

Canadian Live-Stock Journal

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All communications to be addressed STOCK JOURNAL Co., 48 John street south, Hamilton, Ont.

HAMILTON, CANADA, SEPTEMBER, 1886.

A few subscribers still in arrears will please renew their subscription at once. Please bear in mind that no names are removed from the subscription list until all arrearages are paid, as prescribed by law.

VITAL force is a most potent factor in the up-building of a single frame, as in the up building of a herd. Woe unto the herd, stud or flock, at the head of which a sire is placed deficient in this quality, as in such a case this prime essential becomes weakened in the offspring which are to be the herd of the future. Without it no herd will long retain that robustness of constitution so essential to best development. Vital force sends the school-boy bounding over the plain ahead of his fellows, and the lack of it leads to the weaker ones lagging in the rear. So, too, it pushes on the herd where it is largely present, ahead of those which lack it, in spite of the best efforts of the owners to the contrary. When stock has been long inbred, this prime quality is notably lacking, hence the dangers attendant upon such a course. Some advantages may and do arise from inbreeding, but it is a hazardous course that only master hands should attempt.

NOT many months ago it was our privilege to spend a few minutes at the farm house of Mr. A. Bishop, M. P. P. for one of the ridings of Huron. The conversation turned on feeding cattle. Mr. B. remarked to us that buyers very frequently called on him, enquiring where they were likely to get suitable shipping cattle; and usually the enquiry as to the character of the bull used, accompanied the question. On learning that a scrub bull was used in such and such an instance, it was the invariable remark, "Then we needn't go there." Whole sections of country in our own Ontario have never yet seen the faces of cattle exporters, and just because the scrub bull standard is still floating there. These sections are simply at the mercy of local buyers, but then they will have it so. In ten short years all this might be changed, if the

pestiferous little scrawny bulls were only steered at the proper time and good pure pure-breds used in their place.

It is a common practice with many to turn their working horses out on grass as soon as this is long enough for them to get a good bite. This practice, though some things may be said in its favor, is not a good one on the whole, where the horses are doing much hard work. The grass they get renders them soft, and less able to endure a heavy strain. It is better, usually to keep them in the stables and feed them hay and grain, as pointed out by our excellent contemporary, the *National Live-Stock Journal* of Chicago. We believe, too, that they are more cheaply kept in the stable than when on pasture, owing to the far larger return that a plot of ground gives in the form of hay. Much attention should be given at the same time to the conditions of the stable, as regards ventilation, regulation of light and darkness, and the provision by way of a bed. A working horse in the summer will lodge more comfortably in a darkened stable in the day, than in a pasture where he is continually annoyed with flies.

PERSONS who are not breeding pedigree stock are prone to make much, too much, of size, when they do begin. They usually have more regard to the superficialities than to the way in which this is arranged. There is no doubt but that size should be one object with the breeder, but it is by no means the only one, nor is it the most important. If size can be permanently increased without sacrificing symmetry, quality and vigor, then it is well; but mere size should always occupy a subordinate place to the qualities we have just named. Overgrown specimens are seldom the most perfect, either in the animal or vegetable kingdom. The butcher never pays so high a price for the large beast, if rough, as for the medium beast that is smooth, and in the show-rings the perfectly developed animal always pushes aside the ill-balanced giant standing beside it. On the other hand we should guard against lack of size. The smaller grains in cereals are not the best, any more than the largest, and so of quadrupeds of every class.

THE *National Live-Stock Journal* for July has a very sensible article on the "Requisite Treatment of the Stock Horse." The writer has in his mind thoroughbred horses, but his remarks will apply equally well to horses of any class. He gives it as a fact that most of the get of Rysdyk's Hambletonian of any celebrity were sired before the horse became so well known to fame, and before there had been so heavy a drain on his procreative powers. On the other hand he attributes the renown of Sultan in the stud to the fact, that until recently his services were limited. The writer is no doubt on the right road, and his criticism might well be extended to other classes of stock-breeding. When a heavy draught horse becomes famous as a sire, the drain that is made upon him is unreasonable, and so oftentimes in the case of the famous stock bull. Instances have been known where complete impotency has been produced, and where this has not resulted the stock has been of that character which only served to disappoint the expectations that had been formed regarding them.

A GOOD deal has been written of late in many of the agricultural journals of the day regarding controlling the sex, some of which has been sensible, and not a little of which has been nonsense. It is an item of knowledge that is as yet undiscovered by the wisdom of man, and therefore we warn our readers against being carried away by anything they may read

on the subject. Although no doubt governed by laws that are unfailing in their operations, those laws are yet unread—they exist on no statute book which guides the breeder in his operations. We have not very much faith in the expectation that this item of knowledge will ever unveil itself to the researches of men, for if known to them, we are by no means sure that they would make a good use of it. We are far from satisfied that it would be good for the race to have the power of determining which sex should predominate in coming ages. In the meantime no one should be so carried away by any theory on the subject as to allow it sensibly to effect his routine of breeding, unless it be him who can afford to experiment.

SOME breeders of pure-bred cattle seem to move in a circle. Their herds are no better to-day than they were ten years ago, and perhaps not so good. Now this should not be. It should be the aim and pride of every one to make constant advance. The reasons that induce stagnation may arise from various causes, and may not be suspected by the owners themselves; but in very many instances we feel quite sure that the weak point lies in the inattention given to the proper mating of the animals. To place an inferior or even an ordinary sire at the head of a large prize-breed herd because he can be secured cheaply, is a most unfortunate mistake. If the mistake is an error of judgment the party is indeed to be pitied, but if it arise from stinginess, he is to be blamed unsparingly. The individual having but few pure-breds may not always be accessible to the one of his choice, but any one possessing an old established stud, herd, or flock, may secure a suitable one for himself. If there is to be continuous ascent up the inclined plane of Canadian possibility in stock-keeping, the sires must be chosen with a jealous care.

AN old country exchange, in speaking of the probable American demand in future for the better classes of British pure-bred stock, says, that "until the herds, flocks, and studs of the United States, Canada, and South American Republics, are graded up to our high standard of early maturity and feeding capacity, there can be no permanent decrease." This has been our own view from the first, and we have more than once given free expression to it in the columns of the JOURNAL. We believe that this continent requires the infusion of this superior blood, not only to renovate existing herds, but to assist in building up new ones. Yet we would caution our importers against bringing out a class of stock in any way inferior. We want here only what is truly first-class, for every country has usually enough of what is ordinary. When stockmen import for their own use exclusively, they will of course do their best to get only what is first-class, but when they import to sell again, the temptation to bring over what should go to the local butcher, is very strong, especially when it can be gotten at a low price. Bringing over this class of stock not only hurts the trade in Britain, but tends to bring into disrepute the drafts that come from there. It is neither to the interest of Canada or Britain that such animals should leave old country shores.

Starving Stock.

Not very long ago a farmer named John Wilcoxson, of Broom Hall, near Chesterfield, England, a man said to be worth £60,000, was convicted of starving several of his cows to death, and was sentenced to three weeks' hard labor, without the option of a fine. The prosecutors were the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals. In this episode there is abundant material for reflection.