

Live Stock.

Select and Save Your Best Sheep.

We are sorry to record that the prevailing practice with many keepers of sheep is to select and sell the best of their flocks, rather than to call out the inferior members and keep none but such animals as will tend to improve the appearance and value of the flock. A writer in the *Michigan Farmer* states that there will be a disposition to sacrifice sheep and render their carcasses for the tallow, on account of the low price of wool. We recollect the scare of 1869, and we also recollect that those who held on to the wool production made the money, and we apprehend this will again be the case.

It is earnestly recommended that wool growers cull their flocks and turn off all inferior, non-productive sheep, but let no one imagine that the bottom is about to fall out of the business. There are altogether too many sheep which will yield only two and a half to three pounds of wool. No sheep should be retained that will shear less than four pounds of wool; turn off all this low kind of trash, and the best time to test their value is at the time of shearing. Then mark every sheep for the shambles that does not come up to the standard. It is time wool growers abandon the use of scrub rams and scrub ewes. It is time that all half breed bucks were sent to the shambles. There should be a more active demand for the best thoroughbred rams. There should be an advance along the entire line of sheep breeding. We wish our voice could reach every flock master in the State with such potency as should compel this season the slaughter of every scrub ram in the borders of the State. The best flocks are the ones that are going to pay. It is with sheep as it is with swine or cattle—there must be selections—flocks must be culled—some pains must be taken with breeding stock. All we can say is let the man who has a good flock of sheep keep making it better. Resolve to add one pound of wool to each fleece the next season. After the culls have been separated from the better sheep, let them be disposed of at some rate. Better sell such culls at fifty cents per head than to attempt to bring their condition up to a desirable standard. Summer is the true time to assort flocks. Many flock masters defer this job until autumn. By separating the culls now, the selected sheep will have the advantage of better feed until the end of the grazing season. In the management of sheep it will be better to take a conservative course, pursue it steadily, do not be carried away with the cry of cheap wool, but aim to keep a flock of sheep on your farm. There are many considerations in favor of keeping a few sheep on every farm. They are good fertilizers; they afford some variety to farm life; they are a food-producing animal; their wool will always sell for cash at some price, and they are easily handled and their product cheaply marketed.—*N. S. Herald.*

Educating Horses.

Horses can be educated to the extent of their understanding as well as children, and can be as easily damaged or ruined by bad management. We believe that the great difference found in horses as to vicious habits or reliability, comes more from the different management of men than from variance of natural disposition in the animals. Horses with high mettle are more easily educated than those of less or dull spirits, and are more susceptible to ill training, and consequently may be good or bad, according to the education they receive. Horses with dull spirits are not by any means proof against bad management, for in them may often be found the most provoking obstinacy or vicious habits of different characters that render them almost entirely worthless. Could the coming generation of horses in this country be kept from their days of colthood to the age of five years in the hands of good, careful managers, there would be seen a vast difference in the general characters of the noble animals.

If a colt is never allowed to get an advantage, it will never know that it possesses a power that man cannot control; and if made familiar with strange objects, it will not be skittish and nervous. If a horse is made accustomed from his early days to have objects hit him on the heels, back and hips, he will pay no attention to the giving out of a harness or of a waggon running against him at an unexpected moment.

We once saw an aged lady drive a high-spirited horse, attached to a carriage, down a steep hill, with no hold-back straps upon the harness, and she assured us that there was

no danger, for her son accustomed his horses to all kinds of usages and sights that commonly drive the animal into a frenzy of fear and excitement.

A gun can be fired from the back of a horse, an umbrella held over his head, a buffalo robe thrown over his neck, a railroad engine pass close by, his heels bumped with sticks, and the animal take it all as a natural condition of things, if only taught by careful management that he will not be injured thereby. There is great need of improvement in the management of this noble animal; less beating wanted and more of education.—*In-Door and Out.*

Ringling and Handling Bulls.

Now that more attention is given to improving farm stock, a bull is kept upon nearly every large farm. The high-bred bulls are spirited animals, and are exceedingly dangerous if the utmost caution is not exercised in man-

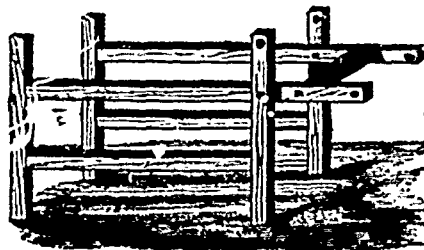


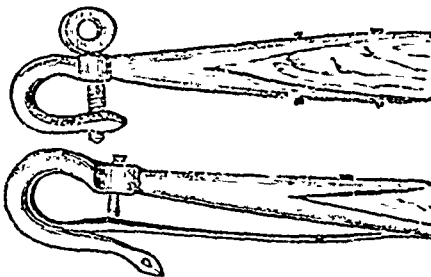
Fig. 1 Stall for Bull.

ging them. Experienced breeders are not unfrequently caught unawares, and unceremoniously lifted over the fence, or forced to escape ingloriously from one of their playful animals, or even seriously injured by the vicious ones. It should be made a rule, wherever a bull is kept, to have him ringed before he is a year old, and brought



