morrow they may be searching for long tails. Some years ago the equine beauties dared not appear in society without their ears cropped, to-day a horse appearing in good company without a full complement of auditory organs would be severely ostracised. Victims ourselves to the iron hand of fashion, we extend our misfortunes to the lower animals, and find company with the horse. As we get older we may get wiser—let us at least hope so—and when that time comes there will be no difficulty in restricting docking.

Mr. James R. Bain, Muskoka, says: I am well pleased with it. It is full from cover to cover of valuable information.

## STOCK.

### Canada and St. Louis Fair.

To the Editor "Farmer's Advocate":

Sir,—Permit me space for a few remarks re the action of the Government in connection with the St. Louis Fair. While we as Canadians are opposed to the regulations of the United States Government, which prevents us from taking pure-bred stock into that country and selling it without paying duty, or that the St. Louis Fair Board refused to accept some of our herdbooks, and other small grievances, I ask are these sufficient reasons for our Government refusing to make a national exhibit of live stock at St. Louis? I contend that the World's Fair at Chicago did much to advertise Canada as an agricultural and pure-bred stock country, our winnings resulting in good sales to our breeders and farmers. We had Canadians at our back, and we were proud of our live-stock men, who brought honor to our country. Is it, I ask, any good reason, because the Shorthorn breeders refused to show, that the Government should refuse to make an exhibit? I do not believe one of them intended showing, no matter what the regulations were (I mean those who passed the resolution at the Toronto meeting in November). Another reason given was that certain breeds of sheep and pigs, which are largely bred in Canada, had not been given equal prizes with other breeds. Now, sir, what has happened? The St. Louis board, on having their attention called to this, raised the prize-list of the sheep and pigs in the classes in question, and according to the report in your issue of Feb. 11th, all Canadian herdbooks have been accepted that the Government asked, which leaves no great grievance to Canadian exhibitors, except the matter of duty. Would it not have been wise for our Government, if a national exhibit were made, to have paid the duty on all animals they selected from the different herds, that we might compete equally in the matter of sales with American exhibitors? It is, in my opinion, a small matter for our Government to kick about. At the Dominion Sheep-breeders' meeting in Toronto, the resolution which was passed, I believe, was concocted by the Dominion Commissioner of Live Stock; if not, certainly by men who did not intend to show at St. Louis. On account of bad weather and roads, but a handful of breeders were present, or I do not believe that resolution would have passed. In Mr. Campbell's letter, he advocated holding the annual meeting at Guelph, which many of the breeders wish, and what was the reply? If we persisted in holding it there we would lose the Government grant for the Winter Show at Guelph. Is it possible that the sheep-breeders and other breeders have not the right to hold their meetings where they choose? Are we servants of the Government and Government officials, or are the Government and Government officials our servants? I claim it is time we should assert our rights. If the Dominion Commissioner used the same tactics with the St. Louis management as he is doing with us, I do not blame them for the action they took. We hear that they had a row. There are always two sides to a question. By staying away from St. Louis we should not be hurting the American exhibitors—we would be injuring ourselves. I believe the live-stock men have the public at their back, though the Government is far from it.

Brant Co., Ont. JOHN B. LLOYD-JONES.



Prince Sunbeam (imp.) = 45216 =.

Topsman's Queen = 52536 =.

First-prize 2-year-old bull and 2-year-old heifer in Shorthorn class, Dominion Exhibition, Toronto, 1903. Exhibited by Capt. T. E. Robson, Ilderton, Ont.