

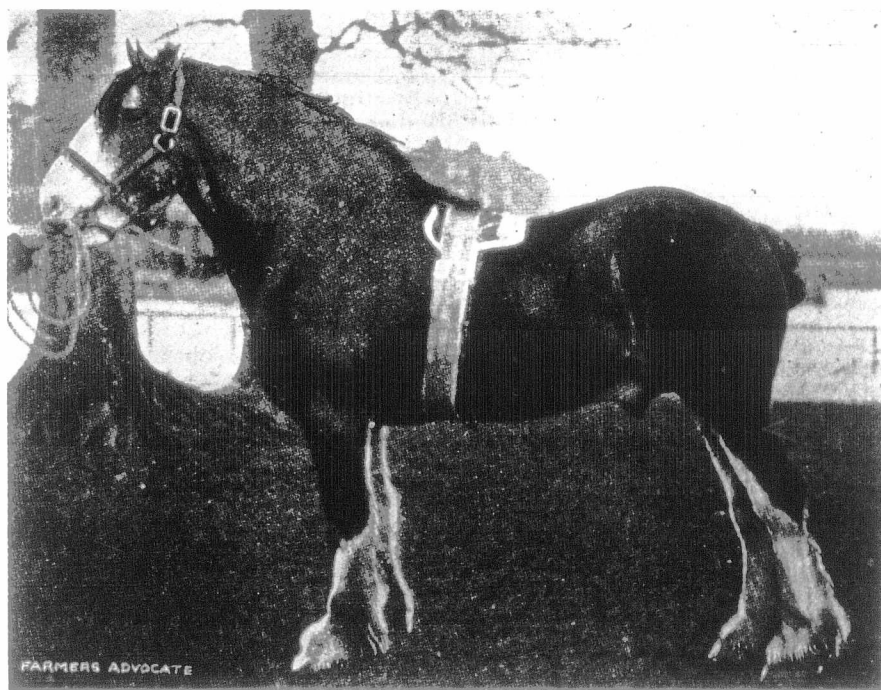
The Taxing of Stallions.

To the Editor FARMER'S ADVOCATE:

SIR,—Now that horse-breeding is on a fairly satisfactory basis, the stallion tax is again urged to the front, with the veiled object of improving the horses bred in Canada. I am decidedly opposed to this tax, and the majority of stallion owners throughout the country will support me, and lest I am suspected of having what is called, in Canada, a mongrel, by some, as an argument against the tax, I may be permitted to say that the stallions for service kept by me are of the very highest class, imported, registered, and of the best blood to be found in their native land. Did the most famous country in the world, the home of studs, herds, and flocks, from which a great many countries are at present purchasing the best types of horses, cattle and sheep, attain such excellence in their animals by enforcing a tax on male animals? No. Did Amos Cruickshank, the famous Shorthorn breeder, gain such fame, all the world over, by living under a Government which, in a fatherly way, taxed and examined all breeding males, assuring him they were fit for his purposes, and that he need look no further? No. Cruickshank was possessed of genius, and made breeding his lifelong study. He saw further into the mysteries of breeding than any man of his time. He knew how to select animals, both male and female; and greatly more important than this, he had genius for mating those animals so that their offspring would partake of the very highest characters. In the same manner the highest class of horses have been produced, and will continue to be produced, and a high standard of excellence maintained. Stallion owners have not yet forgotten the years of adversity since 1892. Some who were enterprising enough, in nearly every neighborhood in Canada, to invest large sums of money in pure-bred stallions found breeding at a standstill, their money invested uselessly, feeding and expenses going on as before, no return as interest on money invested, no profit, and nothing but loss in the majority of cases. High priced stallions in some instances were castrated. Are the men who have felt this eager to invest again, with the prospect of a tax added? Why was not this cry of taxing stallions heard from 1892 to 1896? Between the years mentioned, the Government might have taken the stallions as payment of the tax, had it been in force. Is the Government going to insure the stallion owners no more bad times, no surplus production of horses, and a ready sale, at paying prices, for animals bred from taxed and inspected stallions? The Government may tax and inspect stallions, but it cannot supply men with brains, to make a success of horse-breeding by a proper selection and proper mating of the male and female. One often sees a certain type—or may be no type at all—of mare bred to a stallion with the object of producing a certain class of horse, in the owner's opinion; but in many instances he finds he has produced the class of horse he did not want, nor did anyone else. Is the tax going to make up for want of judgment and ability? Other breeders with better judgment can produce a fairly satisfactory horse every time. Breeders who make a close study, use their brains, and not too hasty judgment, in selecting a good sire and using a good mare, will, in general, produce a fairly satisfactory colt. In every section, the best class of stallions are more and more in demand, and the inferior ones are gradually disappearing. People follow the example of their successful neighbors, and will continue to do so in horse-breeding, as in everything else. The successful neighbor is generally a man of intelligence, and studies his business, uses the highest class of stallion to be had, breeds a good mare, feeds his colts well, and makes a success of breeding, and his influence in a neighborhood will do more good to the horse-breeding industry than anything the Government can do by either inspecting or taxing stallions.

