

THE FARMER'S ADVOCATE AND HOME MAGAZINE.

THE LEADING AGRICULTURAL JOURNAL IN THE
DOMINION.

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JOHN WELD, MANAGER

AGENTS FOR THE FARMER'S ADVOCATE AND HOME JOURNAL,
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use of lime or ashes in the gutter, either of which sets free ammonia, instead of retaining it. A number of American authorities have been very strongly recommending the use of raw ground rock in the stables at the rate of a pint per cow twice a day, or scattered over the manure heap at the rate of 100 pounds to the ton. The cost of this ground rock is somewhat greater in Canada than in the United States; it may be obtained from our fertilizer dealers at \$14.00 per ton, carrying about 68 per cent. phosphate.

The first noticeable result to be expected from the use of the phosphate rock in this way would probably be a slightly more luxuriant growth of whatever crop the manure had been applied to, due chiefly to the saving of nitrogen (ammonia). Second, and more important, would be a better yield and quality of grain, together, probably, with more stiffness in the straw, these advantages being due to the more abundant supply of phosphorus. Third, we should look for a greater thrift and superior quality of the clovers and other legumes afterwards grown on the land, and possibly in some cases a greater thrift of the animals, particularly the young animals raised upon the farm. The tendency of cattle to chew sticks and bones is believed to be due, in some cases, at least, to a lack of phosphorus in the food, which lack must militate against growth and thrift.

While some of these benefits are speculative, and while none of them might be marked enough on certain farms to attract notice, the chances are several of them would be observable in most cases, and the results might be expected to show for a number of years on the same field.

We have been endeavoring to interest Canadian farmers in the use of raw ground rock phosphate as a stable absorbent, and trust that a considerable number may be sufficiently interested in the cause of science and agricultural progress to try a ton or two of it this winter, and report results. A few neighbors, if so disposed, might order a carload.

Read Experimental Farm Reports.

No matter how limited is a farmer's time for reading, he should keep in touch with the work done at the experimental farms. Each year a mass of valuable information is compiled at these institutions—information that is in the largest sense practical, that can be used to advantage by every farmer in the country. These stations have been described as the guide stars in agriculture. An American professor at the recent British Association meeting at Winnipeg, said the Indian Head Experimental Farm was the greatest treasure-house of information in soil-moisture problems on the continent. The experimental farms are doing work each year that every man who is engaged in agriculture ought to know about: work in every branch of agriculture, testing varieties of grain, testing out different methods of cultivation, conducting experiments with live stock, and carrying on a great deal of practical investigation in all agricultural lines. To be sure, the men in charge of them are human, and not infallible in their judgment or deduction. Nevertheless, the staffs of both Dominion and Provincial stations include many alert, well-informed and level-headed investigators. Moreover, whether the layman agrees with the published conclusions or not, the data are valuable to him in shaping his conclusions and adapting his practice. For instance, the assurance that a ton of fresh manure is practically equal to a ton of rotted, and that it takes about two tons of fresh to make one ton of the decomposed material, has been of invaluable advantage to Canadian farmers. Similarly, the great benefit of sowing clover, even for plowing under in the fall or spring after it is sown, has been demonstrated at the Experimental Farms. These are but two instances of many. One swallow does not make a summer, and one experiment seldom settles the point it was designed to elucidate, but every successive experiment sheds additional light. To substitute knowledge for opinions, exactitude for guesswork, definite understanding for inference and surmise—that is the function of the Experimental Farms.

HORSES.

Syndicate Horses.

When living in Manitoba, the writer remembers a certain firm bringing in a black Percheron stallion to sell to a syndicate of farmers. The farmers, however, were somewhat slow to take shares, and the agent began to be anxious, but being, as our Scotch families would say, "a canny chiel," resolved to try a little trickery. He knew well the course, but true, quotation: "Fools rush where angels fear to tread," but he also knew that man, in one respect, at least, resembles a flock of sheep—where one leads, the rest will follow. It was very plain to him that the "angels" (i. e., the best-known men) feared to take shares in this horse, and that, in order to get the "fools" to rush, he must procure a leader. This could not be done without expense, but it is a common business trick to "give a sprat to catch a whale."

He, therefore, offered one of the leading men in the district a share in the horse for nothing, and \$50 in cash, simply for the use of his name. To another he offered a share for his signature, and to a third he offered a share at half price for his name. (The writer was one of these three.) Although these three declined to accept the shares, the names of some prominent farmers were obtained, and then the work was easy. No sooner were these names seen than all timidity vanished, for, if the men whose names were shown thought enough of the horse to take shares, surely there was no question about the genuineness of the transaction.

