Stock and Dairy.

Potatoes for Horses.

L. T. Scott writes in the *Country Gentleman* :—Nearly every winter when I have my horses up in stable, I think I will call the attention of your readers to the practice of feeding potatoes to their horses. I once came very near losing a very valuable horse from feeding him dry hay and oats, with nothing loosening. I have never believed in dosing a horse with medicine, but something is actually necessary to keep the horse in the right condition. Many use powders, but potatoes are better, and safer, and cheaper, if fed judiciously. If those who are not in the habit of feeding potatoes to horses will try them, they will be astonished at the result. I have known a horse to change from a lazy, dumpish one, to a quick, active, headstrong animal in five days, by simply adding two quarts of potatoes to his feed daily. If very much clear corn meal is fed, they do not need so many potatoes. Too many potatoes are weakening, and so are too many apples. When I was a lad I was away from home at school one winter, and had the care of one horse, one yoke of oxen, and one cow, everyone of which I had to card or curry every day. The horse had three pails of water, four quarts of oats, two quarts small potatoes, and two quarts of corn extra every day he worked, with what hay he wanted, and a stronger, and more active horse of his inches, I have never yet seen.

Judging Wool.

Many farmers have been annoyed, when selling their wool, to find that the acute and practised eye of the wool buyer had detected the fact that his sheep had been allowed to run down in condition at some time during the growth of the fleece. They are half inclined to think that the buyer is merely trying to depreciate the price. As a matter of fact, there is nothing which renders wool so useless for certain kinds of manufacture as unevenness or break in continuity of the thickness of fibre; and there is no defect more common, and nothing that year by year touches the sheep-grower more severely on that tender part of his anatomy —the pocket. However good the wool in all other respects, the keen eye of the buyer singles out the defective wool, and down goes the price of it. And it is not mere fancy that regulates the prices, for the uneven wool will break at the weak places during the first process of manufacture. Some persons suppose that this unevenness of fleece is hereditary in certain animals, and perhaps unevenness might be made hereditary by generations of ill-usage and neglect. But as the wool of an entire flock is found to be uneven one year, and not so in another, it shows that management has more to do with it than descent. If sheep are allowed to get into a low condition, are neglected, underfed, or not sheltered properly, the pores of the skin will contract, and the wool that issues will be of very fine fibre. As soon as the animal recovers a vigorous condition the pores again open, and a longer and stronger fibre grows. The wool is thus weaker in one place than in places at each side of it, and breaks at the weak place on the slightest strain. Nothing induces unevenness more easily and surely than want of water. It is a common notion that sheep can do without water or a very little. If supplied with roots daily they will not want much water; but it is well and humane, too, that water should be always within their reach. Not only is it important that the fibres should be even, but the fleeces throughout should be even as regards length, softness, density and firmness. A practiced wool buyer gives the following description of the way in which an expert examines a fleece:—Always assuming that the wool to be inspected is really a fine wool, we first examine the shoulder at the point where the finest and best wool is usually found. This we take as the standard, and compare it in turn with the wool from the ribs, the thigh, the rump and the hinder parts, and the nearer the wool from these various portions of the animal approaches the standard the better. First, we scrutinize the fineness, and, if the result be satisfactory we pronounce the fleece in respect to fineness, very "even;" next, we inquire into the length of the staple; and, if we find that the wool on the ribs, thigh and back, approximates reasonably in length to that of our standard, we again declare the sheep as regards length of the staple, true and even. We next desire to satisfy ourselves of the density of the fleece; and we do this by closing the hand upon a portion of the rump and of the lion wools, the fleece at these points being usually the thinnest and most faulty, and, if this again give satisfaction, we signify the fact by designating the wool "even" as respects density. Now, to summarize these separate examinations, if you find the fleece of nearly equal fineness from the shoulder, rib, thigh and back, and of equal density at the shoulder and across the loins, you may conclude that you have a perfect sheep.—*English Exchange.*

Practical Views of Practical Breeders.

Mr. Wise, of Prescott, writes as follows to the *Turf, Field and Farm*:—

In the first place, I would say my first purchase was the brood mare Lady Patchen, by George M. Patchen, dam Long Island Maid, by Montauk, son of Cassius M. Clay, bought of W. H. Pick, Esq., Hartford, Conn. The next one, Belle, by Rysdyk's Hambletonian, dam Rhoda, by Ames' Cassius M. Clay, jr., bought of C. M. Pond, Esq., also of Hartford, Conn. My third purchase was Rysdyk, also of Mr. Pond. These three purchases were made in the spring and summer of 1874; and you will say they have been very productive when I tell you I have to-day something over sixty head of stock. The two mares named were in foal when I bought them—Lady Patchen to Peck's Idol, and Belle to Rysdyk. Lady Patchen's produce was a bay filly, now 32 months old, 15.3 hands high, and weighs 975 pounds. She is a right good one, has been handled a little, and can show a 2.40 gait very handily. Produce of Belle: a bay colt, 31 months old, 15.3½ hands high, and weighs 1,105 pounds. He has not been worked as much as the above filly, but is well broken, and can show a 3 minute gait. I have kept him a stallion, and think him a very promising young one. Now, as to how they were fed, &c. At 5 months they were weaned, put into a box-stall 16 to 20 feet, run out doors daytimes, and shut up nights; were turned out every day; don't think they missed a day all winter. I commenced by giving them two quarts each per day, and kept increasing it up to six quarts daily; was changed to ground oats, then back to oats again. Carrots twice a week in place of oats, and in addition to this, about four quarts of milk each night and morning all winter, together with all the good hay they can eat. I have treated all my colts in this manner till this winter, when I have added one-quarter corn to three-quarters oats, and I like it better than the clear oats. For the two (this is the third) years I have been breeding, I have not had a sick colt for an hour—always well and ready for their three meals a day. As I have said above, as I fed my two first colts, so I have fed them all, and I think successfully. One of my yearlings, Louise, by Rysdyk, dam Minnie Day (grandam Old Kate, dam of Orient), she by Green's Hambletonian (full brother, as you know, of Volunteer); this filly is fifteen hands high, as handsome as a picture, and can pull a man in a road cutter in one minute, and has done it. Then I have two weanlings that stand 14.2½ hands, good ones, and show good promise of speed.

