

HORSES AND CATTLE.

PEDIGREE NOT EVERYTHING.

Not long since Mr. Wm. Housman, a gentleman well known in Hereford circles, in delivering an address to breeders of Whitefaces at Hereford, England, made the following observations which are worthy of consideration on this side of the Atlantic:

As to breeding, the great celebrity which the Hereford had already gained in North and South America, Australia, Canada, and other distant parts of the world, and which it was gaining in this country, would bring about a state of things in regard to which breeders might have to be on their guard. The great bane of the Short-horn had been that many men who did not understand stock-breeding took up the pursuit, bought good cattle, and not knowing how to use them when they got them, bred them in-and-in till they bred them away to mere weeds, and then they went on with those weeds because they were well-bred, forsooth! He thought the death-blow had already been struck at that, but still he would urge Hereford men to guard against a repetition of that blunder. He would have it understood, however, that he did not say that to the depreciation of old lines, because he believed many of those to be most valuable; let them stick to old sires that had proved their excellence, but he warned them not to go in for breeding on paper. A pedigree was a capital memorandum, but it was a fallible guide if trusted to in another way. With regard to the "prospects" of the breed, he believed its success to be sure if the danger he had indicated was guarded against, and he had no doubt the judgment of Hereford breeders would insure that.

These remarks should be fully appreciated by all, for, although we gave an instance last week where cattle have been bred in-and-in for twenty-eight years without apparent deterioration, yet the contrary results are more general. Pedigree has been of great value in the past when breeds were being originated, and in the present era they should be accepted as a guarantee of good faith in breeding, but purchasers should see to it that the animals they buy have in themselves individual merit and every evidence of good constitution, vigour and potency. Do not buy a pedigree apart from an excellent individual, nor a fancy escutcheon minus the characteristic points of a deep milker.—*Farmers' Review*.

THE BEEF BREEDS.

For nearly 100 years, the *Breeders' Journal* tells us, there has been an established breed of cattle for beef purposes; and it is often said that each district in which a particular breed exists, must have the best breed for such districts; but it may well be questioned as to whether there is a better understanding of the comparative merits of these breeds to-day than there was 100 years ago. We formed our judgment as to the merits of breeds, when we undertook to make stock rearing a business; we would have been glad to have made a comparative test with other breeds. We believe that this could be easily accomplished; but up to the present time we have failed utterly and entirely to secure such a test. It is easy for our agricultural societies to bring breeds in competition with a view to determine which is the best for special purposes, securing for the time being an advantage one breed may have over the other by partisan management. This test is only *prima facie* evidence.

Each exhibitor selects the best he has, and if he has the means, he will not only select his own, but he will buy the best he can find, and come up to the show in good shape; and if he has a skilled feeder he will take the honours, and the

public will believe he has the best breed of cattle; it may be true that he has, but it is a very unsafe basis upon which to make purchases.

Our readers that have followed us for some time, will understand our views as to what is a correct and authoritative test; but we will again state right here that the only test that is of value is one that will place the breeds in keeping under like circumstances and conditions for food, handling and climate, and the tests should be continued during several years, and the market or butcher's block should be where the decision should be made. And this test will at some day be reached, and until it is, the breeders interested in any special breed of cattle who are not willing to bring their breed under some such or similar test, ought not to have the confidence or support of the public.

Agricultural journals that have professed to support and advocate the merits of different breeds of cattle (other than the Herefords), have charged the proprietors of this journal of publishing it to advance their own interest. These journals who write up the history of any herd that should be presented to them in proportion to the amount of money they would get for such work—often doing it for very small pay—and breeders who have had much experience understand the value of all such puffing and slobbering.

There has never been a time since we have bred Herefords that we were not willing to bring them to the most severe and searching tests that could be applied. And there has never been a time when we could find an advocate of other breeds willing to make such test, but the time has now come when cattle breeders, breeding bullocks for the butcher, should demand of fine stock breeders, breeding for breeding purposes, a practical test. Such test should be made, and we will undertake to meet any and all other breeders on an equal and fair test, all to be treated and kept alike, and we will give to other breeders the choice of conditions under which they shall be made. We claim that for beef purposes, the Herefords in all places and under all conditions will make beef at the least cost and of a better quality.

BAD ROADS AND BAD FEET.

Colman's Rural says horsemen should remember that the bad condition of their horses' feet cannot be laid at the door of the farrier alone. Bad roads are fruitful sources of injured feet, more so in fact, than many realize. It is estimated that a horse weighing sixteen hundred pounds, when drawing a heavy load, bears a weight upon his feet of two tons, the extra pressure being caused by the downward force of the act of drawing. Whether this idea is only imaginary or not, there is no question about the pressure being increased by drawing a load. Whatever this increase may be, added to the weight of the horse, it makes entirely too much of a pressure upon the feet for them to be constantly used on rough and stony roads without injury. Bad feet can often be attributed to the carelessness of those having the care of the horse. It would be astonishing to know how few of our farmers ever give the feet of their horses a thorough cleaning out and dressing up. They do not realize the fact that the feet need cleaning and renovating as much or more than any other part of the body. Should a stone get caught in the shoe it is not discovered until the foot becomes inflamed from the injury, and the horse signifies his misery by limping. It takes but little time to examine the feet of a horse, and with an instrument made for the purpose, extract all the dirt that accumulates around the frog and under the shoe. This should be attended to at least once a day. It is certainly criminal carelessness to neglect this duty as some careless horsemen do.

REAL HOLSTEIN CATTLE.

The ancient duchy of Holstein, which was wrested from Denmark by Germany a few years ago, possesses extensive lowlands reclaimed from the sea. These were not ancient lake-beds, like much of the present area of Holland, but salt water marshes; hence are known to-day as the Holstein Marshes. The population is almost exclusively agricultural, and possesses a valuable breed of neat cattle, which is bred both for beef and for milk. As milk-cows, they have achieved no special fame, but the beef is excellent. The strains of milk and beef cattle are kept quite distinct, as among Short-horns. They are fairly well-formed, judging them by our notions, and are the basis of a very profitable trade. In colour they are black and white, or dark-brown, or red and white, and show clearly that they have been modified by the Short-horn cross, otherwise are much like the Friesian and North Holland cattle, which pass by the trade name of "Holsteins" in this country. A notable difference between the Holstein beef and that of Normandy, which also finds its way to the great markets of the metropolis, is, that its fat is white, while that of the French beef is often golden yellow, like that of the Guernseys, and many of the Jersey cattle. The London market demands fat beef, and requires it to be "white as alabaster," to meet the highest favour.—*American Agriculturist for September*.

CAREFUL TRAINING FOR HORSES.

Horses with high mettle are more easily educated than those of less or dull spirits, and are more susceptible to ill training, consequently may be good or bad according to the training 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 colthood days 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. 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 railway 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 education.

TIPS FOR HORSES' FEET.

There are many cases in which farm horses need no shoes in the summer, and would be better without them. A horse owned by the writer had hard, dry hoofs and contracted feet, which were caused by a natural tendency, increased by shoeing with high calks. For want of use, the frog had withered away, and the horse was always lame. The shoes were taken off, and tips only were used. These were thin plates, reaching around the fore half of the hoofs only, to protect the toes from wearing away. The frog and the heels thus came to the ground at every step; the bars were able to spread, and the proper functions of the feet, to preserve healthful action and growth, were given full play. The horse soon became sound, the frog grew healthfully, and the feet were in perfect order, while the expense of shoeing was greatly reduced.—*American Agriculturist for September*.