

Preventable Losses on the Farm

It is a "penny wise and pound foolish" system, to breed from scrub stock. There is not a farmer in this region who has not access to a pedigreed Shorthorn bull, by a payment of a small fee of two to five dollars, and yet we find only one animal in ten with Shorthorn blood. It is a common practice to breed to a yearling, and as he is almost sure to become breechy, to sell him for what he will bring the second summer. Many farmers neglect castrating their calves until they are a year old. We think ten per cent. are thus permanently injured, must be classed as stags, and sold at a reduced price. Fully half the calves so stunted never recover.

With many, the starving process continues through the entire year. They are first fed an insufficient quantity of skim milk; then in July and August, just at the season when flies are at their worst, and pastures driest, they are weaned, and turned out to shift for themselves and left on the pastures until the snow falls, long after the fields yield them a good support. They are wintered without grain, spring finds them poor and hide bound, and the best grazing season is over before they are fairly thrifty.

The keeping of old cows long past their prime is another thing which largely reduces the profits of the farmer. We have found quite a large per cent. of cows, whose wrinkled horns and generally run-down condition show that they have long since passed the point of profit. A few years ago, these cows would have sold at full prices for beef, now they will sell only for Bologna at two cents per pound. Thus cows have, in a majority of cases, been kept, not because they are favorites or even because they are profitable, but from sheer carelessness and want of forethought. Another fruitful cause of loss to the farmer is attempting to winter more stock than he has feed for. Instead of estimating his resources in the fall, and knowing that he has enough feed even for a hard winter, he gives the matter no thought, and March finds him with the choice of two evils, either to sell stock, or buy feed. If he chooses the former, he will often sell for much less than the animals would have brought four months earlier, and if the latter, will usually pay a much higher price for feed than if it had been bought in autumn. Too often he scrimps the feed, hoping for an early spring, and so soon as he can see the grass showing a shade of green around the fence rows, or in some sheltered ravine, turns his stock out to make their own living. This brings one of the most potent causes of unprofitable

cattle raising; namely, short pastures. The farmer who is overstocked in winter, is almost sure to turn his cattle on his pastures too early in the spring, and this generally results in short pasture all summer, and consequently the stock do not thrive as they ought, and in addition, the land which should be greatly benefited and enriched, is injured, for the development of the roots in the soil must correspond to that of the tops, and if the latter are constantly cropped short, the roots must be small. The benefit of shade is lost, and the land is trampled by the cattle in their wanderings to fill themselves, so that it is in a worse condition than if a crop of grain had been grown on it. From all these causes combined, there is a large aggregate of loss, and it is the exception to find a farm on which one or more of them does not exist, and yet without exception they may be classed as "preventable," if thought and practical common sense are brought to bear in the management.

Putting Away Tools.

The wearing out of farm implements is, as a rule, due more to neglect than to use. If tools can be well taken care of, it will pay to buy those made of the best steel, and finished in the best manner; but in common hands, and with common care, such are of little advantage. Iron and steel parts should be cleaned with dry sand and a cob, or scraped with a piece of soft iron, washed and oiled if necessary, and in a day or two cleaned off with corncob and dry sand. Finally, paint any iron part with rosin and beeswax, in the proportion of four of rosin to one of wax, melted together and applied hot. This is good for the iron or steel parts of every sort of tool.

Wood-work should be painted with good, boiled linseed oil, white lead and turpentine, colored any desired tint; red is probably the best color. Keep the cattle away until the paint is dry and hard, or they will lick, with death as the result. If it is not desired to use paint on hand tools, the boiled oil with turpentine and "liquid drier," does just as well. Many prefer to saturate the wood-work of farm implements with crude petroleum. This cannot be used with color, but is applied by itself so long as any is absorbed by the pores of the wood.

To Prevent the Balling of Horses.

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