The stallions—Rysdyk, Phil Sheridan, Chestnut Hill, Wm. B. Smith and North America—are given eight to ten miles daily. Chestnut Hill, by Rysdyk, is a slick one; trotted a quarter for us the other day in 37 seconds. The brood mares are never worked; run out days and stabled nights. They are fed four quarts of oats daily, carrots twice a week, and all the hay they want. They all look well, and, notwithstanding it has been thought by some our winters are so severe, we could not breed and raise the trotting horse successfully, I am very much inclined to think we can, and hope in a few years to be able to prove it. I am satisfied myself that we can, and am well pleased with my stock so far. I am told by those who have seen Eastern and Kentucky stock that mine compares very favorable with their stock; that they have seen no better ones than mine, and I need not be ashamed of my efforts thus far. I consider this very flattering, indeed, for the remarks are made by those having no interest in one section more than another. If there is any difference, it is rather against Canada than for it.

Ayrshire Cows.

The report of the Ayrshire Agricultural Association gives the following points as the standing of superiority in Ayrshire dairy cows:—

Head short, forehead wide, nose fine between the muzzle and eyes, muzzle moderately large, eyes full and lively, horns wide set on, inclining upward and curving slightly inward.

Neck long and straight from the head to the top of the shoulder, free from loose skin on the under side, fine at its junction with the head, and the muscles symmetrically enlarging towards the shoulders.

Shoulders thin at the top, brisket light, the whole forequarters thin in front, and gradually increasing in depth and width backward.

Back short and straight, spine well defined, especially at the shoulder, the short ribs arched, the body deep at the flanks and the milk veins well developed.

Pelvis long, broad and straight, hock bones (ilium) wide apart and not much overlaid with fat, thighs deep and broad, tail long and slender, and set on level with the back.

Milk vessels capacious and extending well forward, hinder part broad and firmly attached to the body, the sole or under surface nearly level, the teats from two to two and a half inches in length, equal in thickness, and hanging perpendicularly; their distance apart at the sides should be equal to about one-third of the length of the vessel, and across to about one-half of the breadth.

Legs short, the bones fine and the joints firm.

Skin soft and elastic, and covered with soft, close, woolly hair.

The colors preferred are brown, or brown and white, the colors being distinctly defined.

Great value is attached to the above form and points by the dairy farmer, and he quickly takes them in when effecting a purchase, so that a mistake is rarely made.

Value of Cattle Food.

There is an enormous difference in the value of cattle foods used in this country, both for fattening and for labor sustentation. This difference is mainly due to the varying amounts of water and nitrogen substances they contain. Take the difference in the manurial value for illustration, between two kinds of meal. The worth of the manure from a ton of linseed and cake is about $17.50 in the New England markets; that from a ton of cotton seed cake is worth nearly $24. This value is based upon its use when fed to fattening animals. If feed to working oxen and milch cows, it falls to about half this value. The amount of labor and milk obtained will be in proportion to the relative manurial value of the experiment. All foods that hold a large amount of water, like roots, potatoes, &c., have comparatively a small value as fattening or working foods. The percentage of nitrogen or phosphatic substances is so small that large quantities must be consumed to produce desirable results. The percentage of water in several of our most ordinary foods is as follows:—

	Per cent.
Meadow and clover hay	14.3 to 1.6
Straw	14.3
Dry grains of cereals, &c	14.4
Green fodder	75 to 80.
Mangle-wurzle	88 to 90.
Turnips	90 to 91.
Potatoes	75

Cattle food should be selected with reference to the ends desired in their use, and relative cost of the same. Foods for work, for milk, for fattening, should be better understood among farmers. The time will come when science will be applied to the use of cattle foods, and it will be of immense service to the industry of the country.—*Boston Journal of Chemistry.*

Not all the green and juicy plants which the animal relishes are nutricious or unprofitable for food. The richest varieties of grasses and stalks of cereal grains, are not those which have the largest growth. The product of a field of clover or timothy grown in deficient sunlight, or under the influence of excessive moisture, is much less valuable than that grown under different conditions of light and moisture. It is a common practice in many localities to grow the corn plant in drills, or from broadcast sowing, as feed for the milch cows, late in the season. But it is maintained that this kind of food is not the best to produce milk, because the conditions under which it is grown are unfavorable to its perfect and healthy development. If grown in hills in open space, with a full supply of air and light, the plant is richly sacharine at maturity; but where grown in moss this principal is almost entirely wanting. The sweet millet, green oats, and clover, are much to be preferred to corn, as fodder for milch cows in summer.