

THE FARMER'S ADVOCATE AND HOME MAGAZINE.

THE LEADING AGRICULTURAL JOURNAL
IN THE DOMINION.

PUBLISHED WEEKLY BY
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JOHN WELD, MANAGER.

Agents for "The Farmer's Advocate and Home Journal,"
Winnipeg, Man.

1. THE FARMER'S ADVOCATE AND HOME MAGAZINE is published every Thursday. It is impartial and independent of all cliques and parties, handsomely illustrated with original engravings, and furnishes the most practical, reliable and profitable information for farmers, dairymen, gardeners, stockmen and home-makers, of any publication in Canada.
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out troubling about Latin names or carpels or segments, antennæ or cotyledons. Of what concern are all these, anyway, unless one wishes to follow up scientific research to some greater or less degree?

Far be it from "The Farmer's Advocate" to despise such knowledge. It is excellent in its place, but it is not for everybody, and is by no means necessary to the most uplifting, enjoyable and reverential companionship with nature. It is no more requisite to enjoyment of nature than a knowledge of physiology is necessary to admiration of the human face and figure.

To walk through the woods, absorbing through every sense and pore the cadence, the fragrance, the beauty and the inspiring, solacing charm of the Great Out-of-doors, is to experience a wholesome exaltation beyond the ken of city dwellers. This is true enjoyment of nature, and it has no necessary connection with botany or any other science.

When the strawberries begin to ripen, it makes one wish that he had a few rows in his own garden. There is no reason why every farm garden cannot contain sufficient of the small fruits for the use of the family. No fruit tastes quite so good as that which is picked fresh from the vines on your own place. The trouble is, when these fruits are out of season, one doesn't see the need of planting, and the planting season comes and goes without being heeded. If your garden doesn't contain the various bush fruits, strawberries included, place a mark on the garden gate as a reminder to be acted upon at the earliest opportunity this autumn or next spring, in the form of planting these fruits.

For all the rainy weather, it is surprising how little growth has been made on many old pastures. New clover seeding, on the other hand, has made very encouraging progress where there was anything to start. Probably insect injury is responsible for the poor showing on the old sod-bound wire grass meadows. Whatever the cause, the remedy is to break them up where practicable, and work under short rotation.

HORSES.

Avoid, as much as possible, breeding the mare when she is excited. Mares seldom conceive when bred in such a condition.

Lose no time now in getting the mare to the horse. She may not get with foal at the first service, and every delay means nearly a month.

Stallion owners should be careful that their horses are not overworked during this the rush of the breeding season. It would be better to turn a few mares away than to permanently impair the usefulness of the sire or run the risk of his failing to insure the mares bred.

The draft horse that moves straight and true at the walk, with a snappy movement of the limbs, is almost sure to go right at the trot. The walk is the gait from which draft horses should be judged, as it is the natural gait of the heavy animal; however, one must not neglect to see the animal at the trot, for defective action is often more marked then than at the walk, and any lameness which might be overlooked when the horse is walking becomes apparent when he is asked to move faster.

The rush of spring's work is done, and many of the horses have been turned away to grass, yet the trade in horses was reported by our Toronto market correspondent last week to have been the best which that market had seen for many weeks. This goes to show that there is a steady demand for horses outside of that occasioned by the rush of work on the land, and also is a very good indication that the horse's usefulness where heavy work is to be done is far from being a thing of the past. If present demand is any indication of the future of the horse trade, every farm mare should raise a colt next year, and so on and so on.

Local Horse Breeding Societies.

Farmers and horse-breeders who are so favored as to be situated in the heart of a district noted for the excellence of some one particular breed of horses scarcely realize the inconvenience the man in another section, and not so favorably situated, is put to in order to get his mares bred to a suitable horse. There are in Canada many districts which cannot boast of a really good sire of any of the many breeds of horses. Stallions of the right kind are scarce enough anywhere, but some districts in which no specialized horse-breeders or importers live feel the loss to a much greater extent than those who have access to a few good sires in the barns of the importers. A well-known Western horseman believes that if we followed the hiring system of Scotland it would tend toward the production of a more uniformly high class of horses in each locality, and doubtless it would. We have too much haphazard breeding. Stallions of entirely different type are used in a locality year after year, and very often the breed is changed as often as the type. This is not in the best interests of horse-breeding. No district can become noted for its good horses under such a system. Matched teams are very rare, and high-class foals are the exception, not the rule. One good draft breed, and one good light breed are enough for most neighborhoods.

