

FARMER'S ADVOCATE

AND HOME MAGAZINE

* AGRICULTURE, STOCK, DAIRY, POULTRY, HORTICULTURE, VETERINARY, HOME CIRCLE.*

REGISTERED IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE COPYRIGHT ACT OF 1875.

Vol. XXXIV.

LONDON, ONT., AND WINNIPEG, MAN., JULY 1, 1899.

No. 481

EDITORIAL.

The Farmer's Dwelling House.

CASH PRIZES OFFERED.

The observation is frequently made in many sections of the country that the farmer erects better buildings, comparatively speaking, for his animals than he does for himself and his family. He is charged with putting more thought and results of observation into barn plans than into house plans, and that he seems to be more concerned for the ventilation and sanitation of stables than for the comfort and well-being of his wife and family. We shall not stop to discuss how well founded the complaint may be, but as many new farmhouses will undoubtedly be erected in the near future, and many substantial old ones can be easily improved by a little alteration, we have a plan to propose whereby helpful ideas may be placed at the disposal of our readers. Time was when the main idea appeared to be "lots of room" enclosed within four square walls, with little or no regard to obviating unnecessary steps and toil on the part of the wife and daughter or domestic help, or to a tasty exterior, or to making the rooms where the members of the family spend most of their time the most comfortable. To begin with, the farmhouse should be *homelike*—a place to live in, the associations of which will become almost part and parcel of the family as it grows up. Heretofore the ventilation, drainage, heating by furnace (more cleanly, economical and effective than an assortment of stoves), arrangement of cellar, back kitchen, etc., have received altogether too little attention, compared, in many cases, with an ambitious but costly attempt to make a big, showy edifice. What we propose is to offer the sum of \$45, divided into three prizes (1st, \$20; 2nd, \$15; and 3rd, \$10), for the best and most complete plans, with written descriptions sufficient to explain the former fully, together with a good clear photograph of the house itself; the house to be one of the cost of which would in the ordinary course run from \$1,500 to \$3,000, not exceeding the latter. Many people themselves now possess and can use cameras, or, if not, the services of a local photographer can readily be secured to "take" a picture of the residence. Many persons naturally take a justifiable pride in their homes, and already have in their possession good photographs. In such cases it would only be necessary to prepare the plans of the cellar or basement and different stories, showing how they are laid out, together with closets, pantry, verandas, dimensions, etc., and forward to us, with a letter describing the house, material used, cost, etc. This competition will be open for two months (July and August), all plans, photos, and manuscript to reach the FARMER'S ADVOCATE office, London, Ont., on or before the 1st of September next. Announcement will be made as soon as our awards are made, and so soon after as practical we will publish in the ADVOCATE engravings of the prizewinning houses, and plans and the descriptive articles. We desire our friends to aid us in furthering the object we have in view, as stated above, by at once entering the competition and sending us the plans, photos, and articles. Do not put it off till a more convenient season, but decide to-day that you will do so. Prepare the plans in pencil or ink (the latter preferred), or making pencil sketch first and pen and ink afterwards. Make arrangements for the taking of the photo, if you have not one already, and writing the descriptive article. Mark your name and address on each, and wrap up the photo carefully, so as to avoid injury in coming through the mails.

Fattening Cattle Loose Instead of Tied.

