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FARMERS' Institutes are coming much into favor in the United States, and on all hands it is claimed for them that they are doing a good work. Next to agricultural newspapers they are beginning to be looked upon as educators of the people. They should therefore receive the hearty support of all lovers of good stock and good farming, for these improve with the education of the people. It would not be possible for scrub stock to retain its hold upon the country if the farmers were all intelligently educated. We do not assume that all farmers who keep scrub stock are uneducated, and that on the other hand those who keep improved stock are educated, but we affirm that as a general principle all kinds of superior farming, including the keeping of improved stock, are closely allied with superior intelligence and superior education.

MR. MASON once said to Mr. Bates, "You can go on breeding Shorthorns because they pay you in milk, butter and beef, but we can not unless we sell at high prices to breeders." Whether the compliment were deserved or not, it involves a principle of much moment. So long as Shorthorns can be made to pay in milk, butter and beef, they shall not cease to multiply and fill the land; but if high prices as breeders are to be depended on, the production will be circumscribed. It seems it was the practice of Mr. Bates to rear his calves by the pail, a practice so intimately connected with the development of milking qualities, that its re-introduction generally in relation to the Shorthorn cows would prove altogether a blessing. Viewed in this light, the importance the dairy interest is assuming in the minds of so many, may lead to a revival of the great milking qualities of the Shorthorn cow, so deeply buried of late beneath heaps of beef. It may not be better for the calves, but it certainly will be better for the owners and for the cows. If Thomas Bates in the early part of the century could rear Shorthorn cows noted as milkers, and also as producers of magnificent beefing steers, why cannot the Shorthorn breeders of to-day?

WITH the increasing prices that are being paid for feed, and the stationary or declining prices that are given for pure-breds, it is more and more apparent that, unless in exceptional cases, it will not pay to allow a cow to raise her own calf for five or six months and then permit her to go dry. The day is coming, we believe, when it will be the exception to suckle calves, even those that are pure-breds, as now it is the rule, and we hail the advent of such a time with warmest welcome. If the beef-producing breeds are to regain lost milking qualities, the calves must be raised by hand and the cows milked for a period of nine or ten months after calving. The battle still rages as to whether there is or is not a general purpose cow. Whatever may be the result, this is clear—that a cow of one of the recognized beef breeds will produce more meat than one from a dairy breed, and that it is a matter of much importance that she give at the same time an abundant supply of milk to feed her calf. Even though calves are reared on skimmed milk, they must have a liberal supply of it from some quarter, and the natural source to look for it is surely its own dam.

If a farmer were convinced that by paying a good sum for a good sire, or a good service fee for the use of the same, he could get his money back again and more along with it, he would no doubt take this step. Of this he has lingering doubts, notwithstanding the apparent clearness of the demonstration that he may read from time to time. His mistake may arise in part from taking an incomplete view of the whole matter. He figures as to the cost of the sire and his keep for one year or term of years, and deducts from this the probable amount of service fees to be received, plus probable price for which the animal will be sold. He does not allow for the influence that this sire may have on his own herd for several generations. The above method of calculating would be correct providing the purchase were a purely business speculation, as is the case frequently with those who purchase stallions. These men have done much to elevate the standard of the better class of horses, thus putting the non-enterprise of the farmers in many communities to the blush. The reason that others assign for not bringing good sires into the neighborhood is, that they cannot afford it, which sometimes is the correct one, but not always. It is invariably to be received with some reservation where the person is within reach of a good sire and yet does not patronize it.

VERY much is said and written on the wisdom of using only first-class sires if our stock is to be improved, or even kept at a normal standard, and yet thousands upon thousands of our farmers pay no more heed to such statements than if they were the words of some nice sounding fairy tale. Equally common is the indifference manifested by nine-tenths, it may be, of those engaged in growing grain, in the selection of their seed, and yet the proper selection of good seed is quite as important as the right selection of good sires. As stated in a leader in the *North British Agriculturist*, it is not improbable that the deterioration consequent upon continuing to sow seed long upon the same land is controlled by laws akin to the loss of stamina that is the penalty of continued in- and in-breeding in live-stock lines. This, it may be, is the explanation of the good results that follow a change of seed. But whether seed is changed or not, only the best of its kind should be sown. It is in the power of every farmer to do this who has a good winnowing mill and the inclination to put it to a good use. The best time to select and prepare seeds for spring sowing is early winter, when the supply is

abundant, and one is able to select a sufficiency of what is best only from the whole crop. When the pile from which to select becomes diminished, all that one can do is to sow such as he has, and that is seldom or never of the best, unless selected. The room for improvement in agriculture is like the fabled story required by the eastern king—without an end.

IF one were possessed of a piece of land which required an outlay for manure nearly or altogether as much as the returns it gave him, and this from year to year, he would be most unwise to continue to cultivate that land. If he were so situated that he could become possessed of land at a reasonable price in the vicinity which would give him a liberal return for the outlay upon it, and were desirous at the same time of making his livelihood in that way, he would be foolish indeed if he neglected to secure it. This is just what the keeper of scrub or inferior stock is doing. He is putting his feed into a machine that will give him little or no return for it. He might at the same time easily secure a better class of animals that would give him a liberal return for his outlay. If we could but induce those who are content with such stock to try the experiment but once, of feeding a rightly-bred beast alongside of one of the inferior sorts for some months or even a year or two, they would surely be convinced. It would prove to them a cheap experiment in the end. But this is just what they cannot easily be persuaded to do. Usually they leap to the conclusion that a beast of the better class is made so by feed fed to it at an additional cost fully equal to its extra value. Here it is that they make shipwreck. They rush to an assumption of the truth of which they have no demonstration. They look upon feed as the principal if not the sole source of the difference in values. But they are themselves not consistent in the application of this belief, for in selecting a young animal to keep from amongst their common class of stock, they prefer a likely-looking one to one of a lower type. If feed makes all the difference, it should not matter which was kept. The only two conditions required would be, that it should be an animal without deformity and possessed of life. It is not only a misfortune to them individually that they are satisfied with inferior when they might have better, but also to their households. It is of some consequence to the farmer boy and girl as well as to the farmer whether the stock kept on the farm gives returns as it might and should. If in the case supposed of the farmer who persisted in tilling the piece of land that gave him little or no return, his son were to leave him when matured to pursue another calling, he would not be to blame. Why, then, should he be chided for leaving a home where he is doomed to work with scrubs, which neither feed his ambition nor fill his pocket?

## Weaning Lambs.

There is no more critical time in the life of the lamb after the first day or two of its existence than the time of weaning. A majority of sheep-owners do not give the matter their attention sufficiently early in the season, to admit of the dams getting well fleshed before winter comes. With a majority the whole process consists in driving the sheep into the pens and separating the ewes from the lambs, then placing them in fields that are separate.

The lamb, being deprived of a large share of its nourishment, unless put on good pasture and given a supplemental portion at the same time, will fall away at first, which is a serious loss, as it retards the best development of the future sheep. Any stoppages in