

The Farmer's Horse-breeding Policy.

Editor "The Farmer's Advocate":

The "Farmer's Horse-breeding Policy" is, indeed, a topic that should receive the serious consideration of every farmer in Canada. We can readily see the need of this when we observe the types of horses seen at sales and other public meetings of farmers. A very great percentage of the farmers' horses are not suited to any particular purpose. What has brought about this condition of affairs? Has it been due to natural consequences—selling the best and retaining the scrubs—or has it been due to injudicious breeding?

If the present state of the farmers' horse stock is due to the market demand for the best, the selling of these and the retaining of the poorer grades for farm use, then here is one means by which the standard can be raised. Let farmers keep their best mares for breeders, and not be tempted by large prices for the best. If a good sound young mare is worth \$200 to the city dealer, she will, if of the right strain, be worth \$50 to \$100 more to the farmer to breed from. The scrub mare is dear to breed from at any price. It will pay better to sell her at a discount; in any event, she never should be allowed to produce. Let every man have his ideal, whether this ideal farmer's horse be the carriage, hunter, road or draft type. Select with a definite aim in view. Select for quality, action, conformation and disposition.

Quality is a hard thing to describe, but is one of the most essential points in horseflesh, no matter what type of horses we are breeding. Quality, like charity, covers a multitude of defects. "A good looker" always appears at an advantage, whether on the road or farm, thin or fat, well harnessed or poorly harnessed. It is, therefore, essential that we select a mare having good quality.

Another point to be considered is action. We must have good free action in all types of horses. As nearly all the work on the farm is done at the walk, we should select a mare with good swinging walk and straight, snappy action. Have nothing to do with a "paddler" or "roller."

Select for conformation. A mare, to be a good breeder, should be sound. Conformation varies with the type; therefore, let the farmer learn all he can about the type of horses he is breeding. Many opportunities are afforded at our exhibitions to learn the correct conformation of the various types of horses. Judges are generally willing to give their reasons for placing in the ring. "The Farmer's Advocate" depicts from time to time the best models of the various types of horses. These are the true photographs of the horses represented, and, by comparing the pictures, a great deal may be learned in regard to conformation. Be progressive, and keep in touch with the markets. Learn what is wanted, and breed accordingly.

Select for disposition. This is one of the points in horseflesh that is not given the place of prominence it deserves. We must have enough "vim" or "snap" in order to have a pleasant worker, and yet a mare should be good-natured and willing to do what is required of her.

Great improvement can be made by keeping the best mares for breeders, but if these mares are not well mated we cannot expect to materially improve the Canadian horse. One great trouble with the Canadian horse-raiser is that, in many cases, he has no definite type of horse in view. He breeds to the stallion that is nearest his farm, and does not think what the progeny will probably be. Some men want to breed a hunter, a roadster, a carriage horse and a draft horse from the same mare. The writer knows of several instances of this kind in his neighborhood. For instance, a very fine general-purpose mare, having considerable Clydesdale blood in her veins, was bred to a Hackney one year, the next year to a Kentucky trotting stallion, and is now in foal to a Percheron; and, in accordance with the past method of breeding, she, in all probability, will be bred to a Jack for the coming three years, in order to produce a six-horse team to compete for honors at the International. Lack of aim in mating accounts for a great number of scrubs in this country. Had this mare been bred to a Clydesdale stallion her progeny would be worth the care bestowed on them.

Another great mistake is made in crossing different breeds. We have instances where crossing has produced excellent individuals, but the second generation have been scrubs. It is our experience that much better results can be obtained by sticking to one breed, and breeding to the best individual of that breed.

We have not said anything in regard to the various breeds. No one breed of a certain type will suit every farmer. We find good individuals in nearly every breed. In conclusion, the writer wishes to emphasize these facts: (1) Have a definite aim in view; (2) select mares in accordance with this aim; (3) keep the best mares for breeders; (4) select the breed, and stick to it.

Elgin Co., Ont.

FRANK H. SILCOX.

To Get Early Foals.

