

## Stock Department.

## Vices of Horses.

Idle horses, or those not working very hard, are apt to acquire habits that are very annoying, as cribbing, weaving, pawing, dislike to go through a doorway, kicking the sides of the stall, &c. The first is considered by many unsoundness, as well as a disagreeable habit, and they would reject a horse, no matter how good, or ever so well suited to the business they wanted him to perform, if he possessed this trick. I do not look at it in this light, and apart from the annoyance of listening to the sound usually made by those addicted to the habit, I am not aware that it injures the animal. The idea that they "suck wind" enough to make them any more liable to colic or rupture of the intestines, is certainly false in all that have come under my observation. One of the finest "gentlemen's horses" I ever knew was a confirmed crib-biter. He was a large, brown gelding, nearly sixteen hands high, stylish and showy, had trotted in 2:28, could pull a waggon almost that fast, gentle and reliable in every place. If there was anything he could lay his teeth on he was sure to crib, yet always kept easy; would stand an immense amount of work, and trot long distances, never, to my knowledge, sick a day in his life. The last I knew of him, he was owned by a gentleman in Cincinnati, who valued him very highly for his many good qualities. When horses have once acquired this habit, I doubt if they ever forget it. By having a box or stall sealed up perfectly smooth they cannot get hold of anything, and few horses will crib if thus kept, though some press their teeth against the smooth side and accomplish it. There is a muzzle made, through which horses can pick up their feed without being able either to bite or get hold of anything with their teeth. It is made with two small iron bars, joined to the nose band of the halter, far enough apart to allow motion of the lips sufficient to pick up their food.

Weaving is another very perplexing habit, acquired from I know not what, and once learned I could never cure. Fretful, high-tempered horses are most prone to acquire it, and when at full work generally quit of their own accord. Some horses cannot be easy till they have pawed their bedding quite out of the way, leaving them a bare floor to lie on, soiling their clothes and hair in a manner not very agreeable to the groom, his duties thereby being much increased. Turning loose in a box will sometimes cure this evil, or by a clog fastened above the knee. When this is done there should be a pad applied to the shin, to keep the clog from injuring the very sensitive membrane covering the tendons. From having been led carelessly through a doorway, where they have been injured, horses are afterwards fearful at attempting the passage, and when urged to do so will go through with a bound that adds greatly to the danger. Compel the groom to get the horse square with the door before leading him out, holding him firmly by the halter, so that the leap cannot be made, never urging him to go faster than the slowest pace; in no case permitting a blow to be given. Rather than use force, either blindfold or back him out, until the fear is overcome by judicious usage.

Kicking the sides of the stall is a very unfortunate custom some horses possess, and no amount of punishment will cure one that has become determined in the practice. Clogs and whips are of no avail, and there seems to be almost a species of insanity compelling them to kick away till their legs are bruised and swollen from the blows. I had one very fine horse that I tried every method of cure I could hear of without effect. When he was shackled, of course he could not kick, neither could he lie down, and I have kept him standing for a week, when in less than an hour after the straps were removed he would fall to kicking as furiously as if the lost time had to be made up. I cured him by putting him in a stall about the width made in livery stables, the sides of the same length as the horse when standing with his head at the manger. A bar was dropped behind his quarters to keep him from backing. Through the sides of the stall a slot was cut large enough to admit a plank two inches thick and eighteen inches wide. This plank came within half-an-inch of his loin, and of course he could not raise himself to kick. It was amusing to watch the rage he would get in in finding his most violent efforts frustrated. I looked for him to strike with one foot, and intended, if he had done so, to let a sholf extend on each side as high as his gaskins, which would have prevented that. The plank over the loin, however, cured him, and after going from my stable into a stall that had not these appliances, I never heard of his relapsing into his former bad practice.—*Colman's Rural World.*