There is nothing appeals so strongly to a man's conscience in horse-breeding as how much he is going to get for his colt, unless, may be, how much the colt will cost him. The better class of breeders will pay a fair price. The other class, by learning of his neighbor, seeing it is profitable, will do likewise in time. Several years of adversity showed the breeders that the best and highest class of horses only were salable at profitable figures. This circumstance will make the superior stallion more in demand and the inferior class less. If the Government is going to try to raise the standard of horses in Canada, a better plan is for a practical man of intelligence and integrity to be appointed to look after the breeding industry in each county, and by lectures and his practical experience, point out the absurdity of breeding from at least one-third of the mares in the country. Let him be especially active as the breeding season approaches, and, being a wise man, he can give good advice. Some breeders, by acting on his advice, will show themselves wise; others may be otherwise. He will be able to point out how mating should be done, that badly-shaped and unsound mares (by heredity) should be discarded. The very best class of stal-

lions will not, in general, produce good colts from such mares. This will raise the standard of horses quicker than by taxing stallions. Is the object of taxing to put some of the worthless stallions off the road? There is no need for it. They are gradually disappearing; their services are less in demand. If another glut in the horse market takes place, and breeding ceases, will the poor stallion owner, to add to his misery of keeping his stallion at a loss, have a tax imposed on him into the bargain? He has had a taste of it before, and it was oppressive enough without a tax added. May be, it will be worked like the famous *sliding scale* of the corn laws—up or down, as the case demands. Who is going to pay the tax in the end? Will the stallion owner pay it out of his own pocket, and charge just the same service fee as before? He will not willingly pay it. Will he raise the service fee of his horse to meet it? Breeders, after several years of depression in the horse market, have learnt a lesson, and will not willingly pay an increased service fee, because, before the colt is five years old the prices may be down again. One great reason why there should be no stallion tax is that it is not brought forward by a majority of the stallion owners in Canada, nor yet by the breeders. The inferior class of stallions does no injury to the better class of breeders. They would not have his services for nothing. The breeder who patronizes the inferior stallion is the one who nearly always has a very inferior brood mare. It is essential, therefore, to have some person to point out that from such mares a good horse cannot be bred, more especially from an inferior sire. The best taxed and inspected stallion will not breed a good colt from such a mare. After years of experience in breeding and observation, I have had the pleasure of seeing breeders, who formerly patronized anything they could get cheapest, gradually, when it



CASABIANCA (10523).

Clydesdale stallion. Bay. Rising 5 years old. Bred by David Dunn, Roxburgh Mains, Kelso. Property of John Crawford, Manrahead, Beith. Winner of first prize and championship in 1899; the Buchlyvie Premium in 1899 and 1900; and the Glasgow Premium and Second in the Open Class in 1901.

seemed proven it was against their own interests, discard the inferior stallion and become a patron of the best to be had, at a higher service fee. The stallion of merit will win, and the proposed tax, whether from philanthropic motives or otherwise, is not needed. It is another *tuberculin test*. Nobody wants it, unless the to-be inspectors and possibly some others. The inspectors will need to be men possessed of a vast quantity of gray matter in their cerebrum; they will be the men who will decide whether a horse is fit for public service or not. A valuable, high-priced stallion this year will pass; before next year he may meet with a slip, wrench, or strain, and possibly produce a ringbone, bog or bone spavin, and when the inspector again comes along, behold the excellent, high-priced stallion condemned as unfit for public service! Imagine you see the looks of agony on his owner's face. Poor man! It's no dream; you are awake, in the 20th century. Your hard-earned money is in that stallion, and he is condemned. Do you favor the tax? The proposed Lien Act will not be objected to by the better class of breeders, with honesty of purpose, and they are in the majority. Their intention is to pay for the service of the stallion they patronize, and as soon as the money is paid, the lien is removed from both mare and foal. A lien on both mare and foal will raise the honesty of purpose in the minority up to *par*, or 100 per cent., and insure the owners of stallions their own, and nothing more. Possibly, the Government, when taxing the stallion, will, to insure his owner all his service fees, place a lien on the owner of the mare too. Stallion owners and breeders, commence the discussion, and thresh it out among yourselves. HORSE BREEDER.

