

Having already extended my observations on other subjects to such a length, I shall shortly remark upon one or two points only with regard to the treatment of colts.

A very absurd notion universally obtains in this Country, that colts should not get any oats the first winter after weaning, as such feed would have the effect of foundering or otherwise injuring the animal. This is a radical error, and has, no doubt, had the effect of preventing our horses from being much better grown than they are.

In England the usual allowance of oats for a colt, during the first winter, is 15 bushels or 4 quarts a day for four months. Such a course of feeding is also accompanied by bran mash—potatoes and carrots to prevent costiveness, and to keep the blood cool. In conversation with the celebrated Tattersall, in London, on this subject, he informed me that he allowed his choice thorough bred colts as much oats as they would eat the first winter, and that they were never injured by such feeding, but very little if any grain is given during the next winter. Since receiving this information I have put it in practice, and the result has been highly gratifying and successful.

I would be happy to proceed further on this interesting subject, but as I have trespassed so long upon your time and attention I must now draw my observations to a close.

I would earnestly impress upon every Member of this Society the necessity of doing all in his power to promote the interests of agriculture throughout the County. Obtain all the valuable information you can on the subject, and freely circulate all you obtain. As Farmers you have great reason to be content with your lot. You have seen from time to time the depressions of trade. You have seen many of those engaged in Commerce, and whose once fortunate career you may have almost envied, brought low by reverses of fortune, and deprived of their property; but to such vicissitudes the faithful tiller of the earth is rarely, if ever, exposed in this Country. We are blessed with a fertile soil, and he who works his allotment with industry and a due regard to his means, will surely receive an ample reward for all his toil.

Doctor Johnson has beautifully observed "Though mines of gold and silver should be exhausted, and the species made of them lost; though diamonds and pearls should remain concealed in the bowels of the earth and the womb of the sea; though commerce with strangers be prohibited; though all arts which have no other object than splendour and embellishment should be abolished; yet the fertility of the earth alone would afford an abundant supply for the occasions of an industrious people, by furnishing subsistence for them, and for such armies as should be mustered in their defence."

BREEDING HORSES.

This may be a proper period to recur to the important subject of breeding, particularly important, when there cannot be a doubt that our breed of useful horses has, within the last twenty years, most materially degenerated. Our running horses still maintain their supremacy; but our carriage horses are not much lessened in excellence and value; but our hunters and hackneys are not what they used to be. We shall endeavour to point out the cause of this.

Our observations must be of a general nature, and will be very simple; and the first axiom we would lay down is—that "like will produce like"—that the progeny will inherit the qualities, or the mingled qualities of the parents. We would refer to the subject of diseases, and again state our perfect conviction that there is scarcely one by which either of the parents is affected that the foal will not inherit, or, at least, the pre-disposition to it. even the consequences of ill usage, or hard work, will descend to the progeny. We have already enlarged on this, but its importance will be a sufficient apology for the repetition. We have proof upon proof that blindness, roaring, thick wind, broken wind, spavins, curbs, ringbones and founder, have been bequeathed both by the sire and the dam to the offspring. It should likewise be recollected, that although these blemishes may not appear in the immediate progeny, they frequently will in the next generation. Hence the necessity of some knowledge of the parentage both of the sire and dam.

Peculiarity of form and constitution will also be inherited—This is a most important but neglected consideration; for, however desirable, or even perfect, may have been the conformation of the sire, every good point may be neutralized or lost by the defect-

ive form, or want of blood of the mare. There are niceties in this, of which some breeders used to be aware, and they employed their knowledge to great advantage. When they were careful that the essential points should be good in both parents, and that some minor defect in either should be met, and got rid of, by excellence in that particular point in the other, the result was creditable to their judgment, and highly profitable. The unskilful or careless breeder will often so badly pair the animals, that the good points of each will be, in a manner, lost: the defects of both will be increased, and the produce will be far inferior to both sire and dam.

Of late years these principles have been much lost sight of in the breeding of horses for general use; and the following is the explanation it: There are nearly as good stallions as there used to be. Few, but well-formed and valuable horses will be selected and retained as stallions. They are always the very prime of the breed; but the mares are not what they used to be. Poverty has induced many of the breeders to part with the mares from which they used to raise their stock, and which were worth their weight in gold; and the jade on which the farmer now rides to market, or which he uses on his farm, costs him but little money, and is only retained because he could not get much money for her. It has likewise become the fashion for gentlemen to ride mares almost as frequently as geldings; and thus the better kind are taken from the breeding service until old age or injury renders them worth little for it. We would wish therefore to impress it on the minds of breeders, that peculiarity of form and constitution are inherited from both parents; that the excellence of the mare is a point of quite as much importance as that of the horse; and that out of a sorry mare, let the horse be as perfect as he may, a good foal will rarely be produced. All this is recognised upon the turf, although poverty or carelessness have made the general breeder neglect or forget it.

It is recognised in the midland Counties in the breed of cart horses; and the strict attention which has been paid to it has brought our heavy horses to almost the same perfection, in their way, as the blood horse. It is strange that in our saddle-horse, our hunters, and, to a great degree, our carriage-horses, this should be left to chance. The breeder begins to care little about the quality of the mare, and the progeny is becoming comparatively of little worth. Experience, it is said, will make fools wise, but experience will here be bought at a very dear rate, both as it regards the breeder and the community.

That the constitution and endurance of the horse are inherited, no sporting man ever doubted. The qualities of the sire or the dam descend from generation to generation; and the excellencies or defects of certain horses are traced, and justly so, to some peculiarity, in a far distant ancestor.

It may, perhaps, be justly affirmed, that there is more difficulty in selecting a good mare to breed from, than a good horse, because she must possess somewhat opposite qualities. Her carcass should be long, to give room for the growth of the fetus, and yet, with this, there should be compactness of form and shortness of leg.—As to the shape of the stallion, little satisfactory can be said. It must depend on that of the mare, and the kind of horse wished to be bred; but if there be one point which we should say is absolutely essential, it is this "compactness"—as much goodness and strength as possible condensed in a little space. Next to compactness, the inclination of the shoulder will be regarded: a huge stallion, with upright shoulders, never got a capital hunter or hackney. From him the breeder can obtain nothing but a cart or dray horse, and that, perhaps, spoiled by the opposite form of the mare. On the other hand, an upright shoulder is desirable, if not absolutely necessary, when a mere draught horse is required. It is of no little importance that the parents should be in full possession of their natural strength and powers. It is a common error, that because a mare has once been good, she is fit for breeding, when she is no longer capable of ordinary work. Her blood, and perfect frame may ensure a foal of some value, but he will inherit a portion of the worn out constitution of her from whom he sprung.

On the subject of *breeding in and in*, that is, persevering in the same breed, and selecting the best on either side, much has been said. The system of crossing requires much judgment and experience; a great deal more, indeed, than breeders usually possess. The bad qualities of the cross are too soon engrafted on the original stock; and once engrafted there, are not, for many generations, eradicated. On the other hand it is the fact, however, some may deny it, that strict confinement to one breed, however valuable or