## Age at which Bulls should be Used.

We clip the following from the *Farmers' Magazine*:—"We have seen a letter from a short-horn breeder, in which the writer considers that bulls in the present day are used at too early an age, and is of opinion that modern short-horns are less in size and not so robust as they were formerly, in consequence of the youthfulness of sires. 'Short-horn breeders,' he says 'are ruining their herds by using young bulls. Bulls should not work before they are two years old, and not come into heavy work before three.' Unfortunately, the first three volumes of the Herd Book are often so defectively supplied with dates that a reference to them for the ages at which noted sires began to work cannot be expected to impart a completely satisfactory amount of intelligence; and yet, scanty as they are in these records, there is enough to indicate that the principal short-horn breeders at the end of the eighteenth and the beginning of the nineteenth century did not act in harmony with the judgment of our friend. With regard, for instance, to Mr. Charles Colling's famous bulls Favourite, Foljambe, Cupid, and Comet, they were fathers of stock at a very early age. There was progeny from Comet when he was two years old, begotten, of course, when he was little above one, Cupid was born in 1799, and Countess, his daughter, was calved in 1801. Kate and Red Rose, by Comet, came into the world in 1806, their sire being born in 1801, and Foljambe, the sire of Bolingbroke, whose birth took place on the 12th of November, 1788, was calved in 1787. Neither did Mr. Robert Colling object to an early use of bulls. His cows, Venus, Larina, Princess, Clara, and Amelia were all calved in 1816; Lancaster, their sire, in 1814. Trinket, by Barmpton, was calved in 1812; Barmpton in 1810. The herd of Mr. Mason bears the same testimony. The bull Chilton was calved in 1803, and had many sons and daughters in 1805. Dr. Syntax, one of the most famous of the Chilton bulls, was born in 1820, and his sire Mars in 1818; and Dr. Syntax himself was the father of a goodly number of calves when two years old. So was Irishman; so was St. John; so was Falstaff; so also were Cato, Jupiter, Charles, and Henry. The Bull, Monarch (2324), calved in 1826, was the sire of several animals born in 1828, among whom was Mercury. Bonny Face (807), a splendidly bred beast, was calved in 1823; and in 1825 his celebrated son Matchem (2281)—if, indeed Matchem was his son—made his appearance; but whether Bonny Face or St. Albans got Matchem is not material to the question, since Bonny Face was certainly put to Matchem's dam (Farmer Cow) as a yearling, and was the father, at two years old, of many calves. So was Matchem. These examples, gathered from the herds of Charles Colling, Robert Colling, and Mason of Chilton, may suffice. They could be easily multiplied, and other herds, if there was cause to extend the inquiry, would support them. Mr. Hutchinson, of Grassy Nook, may be adverted to as using his bulls at a very early age, and Mr. Bates, not only in later years, but in the more distant periods of his career, invariably did so. With regard, then, to the proposition that short-horns formerly were superior of size and constitution to modern short-horns, some other reason than that advanced at the beginning of this article must be assigned for the difference."

A Western paper announces "a cow struck by lightning and instantly killed, belonging to the village physician, who had a beautiful calf four days old."

**TO PREVENT SHEEP FROM BITING OUT THEIR WOOL.**—Dissolve one ounce of corrosive sublimate in one pint of alcohol. To one ounce of this mixture add one and a half pints of water, and apply externally. Vermont wool growers are very generally using this mixture.

**CALVES "BROUGHT UP BY HAND."**—A member of the Cirencester Farmers' Club makes a speciality of rearing calves, and has read a paper before that association describing his experience. He has been in the habit of procuring the calves dropped on the farm of a neighbour, and, with only four cows of his own, raised 50 calves in 1864, 55 in 1865, and, in 1866, 55 were weaned, but three have been lost by mismanagement. He takes the calves from about the first of March, when ten days old, paying 30 shillings each for them.

"They have for the first three or four days two or three quarts of milk at a meal; then gradually some food in the shape of gruel is added, and, by degrees, water is substituted for milk. Mixing oilcake with gruel is the secret of success. I use half oilcake, the best I can buy. Take a large bucket, capable of holding six gallons; put into it two gallons of scalding water; then add 7 lbs. of linseed cake, finely ground, which is obtained by collecting the dust that falls through the screen of the crusher, and passing it through one of Turner's mills. Well stir the oilcake and water together; and add two gallons of hay tea."

