

a hook. With this primitive but very effective tool he can rapidly draw the stalks into bunches of the proper size for sheaves. In operating, he throws his rude hook forward to its full length, and suddenly draws it towards him, each motion making a lurch. This he raises quickly from the ground, and with his hook by a few well-directed strokes, divests the plant of its leaves. He then binds his sheaf with its own stalks, and passes on to repeat the operation. Other labourers follow, and place the hemp into neat, close shocks of convenient size, securing the top by a neat band made of the hemp stalks themselves, after the manner of shocking corn. Here it is suffered to remain until the whole crop is thus secured as soon as possible, selecting clean dry weather for the operation. The whole crop is to be secured by rick-ing or stacking. The same rules to be observed in stacking as with grain, the object being to keep the crop secure and dry until the proper time for rotting arrives. In the latitude of Kentucky about the middle of October is the proper time. The crop must be retained in the rick or stack until the summer heats and rain have passed, and frost appears instead of dew. The whole crop is then removed from the rick, and hauled back to the same ground on which it grew, there to be spread in thin swaths for rotting; where it remains without turning until properly rotted. This is indicated by the fibres freely parting from the stalk, and the dissolution by the action of the elements of the peculiar substance that causes it to adhere thereto. This stage is only to be learned to perfection by practical experience; yet the novice must have some information to enable him to begin, and it is easily acquired by a little observation.

When the operator finds his hemp sufficiently rotted, the wooden hook is again brought into requisition for once more drawing the swath into convenient bunches. The hemp will have lost much of its weight; and can be bunched and shocked with less labour than at first; besides this last shocking, the binding is to be omitted entirely, the hemp is to be carefully and neatly handled, all tangling to be avoided, and placed again in shocks, and firmly bound at the top.

Then comes the last and crowning operation—breaking and dressing the fibre, or lint for the market. The peculiar break to be used, like the knife or hook for cutting, needs no description, being manufactured in the old hemp regions, at a cost of about five dollars each, and from long experience has been found perfectly adapted to the uses required. The beginner would save time and money by ordering a sample break, from which any carpenter can manufacture as desired. The crop is broken in this climate directly

from the shock in the open field by the removal of the break from shock to shock as fast as broken.

In Iowa, owing to the severity of the climate, it would probably be necessary to remove the rotted hemp to the barn, where the labour of breaking could be more certainly performed. The coldest and clearest weather is the best for this operation; in fact, excess of dampness in the atmosphere suspends this labour altogether. The breaking process is laborious, yet more depends on the skill than on the strength of the labourer.

I have endeavoured to describe the whole process as practiced by the best growers in Kentucky. The same mode will certainly apply to Iowa up to the rotting process. With her advantages, steeping in soft water is entirely practicable, by which she will produce an article of water-rotted hemp perhaps in no respect inferior to the highest-priced Russian, which is fully double the value of American dew-rotted, the only sort produced in this state.

The writer apprehends that the season is too short in Iowa for the successful growth of seed—a want easily supplied by the purchase of seeds grown in more southern latitudes—but no shadow of doubt exists in his mind that she can, at the very first effort, produce better hemp than any territory south of her. Time, he thinks, will demonstrate that Iowa, Minnesota, and Wisconsin compose the true hemp region of the American continent.—*Washington Report.*

#### HORSE PAPERS FOR FARMERS. No. 1.

BY A SPECIAL CONTRIBUTOR.

It seems to me that the Horse Question needs to be presented to farmers somewhat differently from the manner in which most of the excellent works on the subject set it forth; for, while those who make a special business of horse breeding, and even those who raise one or two colts a year for sale, are most benefited by the instructions contained in these works, they are not suited to all the wants of a farmer who regards a horse only as a part of the outfit of his business, or as a means of recreation,—who never sells a horse and would be glad never to buy one,—raising such as he wants and wearing them out in his own service.

I like to think of this sort of relationship between a farmer and his family, and the horses of the farm. It implies an affectionate fondness for the faithful animals which ensures their kind and considerate treatment, and the cultivation of an interest in them, which is one of the best parts of the education of a farmer's children, and which will do more than anything else to attach them to their

home—and to an occupation about which such interests cluster. Oxen—good natured dumb beasts though they are—are not especially lovable, and they always suggest the coming butcher; cows are better, but they are bought and sold without much regard for anything but dollars and cents; while the smaller animals and the poultry usually finish their career within a year or so. A horse on the other hand, which has been raised on the farm and ends his days in his breeder's possession, becomes almost a member of the family, and may follow its fortunes for a quarter of a century—growing up with the children and connecting himself throughout their lives with their most interesting reminiscences of childhood.

Taking this view of the subject, every farmer who is a farmer not alone from necessity, but from choice as well, should endeavor to have one or more horses that are fully identified with his farm as a home. He should raise them himself and should never fix a price on them for a dealer, nor regard them so much as a part of his commercial stock, as belonging to the permanent fixtures of his establishment.

Shortly after I moved into my present neighbourhood, a few years ago, I hired a neighbour to break up a piece of sod for me. His team was a pair of oxen with a horse on the lead. As they swung into my barn-yard from a side road, my attention was immediately attracted by the horse. As I walked toward him with an interested look, his owner jumped down out of the cart and came forward with a pleased air and asked what I thought of him. I eyed him carefully over, wondering how such a horse ever came to lead a pair of oxen, for he seemed to be in the prime of life and had better points than many a thousand-dollarer that I had seen in the city. His legs were fine and free from puffing, his ears were thin, well-shaped and active, and the whole air of his head was perfect. I followed him into the field and watched his work. He stepped off in a brisk knowing way, without any fuss, but with a perfect business-like gait, tossing his head now and then as though indignant at having to keep pace with oxen. As I was in want of a horse, I watched him more closely than I should otherwise have done, even with his decided attractions, and at length sounded my neighbour to get his opinion of him. He was loud in his praise, and, I began to think was paring the way for a large price. Finally I asked his age and was referred to his mouth, when I found to my great surprise, that he was a very old horse; too old for buying and selling to be thought of. However, to carry out the joke, I asked, "how much will you take for him?" "There ain't money enough on this farm to buy that horse,—that horse ain't never ben sold and he ain't agoin' to be; my