

A Few Comments on Horse Stables

James Armstrong, Wellington Co., Ont.

The condition in which I find many of the horse stables in this country is a crime. It makes me wonder how men can expect horses to be strong and able for work kept in such dark, filthy places such as we frequently see. Recently when out buying cattle, I stopped at a man's place that I had not previously visited, and he suggested that I put in my horse. Such a stable! It was in a dark, damp basement. The floor of planks was half rotten, and every time the horse put a foot down you could hear the water and the filth seeping around beneath the floor.

And this stable is not an exception. I have been in many stables equally bad, and it has

air upwards, are much better than no system of ventilation at all.

LIGHT THE BEST GERMICIDE

The lighting of the stable is next in importance. We have windows four feet square taking up half the length of the wall; that is, there is four feet of wall and then four feet of glass. Light is the cheapest germicide that we know. Light also makes the stable much more convenient to work in and certainly much more pleasant for the horses.

These two factors, light and ventilation, properly attended to, will reduce to a minimum the horse diseases with which we will be troubled. Poorly lighted and ventilated stables suppress vitality and are conducive to such diseases as tuberculosis, influenza, distemper, and others too



"When the Frost is on the 'Punkin'"—Scenes Like This Suggest Thanksgiving and Pumpkin Pies.

not surprised me in the least that the horses owned by men with such stables always have something the matter with them, from the minor ailments to thrush and distemper. This last stable, however, has been the last straw that has broken through my reserve, and I have determined to send to Farm and Dairy a few of my ideas on stable hygiene.

VENTILATION OF FIRST IMPORTANCE

The first and most important point in planning a horse stable is to make provision for ventilation. Each horse requires at least 1,200 cubic feet of air, or the equivalent of a space 10 by 10 by 12 feet. Where no method of changing the air is provided much more air space than this would be required. For the sake of economy in work and in building materials, however, it would be better to plan on the minimum 1,200 cubic feet a horse, and install a good system of ventilation.

The system that we use in our own stable has given excellent satisfaction. The walls are of cement. The space left for two of the doors was made one foot wider than necessary for the door. A heavy stud was erected to support the door casting and the extra foot of space is occupied by a wooden shaft 12 inches wide and six inches across. The air enters this shaft on the outside close to the ground, goes up through the shaft and filters out into the stable through an opening at the top. A long shaft to the roof carries away the foul air. Our stable is 30 feet long, with one row of horses, and these two inlets and one outlet keep the air perfectly pure. Sliding doors over the inlets make it possible to partly close them in cold weather when the circulation of the air is more rapid. Cement tiles running through the walls, or windows that swing in, from the top throwing the current of

numerous to mention. Sunlight and fresh air on the other hand are great tonics and stimulants of health.

CEMENT MAKES THE BEST FLOORS

The flooring of the horse stable is important. We find that cement is clean and leaves no cracks and crevices for the breeding of vermin and disease germs. I do not understand why any sane-thinking man can expect his horses to keep in good health while right below the floor is a stinking mass of filth continually sending up bad odours and ammonia gas. Under the horses' feet we have been laying planks, but our experience in recent years has led us to believe that if the horses are kept well bedded, the planks are not necessary, and the stable would be that much more sanitary.

All the unhealthy stables that I have been in could be changed over this fall with little expense considering the great benefits that would accrue. A system of ventilation could be installed with a little labor and the stray lumber that is found around every farm. Any man with ordinary mechanical ability can lay cement floors. A couple of extra windows in the walls and a coat of whitewash would completely transform these old stables and their owners would be surprised at the extra health and vigor of the horses. The satisfaction that they themselves will get from working in such a stable would more than compensate them for the expense involved in remodelling.

There is no doubt but thorough underdrainage does much to help in the control of the sewer thistle. Where the land is properly underdrained it is not a more serious pest than the Canada thistle.—J. E. Howitt, B.S.A., Guelph, Ont.

The Making of a Dairy Cow*

J. M. Dickson, Oregon, U.S.A.

Once the dam is completely dry, nourishing feeding is in order. We are now killing two birds with one stone, the upbuilding of the unborn calf and the putting of the mother in the way of splendid performance for the approaching period of lactation. A diet of a rather laxative character is needed as the time of parturition draws near.

These points having been observed we may await the arrival of the calf with confidence that it will be large, in good condition and vigorous. We let the calf have two or three good pulls at the mother's side while it is being licked into shape; then a 24 hour fast. The calf is now in prime order for the feeder's finger. With gentleness and patience the calf will drink of its own accord the second or third time the milk is offered it. Two weeks of whole milk follows.

DILUTE RICH MILK

If the whole milk is very rich in fat it should be diluted with milk warm water to about a three per cent. basis. This prevents constipation and tends to a proper distention of the stomach, a very necessary item, a good middle piece being one of the strong points of the dairy cow. After two weeks a gradual substitution of skim milk for whole milk is in order till at four or five weeks the milk ration should be entirely of skim milk.

From the very first the calf should have a little sweet and fine hay. We follow each feeding of the milk with oats or oat chop, so that while its nose is still wet the calf is bound to get a taste of the grain. By the time the calf is five or six weeks old it will eat the grain ration readily. It is right here that I have found it hardest, in the animal's whole life, to bring the calf on in good shape. By the time the little fellow is three months old I have it going again as it should. We feed skim milk for many months if we can spare it. We don't let the hog pen interfere with the calf pen in this regard.

SOME FURTHER PRECAUTIONS

Winter raised calves make good use of roots at three months old and thereafter. Skim milk, oat chop, roots and hay and plenty of them will cause satisfactory growth. Clean, dry, sweet quarters, with freedom the greater part of the time, are essential to best results. Beware of the straw stack, windward side, leeward side, any side, with the inevitable accompaniment of chilling wind and rain. How I pity the skinny, shivering calf under such circumstances.

So the liberal humane treatment goes on for 12 or 14 months. All of the time the heifer is in prime growing condition, even fat if you like. When at this age the heifer may be bred, maternity arriving at 21 or 22 mths. of age.

OFF TO A GOOD START

The period of heiferdom is the most interesting one in the animal's life to the painstaking breeder. Brought up under such fostering care, with such liberal feedings, with such kindness and gentleness, the young cow is ready and willing to repay us many fold for all the outlay of time, money and care we have lavished upon her.

We are now to enjoy constant companionship for 10 or, it may be, 15 long years. It behooves man and animal therefore to maintain the very best terms of friendship. As man is the creature of habit, so is the cow. It is hard to over-estimate the value on her part of correct habit of feeding, of milking as to regularity and persistency, of gentleness, of docility. We have made ample provision for a good send off in this regard.

*Extract from an address by Mr. J. M. Dickson before the Oregon State Dairy Convention. Mr. Dickson is a Canadian who has made a great success of dairying in the State of Oregon.