The Science of Breeding.

At this season, when breeding is to be considered, the mating of mares and stallions should be a subject of much thought on the part of breeders. Breeding has long been considered a science as far as it pertains to blood lines, and many hours are spent by enthusiasts on the subject of crosses, out-crosses, and inbreeding. The subject is a most fascinating one, and is susceptible of much research. The proper nicks are looked for, the best crosses aimed at, and when the average breeder has discovered what he thinks to be the most suitable strains of blood with which to produce a champion, he considers his labors ended. In reality he has only just begun, for after having builded for himself a pedigree, he often leaves out his plan of the structure. As much importance should be attached to this as to the blood lines, for it is as contrary to all laws of heredity to double up defects as it is to multiply crosses of bad blood. If all brood mares and stallions were perfect, nothing would be necessary for the breeder to do but to study the various blood lines and out-crosses and mate accordingly, but as conformation plays a very important part in the science of producing special types of horses, the breeder who ignores this part and confines himself exclusively to the pedigree, finds his work half done, and, as a rule, his efforts in vain.

The old saying that they trot in all sizes and shapes is misleading, and has been given as an excuse by more than one breeder for his practice of breeding without due regard to conformation. They trot in spite of and not by virtue of their ill shapes.

A horse's action is largely influenced by his conformation, and the nearer one follows the laws of heredity as regards shape, size and general conformation, the more successful he will be. Bad qualities and defects in conformation are more often transmitted to the get of a horse than the perfections, and the only way a breeder can expect to succeed in producing a type of well formed, properly-shaped horse is to use for breeding purposes only those mares and stallions that are free from defects, and whose conformation is as near perfect as possible. By defects, blemishes are not alone meant, but especially those that come from coarseness. If it is not possible to find mares and stallions of anything like perfection in conformation, the breeder should attempt to eradicate as nearly as possible the defects of each by mating with those whose faults are not the same. It would be unwise to breed a coarse mare to a coarse stallion if one wished to produce quality with regularity.

A mare with curbs, when bred to a stallion with the same defects, is likely to produce curbed, hocked foals, and the same rule applies to all other faults in conformation. Good points are reproduced in like manner, and the ideal light-harness horse must come from ancestors who for generations have not only lacked defects, but whose excellence in conformation has been intensified through generations of judicious breeding. All the advantages of producing blood lines and prolific strains can be lost through the negligence on the part of the breeder to properly mate his stallions and mares, avoiding the misshapen and illy-formed. In the past so little attention has been paid to individuality that the country has become flooded with defective animals—long backs, crooked hind legs, and coarseness have been produced by the mismating of brood mares, and the highly-formed horse of quality has become the exception instead of the rule. Not one stallion in ten is fit to be used for breeding purposes, and the sooner breeders learn the importance of using only those whose conformation somewhat nearly approaches perfection, the sooner will a distinct type be produced. The best is none too good, and anything short of the best is worthless.—Kentucky Stock Farm.

The Usher Ventilation System.

To the Editor FARMER'S ADVOCATE:

SIR,—In reply to your letter of the 11th re ventilation of stables, I would say that my barn is 36x84, with a stone basement 8 feet high. In the year 1895 I concluded to put in concrete floors, and, in order to get proper ventilation, we raised our feed alley and put under it a seven-inch tile, extending from one end of the stable to the other, through the walls, therefore bringing in the fresh air from outside. Between every pair of cattle I tap this large line of tile and put in inch gas pipe. This enables us to get a supply of fresh air from outside, which forces the foul air in stable up through the flues, which extend up the posts and through the roof. The flues are made of lumber 8 inches wide. With this system I can ventilate my stables thoroughly, avoiding any cold drafts on my cattle.

Ontario Co., Ont.

W. J. D.

Farmers will do well to study carefully the letters in this issue by Prof. C. D. Smith and Mr. J. J. Ferguson on beet-sugar cultivation.