The hay tea is made by pouring scalding water in the morning on good sweet hay, in a tub, the tea standing covered till night, and having 7 lbs. of meal (wheat, barley and beans mixed) stirred into a tubful before use. The same hay will bear a second infusion during the night, for next morning. Two quarts per head, with an equal amount of cold water, is enough for a feed. The old plan of letting them suck through the cowman's fingers is preferred, and, as soon as they can eat, crushed corn, sweet hay and roots are placed within reach; vetches as soon as ready, and mangolds, of which a supply should always be stored if practicable. The calves live in a cool, well-ventilated house, are kept very clean and quiet, supplied with fresh water daily, and the manure frequently removed.

**SELECTING RAMS.**—Hon. H. S. Randall, of the *Rural New Yorker*, writes on this subject:—"Among the requisites of the dam which ought to be considered indispensable, is constitution. Observation alone shows that the sire much more than the dam gives the size, form and covering of the progeny. But it just as clearly shows that the dam generally impresses her own characteristics in a superior or equal degree on the vital organs, that is to say, on the interior mechanism of the system, on which health, strength and endurance, or to sum up all in a word, constitution depends. Many a man owns a ewe with a very superior fleece and an abundance of fancy points. Perhaps she has an excellent pedigree. She is the 'show sheep' of his flock. But he finds that she is often amiss. She requires a careful management. A heavy rain storm gives her the snuffles. She is not a good milker and her lambs must be put on foster dams. She does not take on flesh readily in autumn after her lamb is weaned. She 'curls up' under the frosts and cold of approaching winter. She must be carefully housed. Her feed in winter must be carefully watched, for over-feeding very readily affects her condition and health. Whatever the pedigree of such a sheep, whatever her fancy points, however great her yield of wool when everything happens to go right with her, she is not fit to breed a stock ram from."

**WEANING AND FALL-FEEDING LAMBS.**—The true secret of making sheep-raising profitable is to keep lambs growing steadily from the day of their birth until they reach full maturity. The crisis of most importance in the life of the lambs is weaning them. They should be taken from the ewes when about four or four and a half months old, and there should always be provided for them a piece of new, fresh feed, and they should not be allowed to want for the best forage ground during the entire autumn. If not always convenient to provide a desirable lot for them, make up for the deficiency in fresh grain, by a small daily allowance of meal, made from equal parts of corn and oats ground together. Much advantage may be derived from feeding the leaves from cabbages and turnips. They should, if possible, be sheltered from all the heavy rains. It will take a flock of lambs much longer to recover from the effects of a drenching rain, than it will a flock of ewes. Their tender bodies have not a sufficient amount of stamina and vitality to keep up the degree of heat requisite to counteract the effects of rain, which weighs down their fleece. If lambs are cared for in the autumn, so that they come to the barn in good condition, the question of wintering well is more than half settled. *Fresh feed, a little meal daily, and careful sheltering, will pay better now than at any other time in the life of these animals.*—*Mirror and Farmer.*

**THE USE OF SALT CONDEMNED.**—A correspondent of the *Rural New Yorker* writes that paper from Michigan, and inveighs most earnestly against the use of salt whether for man or beast. He supposes the love of this condiment a depraved and acquired taste, and asserts in support that young stock will not eat it except in cases where the taste, like that for rum in some people, is inherited. Among other things he says:—"All creation appears to indicate a wise designer and an adaptation of means to ends. Now, would it not be unwise and even cruel to place animals on this earth with their food before them containing an insufficiency of some of the elements necessary to their health and comfort. Numerous species of animals never taste of salt, and millions of the human race have lived healthfully and died at a good old age without using it at all, and millions more live in perfect health who do not taste it either as food or condiment. In over doses it is repulsive, and even a poison to the human system, and it is said not to afford any nutriment but to pass out in the secretions without change, and when by reason of low vitality the system is unable to expel all, scrofula, ulcers and cancers may be produced."