

THE HORSE.

Foaling Time.

Article No. 1.

As the general foaling time is approaching, pregnant mares should receive special attention. It should not be forgotten that a mare in the advanced stages of gestation has, in addition to sustaining herself, a nearly mature foetus to sustain, and as this calls largely upon her resources she should be fed and cared for accordingly. Her feed should be plentiful, of first-class quality, and of an easily-digested nature. She should be fed liberally on bran with a reasonable percentage of rolled oats, in addition to hay, a cupful of linseed meal, and a couple of carrots or a mangel or turnip daily tend to aid digestion and prevent constipation. The too-common practice of feeding solely on dry hay and oats, while giving fair results in working horses, is not suitable for breeding mares. The bran and succulent feed mentioned tend to keep the digestive organs normal, and also stimulate the lacteal apparatus to the desired activity.

While pregnant mares should receive some special care they should not be pampered and kept in idleness. There is a too-common opinion that self maintenance and sustaining the foetus is sufficient labor. Ordinary driving or regular light work is much better than idleness. They should be given regular but gentle exercise or work. They should not be asked to perform labor that necessitates excessive muscular or respiratory exertion, but the mare that is kept in fair condition and regularly exercised or worked during the whole period of gestation will, with few exceptions, produce a stronger foal than the one that has been pampered and kept in idleness during the greater part of that period. This applies particularly to the last few months of pregnancy. If it be not practicable to exercise her in harness she should be turned out in a yard or paddock for at least a few hours every day when the weather is not too rough or the ground too slippery. Care should be taken to not let her out with strange or vicious horses that might worry or kick her, but some safe means of forcing regular exercise should be observed and continued until she shows symptoms of approaching parturition.

As the period of gestation varies in different animals, and often in the same animal in different years, we cannot tell with reasonable certainty when parturition will take place. In round numbers we say that 11 months is the average period, but observation and experience teach us that this is by no means constant, and that the period varies from 10 to 13 months, and in rare cases we notice even a greater variance. Hence it is well to be prepared for the event any time after the ninth month. After this period she should be kept in a large, comfortable box stall, or if during the season when on grass, a comfortable paddock where she can be closely watched. The box stall should have no mangers or feed boxes into which the foal may drop in case the act be performed while the mare is standing, as is sometimes the case. It is unsafe to allow a mare to foal while tied in a stall, as she is unable to give the foal the necessary attention and it may perish from this cause, or, if it be strong and able to rise and walk around without attention from either dam or man, it is as likely to walk into the stall of another horse as that of its dam, and, in its endeavor to obtain nourishment, is liable to be injured or killed. The stall in which the mare is kept should be well cleaned daily, and it is good practice to sprinkle slacked lime on the floor each time before fresh bedding is supplied. It is a mistake to allow manure, either solid, liquid or mixed, to accumulate, as it heats and vitiates the air as well as favors the multiplication of germs. In support of this practice it is claimed that the presence of manure upon the floor prevents it becoming slippery thereby avoiding accidents to mare or foal that might otherwise occur, but if the stall be well cleaned out daily, and especially if lime be used as stated, it will not become dangerous in this respect. The lime performs a two-fold function—it keeps the floor dry, destroys and prevents odors and destroys microbes, which if present are very liable to cause trouble in the foal. Probably the most dangerous of these microbes is that form which gains entrance to the circulation through the umbilical opening of the foal, and causes that serious and often fatal disease known as "joint-ill or navel-ill." In addition to this it is wise to give the whole stall a thorough sweeping, and scrubbing with a hot 5 per cent. solution of carbolic acid or one of the coal-tar antiseptics, or a thorough coat of hot lime wash with 5 per cent. crude carbolic acid.

When the usual symptoms of approaching parturition appear the mare should be carefully watched. These symptoms usually are a more pendulous condition of the abdomen, an apparent shrinking or dropping of the muscles of the croup, a fullness of the mammae and teats, at the points of which, in many cases, a small lump of inspissated colostrum, which is commonly called "wax" appears. There is usually also an enlargement of the lips of the vulva, and often a parting of the same with a discharge of a small quantity of a viscid substance. It must, however, be remembered that in some cases the symptoms are not well marked, and that in some cases a mare foals without having shown any well-marked symptoms indicating that parturition is about to take place, and in such cases we are often surprised to find that birth has taken place in a normal manner, or else parturition is difficult, and may have reached that stage in which the saving of the foal is out of the question, and the dam's life may also be in danger.

