

Breed Only Good Horses

Horse breeding in Canada has reached an important stage in its development. There is a great scarcity of good horses in the country. The demand for the past year or two has been so good that superior animals of all classes have been quickly picked up by dealers and one has to cover considerable territory if any large number is wanted. This scarcity applies especially to first-class draft and farm horses, and to carriage and saddle animals. The scarcity is so marked that even medium and inferior horses of these classes bring the prices of first-class animals a few years ago. This scarcity applies to other countries as well as to Canada, and the outlook just now is for good profitable prices for good horses for several years to come. Our great Western country is, and will continue to be, a profitable market for a large number of horses. There will be a great deal of railroad building in Canada during the next few years. Not only will a great many horses be required for this work, but the opening up of new lumbering districts along these new roads will furnish a market for a great many more horses. Then there is the old land to fall back upon. There is always a steady market there for good horses of nearly all classes. Our exports of horses have fallen off considerably the last year or two, owing to the increased demand at home.

This, in brief, is the market side of the situation. What should be the farmers or breeder's attitude towards it? He should lay himself out to breed only the very best for the trade. A brisk market and a good demand is no excuse for producing an inferior animal. The best is none too good whether the market be brisk or otherwise, and if a dull time should come it is always the good animal that is first wanted.

One of the weaknesses in our horse-breeding methods is lack of system and purpose. The average farmer has no definite plan or definite ideal before him as to what he wants. He decides that horse breeding will pay and immediately sets to work to produce colts by mating his mares to the first stallion that comes along, and more often than not, it is the cheap one that gets the preference without any regard to his fitness or quality. True, there are many sections in Ontario and the other provinces where this is not the case, and horses of good type are being produced in sufficient numbers to make these sections famous for good horses. This is especially true of Ontario country and one or two other districts, where the draft horse has reached a proficiency to be excelled by few districts, even in Great Britain. But take the average farmer in any part of Canada. He breeds most indiscriminately without any regard to what is wanted, so long as he gets a horse. There has been improvement in this respect in recent years, no doubt, but a great deal more is needed before anything like uniform or systematic breeding is the general rule in this country.

There have been imported from Great Britain the past year or two, a great many Clydesdale and Shire stallions, mostly good. There is also a large number of good Canadian pure-bred males in the country. But the great lack the country over is suitable mares to breed these stallions to. And here is just where the difficulty lies in improving the general quality of horses in the country. The high prices of recent years have been too tempting for many a farmer, and he has allowed his good mares to go that should have been kept for breeding purposes. Why the farmer will often sell his mares in preference to geldings is a mystery. They will do the work of the farm just as well, if properly managed, and raise a good colt besides.

The selection of the mare for breeding purposes is fully as important as the selection of the stallion. Farmers should bear this in mind and not expect too much of the stallion. Though he will do a great deal he cannot do everything towards raising the standard of horses in this country. First get a suitable mare and then select the best stallion to be found to mate her to, even if a larger fee is charged, and success in profitable horse breeding is assured. Breed along definite lines, using system and good judgment.

Want Bonus Renewed

The sugar beet manufacturers in Ontario are asking the local government to continue the bonus granted three years ago, to assist in starting this industry. This special industry has had a more difficult career than was expected of it. Times have been good in Ontario and labor scarce, and the farmers as a class have not taken hold of the growing of beets because of the extra work attached to it. Consequently the four factories with, perhaps, one exception, have found it difficult to secure a sufficient supply of beets to keep the factories running a full season. This has greatly increased the cost of manufacturing and reduced profits, if any, to a very small margin. Besides, owing to the organized opposition of the big cane sugar refineries in Canada, there has been some difficulty in disposing of the product at what was considered a fair value. It does seem, therefore, that for a year or two at least the bonus might be continued and the industry given further time to get permanently on its feet.

Ottawa Winter Fair

The Central Canada Winter Fair, held last week at Ottawa, gives promise of developing into a most valuable educational institution. Another year, with a new and up-to-date building suitable for its requirements, this show will approach closely to that of Guelph in point of utility and value as a great educational show. True, it may be sometime before it equals the latter in attendance and number of exhibits. But these are not essential to good educational work.

Last week's show was, of necessity, located in the comfortable stables of the Central Canada Exhibition Association. These, though not conveniently arranged for the purpose, were comfortable and warm both for exhibits and visitors. There was held in connection with it a horse show that promises much for the future. The display of horses, cattle, sheep and swine was only fairly large, though some good animals were shown in each class. The poultry show was a very fine one, as every such show in the Ottawa district usually is. These, with the lectures and demonstrations, added greatly to the value of the fair. The horses were mostly heavy drafts, and several leading exhibitors put up good shows. But a report of this and the other departments will have to be deferred until next issue, when we shall have more space at our disposal.

Keep More Sheep

In last issue were two letters from correspondents in Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, which show that sheep-raising in that part of Canada is decreasing also. The reasons given are similar to those given by Ontario sheep-raisers.

While these reasons may have something to do with it, there are other reasons, such as the development of the bacon trade, the progress of dairying, etc., which are also important, and may have more to do with the decrease in sheep raising than they are given credit for. Perhaps the sheep breeders themselves are as much to blame for this as anyone else in that they have not pushed their wares as much as they should.

Fodder Cheese

Should fodder cheese be made in Canada, that is, cheese made in the early spring and late fall, when cows have to be fed entirely in the stables? The Montreal Produce Dealers' Association, which specially represents the exporters of dairy products, says no, reasoning that fodder cheese made in any large quantities interferes with the sale of the full grass cheese. Besides, it is of much inferior quality to that made during the regular season, and gives Canada and Canadian cheese a bad name in the British market. The Association advises the making of butter instead of this inferior cheese.

With the advice given we agree. Taking one year with another, the dairyman would be better if no inferior fall or late cheese were made. Last fall a large amount of this quality was turned out, and no doubt had considerable to do with the drop in price at the end of the year from the high values of last season. The dairyman, however, is not wedded to the fodder cheese idea. It is a matter of dollars and cents with him. If exporters and dealers will continue to pay good prices for this stuff, the factories will open early in the spring and keep open late in the fall, and dairymen will supply the milk. The buyer has this matter largely in his own hands.