On the subject, "Difficulty of Securing Early Foals in the North," the American Horse-breeder says:

"There must be some cause for this (difficulty of getting mares to conceive during the winter months), but we have never seen the subject mentioned in any of the standard works upon horses. It is a well-known fact, however, that cold is destructive to the life of spermatozoa. In order that artificial impregnation may be successful, it is absolutely necessary that the vessel in which the semen is secured and the instrument by which impregnation is effected should be warmed to a temperature of about 100 degrees F. It is a fact, too, that when healthy pregnant mares drink ice-cold water to excess it causes death to the foetus and produces abortion.

"These two facts have suggested the idea that very cold water taken into the stomach shortly before or soon after mating her with the horse, may so reduce the temperature of the uterus as to kill the spermatozoa. If this be the cause the remedy is simple and inexpensive. Warm the drinking water slightly that is given to the mare for a few hours before and a few days after mating the mare. It will do no harm to try the experiment.

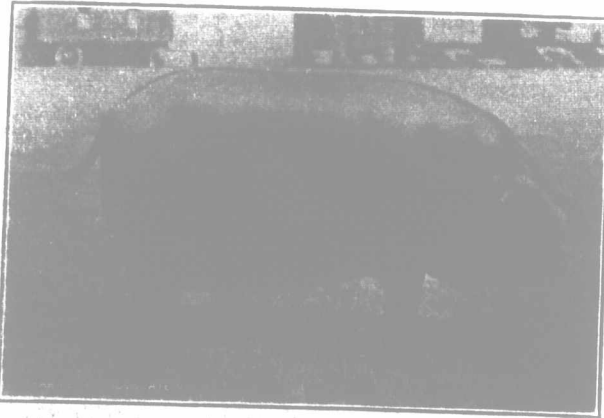
"Another cause that is likely to have some influence is that many stallions do not get sufficient regular exercise during the winter months to keep them in strong, vigorous physical condition. All stallions that are kept for stock purposes should be jogged several miles six days in every week, storm or shine. Snow or rain won't hurt a stallion that is jogged fast enough to keep him warm, provided he is properly cared for when he reaches the stable."

Whether it is wise for Northern horse-breeders to attempt to have early foals, is doubtful, but those who wish to try the experiment may find the above suggestions of value; they certainly are not expensive, and the exercising of stallions will pay handsomely in more ways than one.

LIVE STOCK.**A Study of Breeds of Swine.****THE LARGE BLACK PIG.**

The Large Blacks are the latest addition to the list of registered pure breeds in England. Little appears to be known regarding their origin, but they have been bred for many years in the south and east of England. They are practically unknown on this continent, though a few of them were brought to the Central Experimental Farm at Ottawa a few years ago, and we are not aware that they have earned any special claim to favor in this country, though they appear to be gaining some ground in the Old Land.

They are a large breed, all black in color. The ears are large and drooping, and the general type of the animal inclines to coarseness. They are a prolific breed, and it is claimed that they excel as



Large Black Sow, Hasketon Long Bess 3rd.

Champion at the Royal Show.

bacon producers, though those brought to Ottawa proved in that respect much inferior to some of the other breeds kept there.

The scale of points adopted by the Large Black Pig Society of Great Britain calls for a head of medium length, and wide between the ears; ears long, thin, and inclined well over the face; jaw of medium size; neck fairly long and muscular; shoulders smooth, oblique, and with narrow plate; back long and level (rising a little to center of back not objected to); sides very deep; ribs well sprung; loin broad; quarters long, wide, and not drooping; hams large, and well filled to hocks; tail set high, and not coarse; legs short and straight; belly and flank thick and well filled; skin fine and soft; coat moderate quantity of straight, silky hair.

Mr. Alf. B. Clark, Canard, N. S., writes:

"Your watch came to hand to day in good condition, and many thanks for same. It is a little beauty, and I trust the new names I have added to your list may turn out satisfactory in every way."

Mr. Stratton on the Embargo.

The following letter was addressed to Sir Thomas Elliott, Secretary of the Board of Agriculture, in connection with the recent deputation to the President of the Board of Agriculture:

Dear Sir,—As I shall not be required to speak at the deputation to the Minister of Agriculture, I feel that I should like to place on record a few of my objections to any alteration of the law as it now stands.