The immediate symptoms are, of course, the appearance of "labor pains." These are exhibited by an uneasiness, a nervous, excited state, especially noticed in a mare about to produce her first young. The mare walks around the stall or paddock, stamps, lies down and usually strains. This is usually followed by a period of ease, which is succeeded by another attack. The attacks become more pronounced, more severe and longer continued, and the periods of ease shorter until the pain becomes almost or quite continuous. If in a field the patient usually seeks solitude by wandering away from other horses, while in rare cases the mare is more contented when her owner or groom is present and in sight. In some cases we notice what are called "false labor pains" in which the symptoms are reasonably well marked for a time and then pass off to reappear in a variable time. In some cases parturition is completed in a few minutes after the first appearance of pain, while in others, even when conditions are normal, they continue for hours. The man who is about to watch a mare at this period should be provided with a knife, a bottle containing a five-per-cent. solution of carbolic acid in water, in which is soaking a rather soft, strong cord; an 8-oz. bottle of water with 15 grain corrosive sublimate in it, and a pail or basin containing a quantity of an antiseptic fluid, as a 5-per-cent. solution of one of the coal-tar antiseptics or carbolic acid. There are many reasons why a mare about to bring forth young should be carefully watched. We hope to discuss these in the near future.

WHIP.



Montrave Mac.

A photograph of this noted Clydesdale horse when 27 years old.

Shire Notes

According to our English representative, the cult of the Suffolk horse is spreading wide over that country. A Derbyshire man, J. Preston Jones, has just paid W. D. Parker of Suffolk, £1,200 for a four-year-old stallion, Freston Khedive a son of Sudbourne Arabi one of the most prepotent sires in the Suffolk Stud Book. Young stallions (22) offered at a sale in Ipswich made up to 440 guineas and averaged £216 apiece. Young mares and fillies (23) averaged £190 8s., and made up to 300 guineas; and a dozen geldings sold at £140 apiece, albeit 255 guineas had to be given for one—a real weight shifter and a terror in his collar.

LIVE STOCK.

Oats and Vetch for Pasture.

EDITOR "THE FARMER'S ADVOCATE":

As the season is now drawing near for putting the seed in the ground, it is well to look ahead and provide for emergencies. Seasons are variable, hardly any two are alike. Men in the stock business should plan on sowing a crop to cut for the stock when pastures are short. As a rule pastures are at their best during June and the stock does well, but during July and August hot weather usually sets in and the pastures become dry and parched. Over thirty years ago I read in a farmers' paper that it was a good plan to sow oats and vetches to supplement the pasture. I tried it and find it to be an excellent plan. I was able to cut three crops in one season. I think it advisable to divide the acreage for soiling crops into three parts, sow one part as early as possible in the spring and the other two at intervals of fifteen days. This will prolong the feeding period considerably. I would advise sowing at least one acre of this mixture for every twenty cows you have to feed, and to sow at the rate of one bushel of vetches to two of oats. Vetches will start to grow after they have been cut better than will clover. If it so happens that you do not need to use all the crop for pasture, it can be ensiled or cured for hay. If in the dairy line, do not allow the cows to shrink in their milk before you commence to feed them the green fodder. Once the milk flow slackens off it is almost impossible to bring it back to normal. The prospects appear to be for high prices for butter and cheese, and it is essential that an effort be made to have the cows produce the maximum amount.

Oats and vetch also make a good pasture for hogs, although it is advisable to add red clover to the mixture. In about six weeks after the crop is sown the hogs may be turned on it. A good dry sleeping place must be

provided, as the pigs will not do well if they have to lie in the open. I well remember seeing, on the farm of the late D. N. McPherson, of Lancaster, a herd of eighty pigs pasturing on a little over an acre of ground. They were getting whey and about two pounds of shorts per day and were making good gains. He had a great crop of clover on a piece of ground where the hogs were pastured the previous year. By using the by-product from the cheese factory or creamery along with pasture and a light grain ration there is a fair amount of money in feeding pigs. If one wishes to make pork cheaply it is necessary to have the hogs on pasture during the summer.