Twenty men formed the syndicate. Each share was \$200. Therefore, the horse was valued at \$4,000. The writer is a veterinarian, and valued the horse at less than one-tenth of this sum, because both hind limbs were badly diseased, and so little did he think of the animal that he refused to accept, "free gratis and for nothing" the service of this horse to two of his mares.

It is just as well, before adding your signature, to make sure that those shown to you are genuine. In the district where the writer is at present residing a horse was syndicated. Not one of the syndicate received any papers. Not one has accepted any responsibility. Not one has paid or received any cash. The horse has recently been sold by auction, and realized less than his livery bill. One of the shareholders told the writer that he is unable to write, yet his "signature," as one of the syndicate, appears on the list.

This is peculiar, to say the least. The firm supplying the horse threatened some time ago to take legal action, but this is as far as it has gone up to the present.

The writer was offered a very small "jack" for \$300, and laughingly declined to deal in jack-rabbits, as he termed the undersized brute. This jack was afterwards syndicated in another district to twenty members at \$150 per share!

Leading papers within the past three years contained a very instructive case. A horse was syndicated, and shortly afterwards became sick. It was attended by a local veterinarian, who casually spoke of the horse's age as twelve years, at least. This was stoutly contradicted by two shareholders who were present, because, by the papers given when the horse was bought, the animal was but seven. Shortly afterwards the horse died, and the veterinarian's words made so much impression that the syndicate decided to send the head to Winnipeg and obtain the opinion of some of the leading professionals there upon the question. The reply was that the horse's age was between twelve and fourteen, and was probably nearer fourteen than twelve. The shareholders then refused to pay for the horse, and the matter was taken into court, where the judge upheld the farmers on every point. He advised them not to pay one cent of what was owing, because the pedigree was that of a horse seven years old, and the horse they had received was thirteen or fourteen years old. Therefore, they had not received the horse they had bought.

The syndicate business is becoming played out, though it still flourishes in some remote quarters. —[J. Fielding Cottrill, in "The Farmer's Advocate and Home Journal," Winnipeg.]

Why Should a Woman be a Horsemaster?

The writer was recently asked to give reasons why "Every Lady Should be Able to Handle Horses." Now, sir, it is not an acknowledged fact that every lady should be able to handle horses. Some claim that the ability to handle horses is unladylike; that it is rude and mannish. On the other hand, many claim that it is entirely within the province of any lady to be able to handle horses, and that a lady looks her very best when riding or driving a good horse. While we will not go so far as to say that it is absolutely necessary for the individual and general welfare of humanity that every woman be a horsemaster, we think that in no case will such an acquirement be objectionable, and that there are many reasons why it is advisable. This may be said to apply particularly to rural communities. The woman on the farm, be she young or old, who can harness, hitch and drive a horse, or a pair, or who can saddle or ride a horse, or can do both, is to a large extent independent of the man or men on the farm, so far as the performance of her business or the exercise of her pleasures, for which horses are required, is concerned.

To the woman who likes a horse, the possession of one that she can drive or ride affords an endless source of pleasure. There are many seasons when the men about the place are so busy that it is inconvenient for one of them to leave his work and come to the stable or go to the field and catch a horse, fetch him to the stable, harness and hitch him for his wife or sister, or for his employer's wife or sister to drive; and there are many occasions when the women on a farm suddenly decide that they want to go some place. It may be to town to purchase some necessary; it may be to a neighbor on some errand, whether necessary or otherwise, it may be simply for a pleasure drive or ride. In fact, there occur innumerable causes or excuses for wanting a horse when there is no man or boy at hand to hitch him or saddle him. The result is, when the women are not able to handle the horse, the business is not attended to, else it is done on foot; and if the horse be needed for pleasure, it must be postponed until the men appear, when probably it is not expedient, or the time cannot be spared. The assertion will probably be made by some that the women on a farm are as busy as the men, and that there is no time for driving or riding for pleasure, but our experience has been that this is seldom the case. That is, that, on the average farm, there is seldom several days at once in which an hour or two cannot be spared and spent with advantage by the women in taking a pleasure drive; and none will deny the fact that, when the occasion arises in which it is necessary for the woman to go a considerable distance, she can save time and strength if she has a horse she can harness, hitch and drive, instead of walking.

A woman who can handle horses can afford pleasure not only to herself, but to her friends or visitors. Some will doubtless say that "women on the farm have no right to have visitors in the busy season." Of course, this is nonsense. A woman on the farm has as much right to the pleasure of entertaining company at any season as the woman in town, and the seasons when the