Early in the year 1897 the attention of one of the editors of the FARMER'S ADVOCATE was called to the results of a comparative test between cattle fattened loose and a similar lot tied in the usual way. It was conducted on the farm of Hon. Wm. Mulock, Postmaster-General, near Aurora, Ont., in the County of York, and was under the oversight of Mr. Wm. Linton, the well-known Shorthorn breeder. The gains in flesh stated to have been made by the cattle at liberty, compared with these confined, were so remarkable as to challenge instant attention. A member of our staff visited the farm, obtained a description of the plan of feeding and particulars generally of the trial, which were published in the April 1st issue of the ADVOCATE of that year. There was not only the direct advantage of extra gain in flesh, but a simpler and less expensive plan of stabling, and lessened labor for the attendants, all of which are important items which a good business farmer will not overlook in these days of close margins, because they may mean the difference between loss and profit. That the subject deserved further investigation was, therefore, apparent on its face. On a few stock farms here and there the plan had been in use, giving satisfactory results, such as those of Mr. W. C. Edwards, M. P., of Rockland (where this plan had been in vogue for some years on an extensive scale); A. & D. Brown, Elgin Co.; the McMillans, of Huron; Baty, of Middlesex, and others, from whom we obtained and were enabled to lay before the farmers of the country a fund of definite and suggestive information. The desirability was suggested of an experiment on this subject at one of the Government institutions, and the matter was promptly taken up by Mr. Wm. Rennie, the able Superintendent of the Ontario Agricultural College Farm at Guelph. A careful trial was made during the winter of 1898, which resulted in favor of the loose system of feeding, as our readers are aware. In the 6 months' feeding period the loose steers, on similar rations, gained about 70 pounds each per head more than those confined. A good many others have since been encouraged to give this plan a trial, and the consensus of opinion seems to be that the cattle make greater gains—"do" better—on the same food with less labor. That they should thrive better with a fair amount of liberty and exercise than when tied day after day and month after month—in many cases never let out at all—during the long feeding period, does not seem unreasonable, because under the latter conditions the secretions and other processes will naturally become clogged and impeded, thus preventing the animal from making the best use of its food. Animals so fed require to be dehorned; and, as a rule, have access to water at all times. An incidental advantage arises in the fine condition in which a large quantity of manure is left for use in fertilizing the farm for future crops. Last year a number of stables were overhauled in order to change from stalls, with stanchions or chains, to open compartments, and this year some old stables are being altered and new ones constructed according to the latter plan. That feeders might be further informed on the subject, one of our staff recently spent a couple of days in Huron Co., Ont., and elsewhere we give the results of his enquiry in the case of two successful feeders, Mr. Wm. Murdock, who the past season fed 44 head loose and 18 tied, and Mr. D. A. Forrester, who delivered the other day a well-fattened bunch of 40 head, all fed loose—5 in each pen. Both are well satisfied with the system. A plan of each stable is given. We might add that Hon. Mr. Mulock himself visited Mr. Forrester's stables last winter and was so well pleased with the details of the internal arrangement that he intends to modify his own stables accordingly this summer. He now considers it an advantage to have fewer cattle penned together. We also publish a letter with an elaborate set of

plans kindly furnished us by Mr. A. S. McBean, of Glengarry Co., Ont., in reply to a recent enquiry from one of our readers, in which he gives an admirable description of his stabling for 125 head of cattle, 100 hogs, and 8 or 10 horses, besides poultry. Mr. McBean has been fattening export cattle for 7 or 8 years, and a year ago rearranged his stables, giving up the system of tying cattle, and he is well pleased with the change. The plans which he has furnished us, as well as the others published, will repay careful study.

Preparation for the Fairs.

As the fair season approaches again, we are led to think of the need of preparation for the competition for the prizes offered in the various lines of live stock, agricultural, dairy and horticultural products. In the case of live stock, no doubt the work of preparation has been, as a rule, in process for many months. The experienced breeder and showman recognizes the fact that the preparation of prizewinners, in the broadest and best sense, begins before they are born by the mating of the best parents, with a view to the production of offspring combining a maximum of the good qualities of the highest type of the breed.

Having such a foundation to build upon, the preparation of the animal for this year's showing may well have commenced at the close of last year's fair season—not by continuing to force it to obesity by feeding full rations of concentrated and fattening foods, but by varying its bill of fare, making it to consist mainly of bulky foods, such as good clover hay and early-cut, well-saved straw, corn fodder, and a liberal supply of roots, bran, and ground oats. This, together with regular and sufficient exercise, appears to us ideal treatment for at least the first half of the year since the last year's showing season. While in these remarks we are thinking primarily of cattle, yet in the main the same general line of treatment, with variations to meet the different circumstances, applies to all classes of stock. The first desideratum is the laying of a firm foundation by securing a strong constitution, with the best quality of bone and abundant muscle and vital force; then the finishing touches may safely be added in the form of a larger proportion of the more concentrated foods, such as oil cake and cotton-seed meal, peas and corn; but for variety and safety it is well, in feeding any or all of these, to add bran and oats, in order to avoid cloying of the appetite, and to produce natural flesh in preference to fat exclusively, and to prevent the tendency to lumpiness or the production of rolls of hard fat on the exterior of the carcass, on the one hand, or of excessive softness and flabbiness on the other. There is a quality of handling in the well-fed animal which responds to the touch with a certain elastic softness which pleases and satisfies a judge who knows from experience when he finds what is about right; and, other things being equal, this quality of handling may well, and often does, turn the scales and decide the placing of competing animals, since it indicates a kindly feeder in any class of beef cattle, and is found, as a rule, in the deepest milking and richest butter-producing cows. While it goes without saying that it is hardly possible to prepare stock for successful showing by allowing them to run out in the hot summer sun, where they have to fight flies and forage for a living, but that they must be kept up in well-ventilated stables with screen doors and windows to admit fresh air and exclude flies, yet it is important that sufficient exercise to keep their legs in the best condition shall be given, and to this end they should have the run of a pasture field, if not during the nights, at least for two or three hours in the evening and early morning of each day. This we know is hardly practicable in the case of bulls, but these may be given liberty to exercise in a shed, or be led out for a mile or two in the cool of the