Nova Scotia.

PETER MCFARLANE.

Robert Bakewell.

EDITOR "THE FARMER'S ADVOCATE":

We are inclined in Canada to look down on the farmer who does not own the land he cultivates. From time to time we may hear such expressions used as, he "rents his farm" or he farms "on shares" to explain deficiencies in certain persons. In England it is otherwise. To own a bit of land is always desirable, but not always attainable, and many men live and do good work on rented farms. Such a one was Robert Bakewell of Dishley Grange, Leicestershire. So far as we know he never owned an acre of his native county, yet his name will ever be associated with it as one of the most important of its many honored sons.

The system of land tenure in the old land is not by any means such as patriotic men and women would wish to see it, still it has on the whole served us well. Abuses there have been on both the part of the landlord and the tenant. Landlords have at times been barely honest, certainly not considerate, in raising rents for instance, when farms, owing solely to the enterprise of his tenants have been rendered more valuable. Every one could mention such cases, and others, too, where tenants were sharp enough to impose on the ignorance and good nature of their landlords to a degree that was hardly honorable. So far as we have been able to judge the laws are imperfect as the men who made them were imperfect, but frequently we find people superior to both their laws and their religion.

In 1725, nearly 200 years ago Robert Bakewell was born at Dishley Grange and exactly 70 years later he died in his old home. Until he was 30 years old he worked with his father evidently doing just as he was told, but at this time his father, being an old man retired from business, and then we can imagine changes more rapid than any one had looked for began at Dishley Grange. It was not only in the improvement of his stock that Robert Bakewell made experiments. He introduced a system of irrigation which had so great an effect on one portion of his farm as to enable him to have four crops of hay in the year. He also invented some kind of water chute by which he conveyed his turnips from field to farmyard. He said he threw them in and bade them "meet him at the barn door." These labor saving arrangements were certainly a novelty in the leisurely eighteenth century. We who have the greatest century of industrial advancement the world has ever seen separating us from its conditions can hardly imagine what life in those times could be like.

One book which so far as agriculture and animal husbandry goes tells us much is Arthur Young's Tour. He kept journals and mentioned all he saw, and his books are now more valuable than ever as a reliable account of the country life of that bygone time.

Robert Bakewell comes in for honorable mention on account of the enterprise he was showing in improving the horses, cattle and sheep of the country. Of the last Arthur Young says, Mr. Bakewell has succeeded in raising 2 lbs. of mutton where one was raised before. In the way of cattle he produced what he called the "New Leicester Longhorn" which are described as "small clean boned, round, short carcasses and kindly looking cattle inclined to be fat." According to Youatt a contemporary authority on cattle "the grazier could not too highly value these cattle but their qualities as milkers were greatly lessened." This last is not an unusual experience when men take a hand in "improving" breeds. The Angus, the Galloway, the Shorthorn have a similar tale to tell. As for the "New Leicester Longhorn" we may say peace to their memory for as a breed it has ceased to exist. Fortunately their pictures have been preserved.

Leicester has always been famous for its horses. It is in the best hunting district in England and there a good horse always commands a high price. Towards the end of Mr. Bakewell's career horses were unfortunately in demand for purposes more cruel than fox hunting and he had much to do in making a large supply of suitable horses for the war available. He imported strong mares from Flanders and the result was seen in the fine, black horses he exhibited in London during the later years of his activities. As a special breed these horses have passed away also, but not without leaving their mark on the fine animals still to be seen in the English Midlands.

Robert Bakewell's fame as a breeder does not rest on his work either among horses or cattle. When a Countess of Oxford was introduced to a namesake of his she said: "Are you the Mr. Bakewell who invented sheep?" The gentleman's reply to this question is not recorded, but though he was by profession a geologist he might have answered: "No, but he had written a book about wool."

Mr. Bakewell made no secret about how he improved his horses, but he never yet told how he "invented" the Leicester sheep. It was undoubtedly largely by selection, but it is also probable that some judicious