1. It has worked well. Confidence has hitherto been complete that the Government might be relied upon to prevent the importation of infectious diseases, and if any outbreak should accidentally occur, it would be summarily dealt with. The result has been a steady increase in the numbers of cattle in the United Kingdom, and this notwithstanding the tendency to bring out animals considerably younger than formerly. Cattle-breeding and dairying, owing to immunity from disease, have been the most satisfactory branches of farming throughout the Kingdom; in short, stock-breeders and dairymen have done very fairly well, while the condition of others have been most unsatisfactory. Any relaxation of the law would destroy confidence, and deal a severe blow to this most important and increasing industry.

2. The trade in pedigree stock with the colonies and foreign countries has attained large proportions, and is of great importance both to producers in the United Kingdom and to the purchasers who require this stock to improve the native breeds, and supply these markets with economically-produced food. Any outbreak of foot-and-mouth or any other foreign disease would immediately put a stop to this trade, and cause very heavy losses to the owners of such stock.

3. That there must be danger of disease from Canada, seeing that (though possibly free now) it has a frontier running for upwards of 2,000 miles in touch with the United States, which can never be proved to be absolutely free from infectious or contagious diseases; at all events, such immunity can never be proved to the satisfaction of this country. That being so, and seeing how mysterious is the spread of disease, it would be madness to run the risk of opening the door for it in the way proposed. If the privilege were granted to Canada, other colonies and nations would expect the same treatment, and this would be difficult to resist.

4. In whose interest is this concession claimed? Not the farmers as a class, for fully 90 per cent. are against the proposal. Not the consumers generally, who have nothing to gain by the change, as the price of meat will always be ruled by the amount of imports. No more cattle would be grazed in consequence, or, if such were the case, it would be done at the expense of dairying.

These Canadian stores come here now in fat condition, or replace better cattle that now come either alive or dead; no more meat would be available for the consumer in consequence of this proposed change. It must be a more economical system to either fatten these cattle at home, or send them to the States to be fattened, than to send the lean animal and the maize and cottonseed separately to this country, seeing that the cost of sending a store animal would be the same as for a fat one.

5. There are, no doubt, a few graziers who agitate for this concession—those who invariably buy their feeding cattle in the spring of the year, consequently buy at the dearest time, and sell in the autumn, when beef is always cheapest—they employ no labor, and expect to make money, but are often disappointed. They imagine these stores are coming in the spring, whereas (if they come at all) they are more likely to come in the fall, when they would meet such a bad market as would probably soon put a stop to the trade. Those most interested in the trade are, no doubt, shippers, dock owners, and dealers; but should a great and prosperous industry be threatened for so trifling and uncertain a prospective trade?

6. These animals would, as a matter of course, if allowed to land here, be subject to similar conditions as are imposed upon pedigree stock leaving this country for Canada, viz., the tuberculin test and quarantine on arrival.

7. If graziers are not satisfied with their present returns, let them alter their system, rear their own cattle, and breed good ones, or turn their attention to dairying, and bring the population back to the land—there is no insuperable difficulty to either of these alternatives; it is only a matter of arrangement, but, if carried out, would greatly benefit all classes.

8. The price of beef is lower than ever, and, excepting in the spring months, stores are getting lower every year (but, of course, this depends very much on the hay and root crops), and there can be no sufficient grounds for making any change in the law.

R. STRATTON.

Arrangement of Cattle in Stalls.

Editor "The Farmer's Advocate":

I read in "The Farmer's Advocate" recently an article on the arrangement of cattle in the stalls for sale. My opinion differs from that of the writer in this respect, that instead of placing the small cattle at the door and the larger ones at the other end, I would place the best cattle so that the eye of the buyer will strike them first, as the first impression made on the mind is more effective than the second. When a buyer sees the inferior cattle first his mind is more or less prejudiced when he looks at the good ones; but when he sees the good ones first it puts him into a better frame of mind, and he is apt to overlook some of the defects