

Canadian Live-Stock & Farm Journal

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HAMILTON, CANADA, SEPT., 1888.

IN breeding live-stock of any kind successfully a man must have an ideal before him as clearly defined in his own mind as though it were on canvas, and he must adhere to it with a persistency that knows no faltering. How many of our breeders can clearly and distinctly define their ideal, and of how many may it not be said that when they come across a herd or stud of some other ideal of great excellence it shakes their faith in their own. It follows, then, too much care cannot be shown in fixing this ideal. A mistake here is disastrous. Without it, however, marked success will never be realized, for the breeder without any fixed aim is like the mariner on the wide ocean without a compass. He may meet a favored gale that will blow him landward, but he is more likely to meet one that will carry him out toward mid-ocean, and then another to blow him back in mockery. This fixedness of purpose must be rigidly adhered to in adverse as well as in prosperous times, unless the event has shown that the ideal is lacking in intrinsic merit, a discovery that should have been made at the outset. One who abandons his ideal because of some mistakes that may be mended, is not of that material which makes successful stockmen.

SOME three years ago the Highland Society offered a prize of £400 for an essay on the best method of utilizing the valuable properties of the urine of house-fed animals, and it was to be especially adapted to dairying districts. In response to this offer no less than thirty-nine essays were written, many of them in foreign languages, but to none of them has the prize been awarded, as they are not considered sufficiently practicable. This strengthens our opinion—one that we have long held—that the most practicable way of utilizing this liquid is to absorb it in the stables before it goes into the wheelbarrow, with cut straw, sawdust, muck or earth, and apply it to the land at the earliest possible moment. This necessitates the use of a tight floor, which may be made with cement. The passage behind the cattle should incline toward the

drop where the liquid is licked up by the absorbents. Our own stables are constructed on this plan, and by using plenty of cut litter we retain the valuable properties of the liquid without adding anything to the cost of handling the manure, unless it be cutting the litter. What method more simple and effective can possibly be devised, even though £400 a year should be offered every year for essays on this important subject? But this plan would probably be too simple for the sage fathers of the Highland Society. They are doubtless waiting for some one to tell them some great thing which must be done in order to conserve the valuable properties of a liquid manure.

THE practice of keeping service stallions of the draught breeds in show condition the year round is of questionable wisdom, and can only be done at the hazard of the future usefulness of the horse. On the other hand violent changes in condition are hurtful, and should be guarded against. It is a fact that the percentage of sure foal-getters amongst draught stallions is not so large as amongst sires of the thorough-breds or those of other classes of pure-bred stock. This cannot be accidental, and must be the result of defective management. It is very largely, we believe, the result of feeding too highly, with too little exercise, keeping the stallion too much on the principles by which steers are fattened. Wherever it can be done, would it not be well to put draught stallions to moderate work after the season, and thus make them pay their way during that portion of the year succeeding the service term? It would be good for the horses and good for the owners. Draught horses are intended for work, quite as much so as the Angus steer is intended for beef. The steer would fall far short of his design if kept on the principles best adapted to the welfare of the horse, and so the horse must fall far short of the end sought if kept on principles best adapted to the welfare of the steer. Where it is impossible to work the stallion he should have a large paddock all his own, but it may be found difficult to keep him within the enclosure unless the fence is strong and high.

A WRITER of prominence in the *Breeders' Gazette* argues that as inferior Shorthorns are superior to scrubs, it would be a better plan to sell them to farmers at butchers' prices than to castrate them. With this view we can by no means agree. They are, to be sure, much better than scrubs, but their free use as sires will not tend to bring credit upon the Shorthorn interest. Giving such advice is only wounding this great interest in the house of its friends. The use of such sires will only be partially satisfactory. Very many persons would thus be led to base their estimate of Shorthorns upon these animals and their progeny, which must fall a long way short of the results that will flow from the use of suitable sires. It would be much better to put down the service fee so low that the owners of scrubs would bring their cows to first-class sires. It is only by judicious mating, careful selection and constant weeding, that the standard of excellence with any breed can be maintained. Stay this process in any direction and the standard lowers. Let this happen, and the breed falls proportionately in the estimation of the public. Instead of doing the keeper of scrubs a kindness, the reverse of this would be true. It would be educating him in a system the principles of which, applied to the breeding of Shorthorns, would soon annihilate it. It is true that sometimes inferior-looking calves develop wonderfully and make useful sires, but it is much oftener true that they do not. The great one law of breeding is that "like produces like." The breeder of pure-breds of any kind who

admits the suggestion of the writer to whom we refer, cannot easily do himself a greater injury than to sell his inferior animals to the keepers of scrubs, or indeed to any one save a butcher.

THE breeding of pedigree stock in Great Britain, where more of it is done than in any country of equal area on the face of the globe, is all in the hands of a few thousand farmers. A majority of the farmers there have, according to the *Agricultural Gazette*, looked upon the attention given to pedigreed animals as something bordering upon the ridiculous. It is the chance of the breeders now to ask who have been most ridiculous in their actions, the breeders of pure-breds or the rank-and-file farmers, who cared but little whether they succeeded or failed? The export trade in pedigreed live-stock in Great Britain this year is in the neighborhood of £100,000 per month, and this handsome sum all goes into the pockets of the few thousands of breeders to whom we have referred. The class who were indifferent in regard to their labors are at the present time barely able to hold their own against foreign competition. There is a moral here for the farmers of Canada. With but few exceptions we have a good market for our pedigreed stock, and it is very largely a foreign one, too. But our average farmer has a great advantage over the farmer of Britain in that he is virtually free from competition. Instead of purchasing stores he can sell them to his neighbors to the south, and the better the quality of these, the higher price does he get. The pure-breds of the various breeds in the country are now so numerous that any who fail to take advantage of them for improving their stock, and thereby bringing up the general average, are standing sadly in their own light. The farmers of any country who look upon stock improvement with indifference are enemies to themselves. Where the market for stock is many-sided, as with us, the neglect is suicidal.

The Crop of 1888.

Mr. Blue has again felt the pulse of the agriculture of Ontario, and has found that it still beats feebly with some symptoms of improvement.

Bulletin XXIII summarizes the results of the crop reports sent in by 763 correspondents in all parts of Ontario.

The crop of *Fall Wheat* is a long way below the average, although in some localities the yield and sample were both good. 60,896 acres are reported as having been ploughed up, most of the area being in the Lake Huron, West Midland and Lake Ontario groups of counties.

The *Spring Wheat* crop promises to be more than usually good, but the acreage given shows a decrease from 484,821 acres in 1887 to 367,850 acres in 1888.

Barley is about an average crop, but has been injured considerably by rains in harvesting, especially in the Lake Ontario counties.

Oats have given a satisfactory return in the western lake counties, and a large portion of the West Midland group. In the nine Lake Erie and Huron Counties the crop is abundant, and so generally in Middlesex, Oxford, Brant, Perth, Wellington and Waterloo. In all other parts the larger portion of this crop has been light and short of the average. In the East Midland and St. Lawrence districts the reports are extremely unfavorable.

But little *Rye* was grown for the grain, its chief use being for fall and early spring pasturage, and to plow under as a green manure.

The *Pea* crop is good in the west, but in the centre and east under an average. The pea bug has for the: