

BREEDERS' DEPARTMENT.

UN SOUNDNESS IN BREEDING ANIMALS.

NOW often do we hear the expression used in regard to some stock animal: "He must get good stock, because he is descended from pure blood," or is "thorough-bred." Yet the very purity of the animal's blood may make him anything but desirable to breed from, in consequence of some unsoundness or defect in his organization, that will be more likely to be perpetuated in his stock than a similar defect would be in some less pure-bred animal.

Why do we value a pure-blooded animal? Simply because we can depend upon the progeny of that animal being true to its kind, or like its ancestors,—the very reason, one would suppose, why we should not breed from a good-blooded animal that is defective, either naturally, or by accidental causes. Ignorance of the great influence these last-named causes exert upon succeeding generations has been a great drawback upon successful breeding, and has given us families of animals among whom soundness is the exception rather than the rule.

I have seen a breeder of celebrity coupling a mare and a horse that were both sprung in the knees, and be surprised that the produce should be foaled with the same defect, when the sire and dam were from so good blood. This foal never recovered from this but became so weak in the limbs as to bring only five dollars when two years old, and at that was a hard bargain to the purchaser. Both sire and dam in this instance had become unsound from hard usage.

Another case that came under my observation, proved this influence of accidental injury very strongly. A cow soon after calving received an injury that destroyed the use of one teat, or one-fourth of her bag. Her next calf was a heifer, which after calving her first calf, proved to have precisely the same portion of her bag affected as her dam, giving but very little milk from it from the first, and losing entirely, finally.

Such defects do not always appear in the second generation, but are very apt to in succeeding ones; and many instances can be remembered where they have appeared many generations after, the same as some taint in the blood may lie dormant through many generations, but become active and finally appear in an unwelcome form by the pro-

duction of an animal with strong likeness to the stock from which the taint came. It is important that breeding animals should be well bred, having their characteristics so fixed in their blood that they may produce their valuable qualities, but quite as important that they should be free from unsoundness or defects. In no way will blood be more sure to *tell*, than in transmitting the undesirable qualities, if they are possessed by sire or dam. That blood only is valuable that comes through a sound, perfect system, not that which flows through a deformed or vitiated one.—*Boston Cultivator*.

SPAYING COWS.

THE following article on "Spaying Cows" is taken from a number of the *New England Farmer*, furnished by a correspondent of that useful Journal for the benefit of its readers. We have not heard of any of our farmers spaying (oastrating) their cows; but if any of them have tried the experiment, we shall feel much obliged if they will acquaint us with the result:—

"I have in my herd 13 cows which have at different times been subject to this operation for the purpose of rendering them permanent milkers. Sufficient time has not yet elapsed to enable me to learn whether all the advantages which which are promised as the results of spaying will follow, such as a duration of milking, fattening, etc.

"I will, however, lay the matter before your readers, and let them judge for themselves, whether it is for their advantage to have their cows spayed, or let them remain bearing calves, as is the usual custom. Of course this will depend on the purposes for which cows are kept, whether for milk, butter and cheese alone or for raising stock.

"It is now a year since the first three cows were spayed, one in July, and four in October last, and five on the 11th of the present month. The ages of these cows vary from five to thirteen years, and in every instance the younger the cow, and the greater her natural milking qualities, the more favorable have been the results. They have all continued to give an uninterrupted yield of milk, varying with the season and succulency and richness of food. A slight improvement in the quality of the food immediately increases the quantity of milk.