

winter and summer; he considered he lost nothing by keeping them well; he had not lost one since he commenced keeping them well; when he kept them badly it was quite the reverse. He thought the best method of breeding a great matter. Many of the farmers were debarred from putting their cows to good bulls for breeding purposes, in consequence of the high prices charged for them; two guineas always, but if a calf were kept for a bull, then five or ten guineas being generally charged. If gentlemen in the neighbourhood would buy a good bull for the use of their tenants, it would not be easy to calculate the amount of good which would be done.

FARMERS' CLUBS.

NEWCASTLE, ENGLAND, OCTOBER.—*On the Breeding, Rearing and Working of Farm Horses.*—Mr. Ramsay introduced this subject as follows:

The subject I am about to bring before the Club is one of vast importance, as it involves a great outlay in farming affairs, the useful cart horse being at all seasons and at all times in requisition, particularly in these times, when such great exertions are being made to place the various kinds of seed in the ground in good season as well as in securing the crops when at maturity. Indeed, the horse is so necessary a portion of farming stock, on the good or bad quality of which so much depends, that I hope I need not apologise for endeavouring to show how necessary it is for every farmer to possess a good breed of useful animals of this description. I shall therefore attempt to lay down a few useful hints for the breeding, rearing, and working, of farm horses. First as to the breeding of useful cart horses. The first principle and best rule is to select proper animals to breed from. It is said, "like generally produces like;" and if that is not always accomplished, it will in most cases prove true. It is therefore necessary to begin breeding with well formed animals; and although every one almost thinks himself a good judge of horses, yet it does not follow that he is so. I will therefore venture to lay down a few rules to go by, which I trust may be of use, particularly to the inexperienced breeder. The different breeds of work-horses may be said to be comprised under the heads of Clydesdale, Cleveland and Suffolk, and the large black horse of Lincolnshire and the midland counties. The first is useful and hardy, and may truly be said to be a good sort of horse for farming purposes; but they are heavy-headed, and sluggish in their movements, deficient in their loins and back ribs, and too long in the back: the feet and legs are generally strong and sinewy, and they are good feeders. The Cleveland horse has long been noted for being a good traveller, and an excellent plough horse, and crosses from this breed often produce excellent carriage horses. The Suffolk horse is little known in this district. He bears a good character for hardness of constitution, sound pulling, and great activity. He has borne away many prizes at the Royal Agricultural and other shows, and I believe might be crossed with advantage with our Northumberland and Durham breeds. The Lincolnshire and midland counties horse is often of great weight and strength, and suitable for London drays and those occupations where great loads and slow draughts are required; yet many of these want action for farming purposes. The horses bred in Northumberland and Durham are of an excellent breed, and if proper pains were taken in breeding them they are equal to any kind of work, and I believe they may fairly be allowed to stand high as active and useful cart horses. To improve our native breed, I will therefore endeavour to point out the most desirable animal to breed from, and mention a few points necessary for that purpose, as far as that can be accomplished. Mares for the purpose of breeding should be well shaped in their different parts; gentle, but spirited; have a large well formed carcase; good middle, strong

sinewy limbs, not too high (say 15½ hauds high), broad well-formed chest, which is of the greatest importance; neck not too long, but well set on; a large clear eye; head not too large, and well set on; ears erect; free from natural blemishes of any kind; one colour is to be preferred, with good action in all her paces; head well elevated, which generally indicates spirit; and not too much hair on the legs. The proper age for breeding is neither too young nor too old, which will impart vigour to her offspring. The horse should be of good colour, bold and spirited, well made, and of kindly disposition, constitution strong and healthy, and as much as possible of the same description of animal as the mare. I believe most of the mongrels we see result from crossing with an expectation of improvement, without either sire or dam having the requisite qualifications for breeding; hence so many failures. One thing should not be forgotten, viz. to have both parents of a sound, good, pulling race; there is no doubt of this qualification being hereditary in different breeds. A stallion should have good action. Action is strength in many cases; and when horses have to go through excessive labour in busy times of the year, they fail in performance if they have not great activity. The breeding of good cart horses will pay the farmer best; they go early to work, are generally healthy, need less pampering than the blood horses; and as they begin to work for their meat when young, may be said to cost a farmer little or nothing at the age of 6 or 7 years, when they may be sold if thought advisable, and replaced in the farmer's stock by a younger generation, and the money placed in the farmer's pocket for a useful purpose. The proper season for having foals dropped is so well understood that I need not name it in this paper; but there is nothing like having an early foal. Next as to the rearing of cart horses. As soon as the foal is weaned, which is in the autumn, it ought to be well fed with grass of a nutritious kind, have corn given it daily, and handled as often as convenient to make docile and tractable. In winter it ought to have hay and corn; and if the hay is cut and steamed so much the better. Bran mashies are also excellent for young horses, and should occasionally be given. If treated in this way they will easily be trained to work. Kind treatment should always be made use of; harsh measures should always be avoided. When the horse attains the age of two years, he may be worked gently in seed time, and turned off again till a year older. After that he may go on with regular farm work, such as ploughing, harrowing, &c.; but I would advise good feeding, and not too hard work, at this tender age; as, be assured, the better he is treated when young, the longer he will wear. Many diseases are brought on by ill usage when young, and before the limbs and body are perfectly matured. I now come to the working of cart horses, and to show how I think they ought to be treated, in order that the food they eat may tend to economy, at the same time that they are kept in high condition, and fit for great exertions in busy times. I will therefore need to trespass a little longer on your time. First, as to food. I will commence with the winter season. Supposing a farmer to have obtained by breeding or buying, a useful set of farm horses, and his judgment leads him to keep no greater number than is really required, it will at once strike the mind of every practical farmer of what consequence it is to the success of his business, that he should feed his horses on proper food, to have them in health, and at all times in proper condition for work; for it is certain a farm horse cannot go through excessive hard labour, unless he is kept up to the mark in condition. No person ever expects great performance from the racer, the hunter, the hack or poster, unless he is in first-rate condition; and although the exertions of the work horse are not called out to such extremes, yet his labour is