If the horse-breeders in a certain section where good sires are not to be had would get together and determine just what kind of stallion they required for their mares (the breed should always be a pure-bred of the same breed as that of which the greatest majority of mares in the section are grades), and would form themselves into an association on the co-operative plan, much good might result. The association could appoint officers, elect capable men to select and purchase the needed sires, and arrange for their help and routes of travel. In this way, the amount of capital interested would make it possible for the association to purchase one of the very best stallions of the breed decided upon; whereas, where the individual makes the purchase, limited means often place the most desirable class of horse entirely beyond his reach. Think what it will mean to a section of country, say a township or half a township, in one of these districts where good sires are not known, and there are plenty of them, to start in breeding to the same stallion or stallions of one breed, and to gradually improve in this way their class of mares, until the output of work geldings and surplus stock from the locality becomes noted over a wide area. Would it increase the horse trade of the district? Would it prove a profitable investment on the part of those concerned? It looks like one of the best moves which could be made. Surely no district is so backward in horse-breeding that a few competent men could not be selected to pick out the horse,

If they didn't feel like relying on their own judgment, let them act in conjunction with a well-known, reliable horseman in making the purchase. If there were a number of these associations in the country, stallions could, when their fillies became of breeding age, be passed on from one to the other, and thus the good stallion's service could be worked to best possible advantage. There is no doubt but that too many scrub horses travel during the breeding season, and that too many types and breeds are used in most localities. Local breeders' associations would do away with much of this, and in its stead would gradually and permanently place a class of horses ever improving and ever tending towards closer uniformity in type, which could not help but attract buyers and be a boon to the horse-breeding industry. It costs no more to raise a good colt than a poor one, and every breeder should start right by using the best type of stallion, and the best type of stallion is made possible by a local breeders' association.

Working the Horse.

The horse, man's best friend, is not always subjected to the treatment his usefulness warrants. This is not always due to wanton cruelty, but often to a lack of understanding or carelessness on the part of the driver. It has been demonstrated time and again that certain drivers will do more work with a team, on less feed, and keep the horses looking better, than other drivers will on far more feed, doing less work. Why? Simpler better treatment. The work horse requires regularity in all things. He must be fed a certain quantity at a certain time each day of the week. He must be watered just as regularly. He must be curried and cleaned not once a week, but each day in the week, preferably twice. He must have regular hours of work, and a reasonably steady gait at which to do it. The smart walk is the easiest gait for the draft horse. Slow, sluggish, heavy-going horses make the load they are pulling a steady drag, whereas a good snappy walk does not tire them nearly so much. Heavily-loaded horses should never be required to trot, and the less trotting the draft animal does at any time, the longer will be his period of usefulness.

The horse can be taught to understand his driver only when the driver thoroughly understands his horse. Get to know your team. Study their peculiarities. No two horses are just alike in temperament, any more than are any two human individuals identical. Some horses are nervous and excitable, and require petting and talking to; others are slow and sluggish, and require a judicious use of the whip. Generally, however, the nervous horse can be taught to understand his driver's voice, and become quite at ease, while the slow animal will respond, also, to the right kind of retraining. Much jerking and entirely needless use of the reins could be avoided if teamsters would become more familiar with their horses and would talk to them more. By talking is not meant yelling or swearing at the team, but the use of a quiet, reassuring voice. Few horses will not do as they are wished if they understand what is required of them. Beating, jerking and whipping excites them, so that it is a much more difficult matter to teach them what you want them to do than if a little patience and petting were resorted to, instead.

Avoid overloading. Nothing discourages a horse more than to be hitched to a load which it is impossible for him to move, and to be whipped because he cannot move it. Many a horse has "balked" for the first time under just such conditions, and once a horse "balks," he seldom forgets it. Getting "stuck" does not make truer drawers of the team, but generally has the reverse action, and throws the horses open to serious injury from the strain of over-exertion. You cannot afford to needlessly ruin a valuable animal in this way. It would be far better to make two loads than do this.

Avoid overworking. Sticking too steadily at a heavy job under a blazing sun and in a hot wind is likely to cause the horse to show signs of approaching exhaustion. Very often this is mistaken for laziness, which is a serious mistake from the viewpoint of the horse. There is scarcely any excuse for such mistakes, as a lazy horse will show signs of his trouble when fresh almost as readily as when tired, whereas the willing worker seldom slackens unless tired. It is shameful to lash a tired horse; in fact, lashing at any time is not in the best interests of horse or driver. By all means, when the horse is tired, allow him to stand for a few minutes; and if he must do more work, give him his time, and he is much more likely to complete it without injury to himself than if he is over-urged. Too often the horse is expected to draw the same load at the same pace at a temperature of 90 degrees in the shade, as when the thermometer is below freezing.

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