Fig. 2.

under subjection and discipline at an early age, while he can be safely and easily handled. Some time ago we assisted at the ringling of a yearling bull, which severely taxed the utmost exertions of six persons with ropes and stanchions to hold him. A slip of the foot might have caused the loss of a life, or some serious injuries. To avoid such dangerous struggles, a strong frame, similar to that in figure 1, in which to confine the bull, may be used. The frame con-



Figs. 3-4.

sists of four or six stout posts set deeply in the ground, with side bars bolted to it, forming a stall in which the bull can be confined so that he cannot turn round. The frame may be placed in the barn-yard or a stable and may be made to serve as a stall. At the front, a breast bar should be bolted, and the upper side bars should project beyond this for 18 or 20 inches. The forward posts project above the side bars some inches. The ends of these posts, and the side bars, are bored with one-inch holes, and at the rear of the frame there should be tenons or iron straps to receive a strong cross bar, to prevent the animal from escaping, should the fastenings become broken or loosened.

The bull, led into the frame, is placed with his head over the breast bar, and the horns are tied with ropes, an inch in diameter, to the holes in the bars and posts. He is then secured, and his head is elevated so that the trochar and cannula can be readily used to pierce the cartilage of the nose, and the ring inserted and screwed together. Before the ring is used, it should be tested to ascertain that it is sound and safe.

When the ring is inserted, the straps shown at figure 2 should be used, for the purpose of holding it up and out of the way, so as not to interfere with the feeding of the animal until the nose has healed and become calloused. The straps may be left upon the head permanently, if desired, when the front strap will offer a convenient means of catching him by the staff, when necessary to do so in the field. The staff is a matter of the greatest importance. These should be made of the toughest ash or hickory, and not less than five feet long. With a staff of this length, the herdsman can check the wildest bull, and by resting the but-end of it upon the ground, can throw the animal's head up, and prevent him from approaching too near. The hook of the staff is shown of two kinds at figures 3 and 4. One is furnished with a spring by which it is closed. A metal bar attached to the spring and passing through a hole in the staff, prevents the ring from slipping along the spring. The other is provided with a screw by which it is closed. The former is preferable, as one is not obliged to approach very near to the bull to secure the hook. The forms of staff and the head straps here illustrated are used by Mr. Woodward, of Tewkesbury, England, and are well worth adopting here by those farmers and breeders who do not already use either these or equally good substitutes. The illustrations of the head straps and staves are reproduced from the *London Agricultural Gazette*.

Suggestions about Breeding.

BY PROFESSOR JAMES LAW.

1. A perfect development and sound, vigorous health, constitutionally, especially in the generative organs, are conditions of fertility.

2. In the maintenances and improvement of a breed, the truth that "like produces like," that the reproductive germ will stamp upon the animal developed from it the characters of the parent organism, is the backbone of success.

3. We can, in a great degree, at will produce variations and improvements in breeds, as by abundant feeding, a mild and salubrious climate, a rich and healthy soil, moderate use, education, stimulation, or selection of desirable qualities; by disease or rejection of undesirable characters and properties; by soliciting the weight of imagination in our favor; by allowing the breeding animals to mix only with those of the stamp desired; by crossing less improved breeds systematically with mates of a better race, and by crossing animals faulty or deficient in some particular point with others in which this point is developed in excess.

4. The herding of pregnant high class animals with low bred ones, and the resulting attachment between the two races are to be especially avoided, as occasionally affecting the progeny injuriously; strong impressions from a new or unusual condition of surrounding objects are to be equally guarded against.

5. If a valuable female is allowed to breed to an inferior male, she cannot be relied upon to produce pure bred animals for several succeeding pregnancies. Through a strong and retained impression, through the absorption into the system of living particles (germinal matter) from the fetus, or through some influence during pregnancy on the ova, then being most actively developed, the good or bad features of the first sire are perpetuated in the progeny of succeeding ones.

6. All breeds show a tendency to "breed back," or to produce offspring bearing the marks of their less improved and comparatively valueless ancestors; hence, individuals of this kind must be rejected from the best breeds if we would maintain their excellence.

7. Certain races and individuals have their characters more fixed, and will transmit and perpetuate them in greater proportion than others with which they may be crossed. If their qualities are desirable, they prove highly valuable in raising other stock of greater excellence. If undesirable, they will depreciate the value of any stock crossed for many generations. That fixity of type, however, is above all, a characteristic of those which have been carefully selected and bred up to a certain standard for many generations, so that in our best, longest established and most esteemed breeds we have a most valuable legacy left us by the successful breeders of the past with which we may mould our inferior races almost at will.

8. While breeding continuously from the nearest relations tends to a weakened constitution, and the aggravation of any taint in the blood to sterility, these may be avoided by infusing at intervals fresh blood of the same family which has been bred apart from this branch of it for several generations. Moreover, the highest excellence is sometimes attained only by breeding very close for a time.

9. Diseased or mutilated animals are generally to be discarded from breeding. Mutilations resulting from disease existing during pregnancy, and disease with a constitutional morbid taint are, above all, to be dreaded as transmissible.—*N. Y. Herald.*