

## Veterinary Department.

(Conducted by A. Smith, V. S.)

### Draught Stallions and their Selection.

Farmers have by this time made choice of the horses to which to put their breeding mares, and such selection has, we trust, been judicious and sensible. The recent reduction in the price of horses ought to direct more attention to the subject, and increase the production of those first-class animals which are always so saleable at remunerative prices. There is certainly no department of farm management in which the penny-wise and pound-foolish system is more frequently exhibited. Male animals with faulty pedigree, of shapeless appearance, and with obvious hereditary defects are too often used, simply because they are of convenient access, or the price charged is somewhat lower than for more perfect animals. It is too frequently forgotten that in breeding, whether horses or cattle, the first outlay for the use of the sire is but a small item as compared with the subsequent cost of rearing. The extra sovereign for the use of the superior horse is surely well bestowed when it adds in three years four or five pounds to the price of the progeny if he is a cart colt, and possibly double or quadruple the amount if he be a hack or a hunter.

First in importance in the recommendations of a stallion we would place his pedigree. In horses for the turf, and in the breeding of the best Arab steeds, the descent of both sire and dam receives primary attention, and should not be less important in the farm horse. By using animals which have been carefully and judiciously selected for several generations, we obtain good qualities that by repetition and transmission have become firmly impressed upon the stock, are less accidental and more permanent, and greatly more likely to re-appear in the progeny. Every breeder of superior short-horns or first-class sheep admits and acts upon this fact, but too often disregards it in the case of his draught horses. In many parts of the country inattention to the breeding of the cart stallion has led to much disappointment and loss. At present we know of several neat, compact, and tolerably good-looking stallions, once in good repute, which have left, from all sorts of mares, a multitude of undersized, shabby, valueless colts, which undoubtedly owe their deficiencies to the half-bred small parent stock from which the parents sprung. This disregard of good descent, operating with two-fold effect when involving both horse and mare is, we believe, the main cause of the notorious scarcity of first-class horses.

We must not be supposed to advise the farmer to place his trust in pedigree only. It can never be accepted in the room of good and useful

qualities which the well-bred cart-horse must in addition possess. Most of those so called 'points' are so familiar to the experienced eye of the practical farmer that they require little notice here. We would only insist at present upon two most important matters, of which the value is scarcely sufficiently appreciated, namely, a stout, short back, and good action. So intimately connected are the several parts of the animal machine that a disproportion in one respect seriously interferes with the general symmetry and harmony, and especially is this the case if the back be long. The ribs will then seldom arch as they should do, the chest is apt to be shallow, whilst the space between the last rib and the crest of the ilium will tell only too truly of weak digestive organs, and want of hardiness and endurance. If any horse proprietor looks over his stables he cannot fail to realize the fact that, whether in the saddle or harness, the cart or the plough, the well ribbed up, short-backed horse is the one for the hard work and the long day. Many farmers overlook or underrate the importance of action in the draught horse. They prefer the straight and upright shoulder to that which slopes and is well laid back. But good action is almost as requisite in the farm horse as in the hack or the hunter. If he can easily and gaily step out at the rate of three-and-a-half or four miles an hour, the walking which constitutes an important part of his daily labor is materially lightened. The importance of this is very notable in the case of coarse, heavy, under-bred horses, such as abound in some of the midland counties of England, and, indeed, are everywhere too numerous. They plod dully and clumsily along, generally finding it work enough lazily to drag an empty dung cart at the rate of about a mile an hour. It is also amongst horses of this unenviable description that we find the round, rough hairy, greasy limbs, the short pasterns which predispose to ring and side bones, and the flat, brittle feet which so seriously interfere with the usefulness of any animal intended for work upon the roads.—*N. B. Agriculturist.*

### Condiments.

The veterinary profession must feel an interest in the great agricultural questions of the day, and especially in all those that concern the management of stock. We devote upwards of sixteen pages of this number to the report of a meeting of the Royal Agricultural Society, at which cattle condiments were fully discussed. We have one great objection to the discussion, and that is, that Mr. Thorley has had the benefit of a gratis advertisement, for which he could well afford to pay several thousand pounds out of the extraordinary price he induces the British farmer to pay for his medicine. It is a great thing for a dealer in a specific to get a Mr. Beale Browne with his pile of letters, and Ma-