

Select well-bred mares, if that is possible, that is, mares whose progenitors have been well selected, and whose families are uniformly good stock-getters. (It is useless for us here in the West to talk about *thorough-bred* mares,—they are seldom to be met with.) A breeding mare should have size and weight; she should come off with not less than 1,100 lbs, and 1,200 would be better. This weight is sufficient if the muscular system is well developed. Flesh and bones, it will be remembered do not alone constitute strength, or power. Look well to the shoulder and to the setting of the fore-legs. A fine shoulder is one of the most essential qualities. We should never breed from a mare with a bad shoulder. A fine shoulder projects out, giving ample room for the collar—is round and full, and standing backward, gives shortness to the back of the animal. You may take a beast wanting in almost every other excellency, and it is of some value, but if she has a decidedly bad shoulder, she never can be worth the rearing, much less be bred from with any safety. The fore-legs should be well forward, so as to give support to the animal. If these are well put on, and the shoulder is right, you may be quite sure of good action, which is equally important in a horse as in an orator. The head and nose should be fine, not too long or thin—nostrils large. The eyes must be clear, lively and lustrous, and stick out so that you may hang your hat on them. The ear rather small, and pointing forward. The neck should rise well from the withers, tapering fine to the setting on of the head. The carcass should be long so as to give room for the growing fetus, with as much compactness of form as may be needed for good appearance, though a little looseness of structure is quite allowable in a breeding mare. There is much said about being “well ribbed up,” and you will always see quick judges measuring with outstretched hand the space between the ribs and hips, as though this was a point of the first consequence. Much limit may be tolerated here in brood mares. A farmer should never lose sight of *power* in breeding horses for agricultural purposes. As before hinted, bone and flesh do not give strength to a horse—there must be muscle well laid on especially about the fore-arm, thighs and posterior. Thin, lank thighs, are a serious objection. She should have width across the hips, or haunches,—even if so much so as to subject her to the charge of being *ragged-hipped*, it is no serious detriment. Some horses noted for their speed and strength were ragged-hipped.

There is a beautiful principle (whether observed or not) lying at the very fountain of all breeding, *good or bad*, thus simply expressed: “*like produces like*.” What a simple principle! and how readily its correctness is acknowledge by the common sense of every man. But how little is it regarded by most farmers, who breed from

any old broken down, spavined, ring-boned, or broken-winded mare they may happen to possess, and employ and employ any itinerant stallion which seeks their patronage, because it saves them the trouble of looking about, and a few dollars expense? How can they expect superior colts by such a lottery game as this? Could you get a sporting man to trust to such a course? No, no! horses for the turf are bred with the *niciest* regard to every point. If a mare is deficient in a single point, a stallion is sought which is particularly excellent in this respect, so that the progeny shall possess the exact conformation. Expense and trouble are not considered. The same intelligent course should be adopted by farmers in breeding horses for the farm or road. The same care in matching or pairing would secure the same satisfactory results, and we should soon boast a better class of working-horses.

But the subject of improving our breeds of horses, is one which requires much careful reflection, and a long time must elapse, with well directed efforts, to achieve what those proud of good horses much desire to see.—B.—*Michigan Farmer*.

WINTERING MILCH COWS.—The subject of wintering milch cows is one in which a large majority of our readers are interested, for probably most farming people who own but a single animal keep a cow, and those who are not thus limited generally more or less of these faithful creatures among their stock. And the milch cow is worthy of this distinction. She produces one of the most wholesome and nutritious articles of food which we possess—one always in demand, and which there is no other means of supplying. Good cows always command high prices, for they pay a good profit. But this profit depends largely on the attention they receive from their owners—whether they are so fed and cared for that they are thrifty, healthy, and yield largely of milk at all seasons of the year.

It is poor economy to winter cows upon dry food alone. They need something more succulent and nutritious. A full flow of milk requires a generous supply of the right kind of fodder. Carrots, beets, parsnips, or turnips in addition to hay and an occasional feed of meal or shorts,—a judicious use of hay, roots, and meal,—will keep the animals healthy and in good flow of milk even in winter. In England milch cows are fed principally on turnips and coarse fodder, and are stabled through the winter. They have a slight feed of straw or hay in the morning, and sliced turnips, morning, noon, and evening, with an occasional supply of good straw to their mangers. Their stables are kept clean but well littered, and are also well ventilated, avoiding as far as may be, currents of air, from which cattle will take cold as well as human beings. The proper ventilation of stables, both for horses and cows, is too often neglected.

But all have not and cannot procure the proper supply of roots. The drouth of the past season injured materially or entirely cut off the root crop in many parts of the country. In this case hay and the coarser grains must be used, and these properly prepared answer very well the desired purpose. Good well-cured hay is far from being despised, even by the most aristocratic of the Filly Pail breed, though if first passed through a good cutting machine, it will be more economically consumed. Give cows what hay they will fully dispose of, and a peck or so per day of consistent food, well seasoned with a little salt, and they will continue in milk almost as long and give nearly as much as when supplied with roots. Oats and barley, or oats and corn, ground together, form a good mixture or provender for this purpose. If corn meal alone is used, it should be mixed with cut straw or hay, and slightly moistened—but a large quantity of this grain has a tendency to dry off the milk. It is better adapted to fattening than milk-making purposes. Both potatoes and apples are excellent food for cows, but do not produce as rich milk as either beets or carrots. These roots are probably among the best foods which can be provided—to be used in connection with other kinds of fodder. No single food will succeed as well as a proper variety.

The thrift and health of all kinds of stock requires a supply of water, either frequently and steadily, or always within their reach. It should be brought into the barn-yard, that cattle need not be compelled to wander off to a distant stream or pond through the storm and cold. Such a journey they will not under take unless quite thirsty, whereas, were the water within their reach, they would drink much more frequently, but less at a time, not injuring themselves by abstinence at one time, or an over supply at another. Their comfort in this respect as well as in shelter and cleanliness is the best economy, as an animal well cared for and kept warm and clean, requires less food to keep it in good condition. The best management is generally the cheapest in the end, and is always the most satisfactory to the thorough going farmer.—*Wool Grower and Stock Register*.

IRISH FLAX AND RUSSIAN FLAX.—just now—like a “bold peasantry”—is a very important article—being the raw materials of linen and paper, as the other is of soldiers and sailors; for both are much used by the Russian war, and both are prime necessities of national life. Sebastopol cannot be taken without the “bold peasantry,” and cleanliness and literature cannot flourish without flax. But then cries the Royal Flax Society (when did a weed ever grow under the glass case of these royal societies?) “we shall have no flax imported when we shut up the port of Riga, and don’t any longer allow the Prussians to smuggle into Ireland the