

The Horse and Stable.

Raising Horses.

Horse breeding is a branch of farming which demands knowledge and close attention. To conduct it profitably a farmer must know what kinds bring the highest prices in the market, what are the causes of such prices, and how those causes will be likely to affect the market in the future. Particular attention should also be given to the best and most economical system of stabling, feeding, and training, so that by lessening the cost of production the profits may be increased. And beyond all, great care should be taken that only the very best mares, should be used. The practice among many farmers of using worn out, broken down, and blemished mares for breeding cannot be too strongly condemned.

At present there is a great and in all likelihood there will be a continuous demand for heavy draught horses consequent on the large and rapidly increasing traffic of the principal Canadian and American towns, and it therefore behoves our farmers to give especial attention to this important fact. Thanks to the well directed energy and discriminating skill of many of our importing agriculturists, we have now in many portions of Ontario heavy draught stallions that cannot fail to exercise a marvellous influence on the character of the rising stock of the country, and we feel persuaded that our farmers generally will heartily support the profitable employment of these superior animals in the various localities to which they are introduced. Self-interest itself should strongly support such a course, for our American friends are continually scouring the country in search of first-class heavy draught animals, at prices ranging from two hundred and fifty to four and even five hundred dollars a-piece. Besides in most of our older farming districts deeper ploughing has become an inevitable necessity, and the light stamp of horses hitherto predominant throughout the country will prove very unsuitable for the purpose, and a heavier stamp of animals require to be substituted, a substitution that will be more generally acquiesced in, in consequence of the rapid extension of railways and the consequent diminution of long distances that farmers hitherto have been compelled to travel to market.

In choosing mares to breed from, the farmers should be careful to aim at perfection of style, constitution, and freedom from blemishes, and if he has no good mares of his own, will find himself amply repaid by purchasing one which combines these good qualities in as great a degree as possible. Whilst thus advocating the claims of the heavy draught horse, we must not be understood as deprecating the production of either blood or carriage horses. In their respective classes, and for special purposes, these animals are just as valuable as their neighbors of the heavy draught breed are in theirs. But the exigencies of the times demand an increased number of the latter stamp, and we feel no hesitation in recommending the great bulk of our farmers to give especial care and attention to the breeding of heavy draught animals whether for the purposes of the farm or for disposal to either home or foreign buyers.

Check-Rein on Horses.

Mr. Geo. T. Angell, President of the society for prevention of cruelty to animals, says, in the *American Farm Journal*, the following on the subject of check-reins: "If a man has a heavy load to push or draw, he lowers his head by bending forward, and throws the weight of his body against, or to propel the load—so does the horse under similar circumstances, if permitted. If the man's head were tied to a belt around his body so that he could not bend forward, he would lose the advantage of his weight, and could only pull or push with his muscles—so also with the horse or ox. If the man's head were

thus kept in a perpendicular position, he could not so readily see where to step, and would be more apt to stumble—so also with the ox or horse. No one in the saddle would thus tie up the head of his horse, and no one would expect a horse thus tied up to win a race. Nor would any one think it an advantage to put check-reins on oxen.

The *London Horse Book* says:—"The horse is often prevented from throwing his weight into the collar by a tight check-rein—a useless and painful incumbrance, introduced by vanity, and retained by thoughtlessness, amounting to cruelty. Few of the London cab-drivers use check-reins, knowing them to be inconsistent with proper work; and, when one is observed, it will invariably be found to be on some poor animal, whose weary and haggard appearance is attempted to be disguised by this implement of torture. The check-rein is, in nearly every case, painful to the animal and useless to the driver. Because it fastens the head in an unnatural position; and, as the horse's head and shoulder fall together, cannot be of any real support in the case of stumbling. When, from some defect in the animal, or other cause, the check rein is used, it must be slackened. Because, in addition to the easier position of the neck, a greater portion of weight can be thrown into the collar, especially going up hill, thus saving a great and unnecessary expenditure of muscular power. There is an important difference between a tight check-rein and a tightened rein, although not generally understood. The first is injurious, and cannot help the horse, while the latter is often useful. Because, the latter is a steady support to the animal's head, from a distinct and intelligent source—the driver; whereas, the former is only the horse's head fastened to his own shoulders. That the check-rein is inconsistent with the action of the horse's head, is clearly shown by the fact that when a horse falls it is always broken.

Professor Pritchard, of the Royal Veterinary College, London, says: "I would therefore say that instead of preventing horses from falling, the check-rein is calculated to render falling more frequent. Other, not uncommon results of its use are distortion of the windpipe to such a degree as to impede the respiration ever afterwards, excoriation of the mouth and lips, paralysis of the muscles of the face, etc. It is a useless appendage, supported only by fashion. I feel that if this were more generally understood, numbers of excellent persons who now drive their favorite with check-reins would discontinue to do so."

Mr. Fleming, Veterinary Surgeon of the Royal Engineers, London, says: "I think nothing can be more absurd than check-reins. They are against reason altogether. They place the animal in a false position. The horse stands with a check rein exactly as a man would stand with a stick under his arms, behind his back, when told to write."

Feeding Colts.

I give colts as many oats as they can at once eat up clean, feeding three times a day. They manage to take good care of about the following quantities in a day:—

	lbs. oats.	lbs. hay
Weanlings,	4	8
Yearlings,	5	10
2 year olds,	6	10
3 year olds,	8	10

Once a week they received a warm mash, of bran and oats, and once a week they also have three or four pounds of potatoes each, in lieu of the usual feed. They would get other roots—preferably carrots—if I had them. Of course these quantities vary slightly, with the animals, but they show the average feed of colts at Tugis farm.

My farmer neighbors look at them, and wonder at their size, power, and spirit, when there is no cause for wonder at all. They not only have warm, clean, and ample boxes to move about in, but they are carded and exercised every day. To this end, the youngsters are daily compelled to half-an-hour's gallop in a large yard, while the two and three year olds receive regular work upon the road. They are all handled from birth. It may be objected that the farmer cannot afford to feed so highly. I reply that he cannot afford to do otherwise. He does not keep his growing boy upon a short allowance, but on the contrary, is in a state of chronic astonishment to see the quantity of provender the urchin can stow away under his jacket. We all know that children eat more than "grown" people. Why should not the same truth hold good with other animals?

Experience tells me that extra colts may be raised with extra care. If I fastened a yearling in a box or a stall, and kept him without exercise all winter, I

should expect his legs to fill and "stock;" but I should attribute the disease to its proper cause, and not to the oats.

In conclusion I would say that at intervals we give sheaf oats, in lieu of hay; and during very cold weather, an occasional feed of corn-meal.—*Boling-broke Cor. Maine Farmer.*

Do Horses Reason?

For many years I have made the horse a subject of careful thought and study. At times I have been led to believe that horses have reasoning powers, and can understand and apply them in various ways. For the last two years, I have driven my mare nearly every day over the same road. About one mile from my home are two roads, one leading to the church, the other to the depot. Now, six days in the week I drive to the cars, and on Sunday to the church. At the point where these roads separate, I give my mare her head, leaving her free to make her choice, and on week days she will go straight to the depot, and on Sundays she goes of her own free will to the church; I never knew her to fail me yet. It puzzled me for a long time to learn how she should know any difference in days; and I have come to the conclusion that she reasons from facts—facts connected with every day life. On week days I start from my stable in a two wheel carriage; on Sundays I start from my house in a carryall, thus making an entire change, both in time, place and carriage; and from these facts she must be guided in her choice of roads. Many say this is instinct; if so, where does reason begin?—O. W. FISKE, in *Our Dumb Animals.*

HOW TO FATTEN A HORSE.—To fatten a horse that has fallen off in flesh is sometimes a tedious business—indeed, the work of months. The following suggestions to accomplish it, however, though without paterality, look to us as wise and to the purpose: Many good horses devour large quantities of grain and hay and still continue thin and poor; the food eaten is not assimilated properly. If the usual food has been uground grain and hay, nothing but a change will affect any desirable alteration in the appearance of the animal. In case oatmeal cannot readily be obtained, mingle a bushel of flax-seed with a bushel of barley, one of oats and one of corn, and let it be ground to a fine meal. This will be a fair proportion for all his food. Or the meal, or the barley, oats and corn, in equal quantities, may first be procured and one-fourth part of oil-cake mingled with it, when the meal is sprinkled on cut food. Feed two or three quarts of the mixture two or three times daily, mingled with a peck of cut hay and straw. If the horse will eat that greedily, let the quantity be gradually increased, until he will eat four or six quarts at every feeding. So long as the animal will eat this allowance, the quantity may be increased a little each day. Avoid the practice of allowing a horse to stand at a rack well filled with hay. In order to fatten a horse that has run down in flesh, the groom should be very particular to feed the animal no more than he will eat up clean and lick the manger for more.—*Farmer's Union.*

FEEDING HORSES.—The most natural feed for the horse is good pasture; the next is grass made into hay. But it must be grass made into hay after it is cut, not made or rpened while standing. On such grass or hay, when ill or at light work, a horse will keep in fair condition. If hard or fast work is desired, it will need, with such hay or grass, a suitable allowance of grain. If kept on dry feed a moderate allowance of carrots, in addition to other feed, will be a great help. Carrots not only promote the digestion of other feed, but they also tend to promote the general health and thrift of the animal. It is a question whether many farm horses are not grained too high—whether graining high and making them very fat in the winter, brings them into the best condition for work through the summer. Nature provides no grain for the wild horse, but nature does not make that horse work; men add grain to keep up the condition and strength while doing their hard work. Here, it seems to me, is the key to the rule for keeping horses, to wit: sufficient grain to keep them in condition when at work; but when idle, plenty of pasture, or of good, early cut and well made hay, should be all that is needed. If the hay is not good, or was cut late, an allowance of grain will be needed to make up its lack of nutriment. Horses should always be kept in good, smooth condition, but not over fat, and the feed should be gauged by this rule "F" in *Country Gentleman.*