

still require to do more, in preventing combinations from preying in an unscrupulous manner upon farmers and other consumers and producers. As "The Farmer's Advocate" said, the amount of profits made by a large pork-packing company during the last few years was an eye-opener, and was probably only one instance.

The Government can still give much assistance in the newer parts of the country, in bringing in improved stock; and, in the older parts, by dint of liberal special prizes for improved stock, and by removing all obstructions to and providing every possible facility for the bringing in of cheap feed, it can do much to encourage the stock-raising and stock-improving industry.

Above all, everything possible should be done to give every child in the country as good a schooling in all helpful and practical lines as the Educational Department and the child's parents can afford. This is necessary, so that the farmer may respect himself and his calling, and not take a back seat among the members of any other profession. The kind of work he does, whether dirty or clean, is of no significance. "A man's a man for a' that," and "A gentleman's a gentleman for a' that."

With regard to the special course which is occasioning so much discussion at the present time, I believe every county inspector should be an enthusiast on agriculture, besides having agricultural training, and, in his semi-annual visits to the country schools, he should devote a much longer time—at least half of the whole—to examining, inspiring, instructing and enthusing the pupils on plant-growth, live stock, fruit culture, tree ornamentation, and the decoration of homes, etc. Let one of them, who is alive to his subject, try a lecture of that kind for a couple of hours before a school of country pupils, and see if it don't strike fire.

I will close by saying, Mr. Editor, that, whether time will show that you are playing a losing game in your attempt to raise the standard of country life, and bring about conditions which will make rural life sufficiently attractive to induce the people to stay on the land, we, the farmers of Ontario, feel that you, at least, and all on "The Farmer's Advocate" staff, are genuinely loyal to all the agricultural interests of this Province and country. When we want an "advocate," we feel that we have one who will as jealously watch the interests of the agricultural community as if they were his own. May you have a happy and prosperous New Year.

Durham Co., Ont. R. S. SUTTON.

**A LIBERAL VIEW ON THE AUTOMOBILE QUESTION.**

Editor "The Farmer's Advocate":

Perhaps one of the most interesting subjects being considered by farmers throughout the country at present is the automobile question. Many farmers, or, more particularly, farmers' wives and daughters, have come to look upon autos as an unmitigated evil, and their only thought is to try to have them legislated out of existence. I presume it is but history repeating itself, as every new idea, as applied to our advanced civilization, is looked upon as an intrusion on established customs, thereby incurring enmity and indignation. However, we cannot afford to be over-critical in the matter of the automobile, for, while to-day they may be considered the luxury of the few, I believe the day is not far distant when they will become a necessity with every up-to-date farmer, as well as business man. Trade is more and more becoming centralized in large towns and cities, and to-day, much more than formerly, our best farmers travel long distances in order to do business in these large centers, and more and more the city and the country are becoming allied in business, as well as in pleasure; and, in the near future, the farmer one hundred miles from the city will be able to carry his produce to these large industrial centers by means of this new application of motor-power, and soon it will be as common among farmers as it is to-day in the cities. I am aware that many horses do not take kindly to automobiles at first, but they soon become accustomed to them and do not mind them at all. Horses used or driven in the cities have no fear of them, and even in the rural districts, where they are only seen occasionally, horses very soon meet or pass them without trouble, and even the most nervous horse may very easily be controlled by putting something over his eyes until safely past. Now, sir, allow me to offer a suggestion to my fellow farmers. Let us, instead of trying to get legislation for the purpose of restricting the use and usefulness of the automobile, rather propose to take the auto fraternity into partnership with us, and endeavor to interest them in helping us to build better roads. There is not a man who owns an auto but would be willing to pay a road tax of ten dollars a year, to be applied to road improvement (and that is more than the average farmer pays for the same purpose), having the money spent in the county in which the auto is used. We ought to be progressive along all

lines, and avoid anything that would be retrograde in its action, remembering that the most up-to-date appliances and greatest luxuries can be utilized and enjoyed as much by the present-day farmer as by any other citizen of this great country. I trust that we may all be reasonable in the consideration of this great public matter.

York Co., Ont. W. H. SMITH.

**HORSES.**

**LAMENESS IN HORSES.**

**SIDEBONE.**

Sidebone is a very common disease in heavy horses, and occasionally met with in the lighter breeds. It is usually seen on the fore feet, rarely on the hind, and, when present on hind feet, seldom causes lameness. In order to understand the nature of the disease, it is necessary to have an intelligent idea of the anatomy of the part. The bone of the foot (the os pedis) presents, on the posterior part of the upper border, on each side, a projection of bone, called the wings of the os pedis. Each of these, in health, is surmounted by an irregularly quadrangular-shaped plate of cartilage, called the lateral cartilage. These are firmly attached to the wings and project upwards above the hoof at each heel. These cartilages can be readily felt above the heels in the healthy foot, and their outlines can be easily followed by manipulation with the fingers. They are quite elastic, and yield readily to pressure, but immediately regain their normal position when pressure is relieved. One cartilage being on each side, the space between them is filled with soft structures. When the weight of the animal is placed upon the foot, the pressure of the frog from below upwards, and the weight of the body from above downwards tends to expand these soft tissues, and the cartilages, being elastic, will spread outwards and allow of this expansion, and when the weight is taken off the foot they spring inwards to their normal position. Sidebone is that condition in which these cartilages are altered in structure, enlarged in size, and ultimately converted into bone. The conversion into bone is not sudden; the cartilages gradually increase in thickness, and become hard and less elastic. The conversion into bone is usually somewhat slow, and sometimes not complete. In some cases the anterior portion, and in some cases the posterior portion, first ossifies, but usually the process continues until complete ossification is established, when they become thoroughly hard and unyielding, hence there can be no expansion of the space between them when weight is put upon the foot, and the forcing of increased amount of soft structures into this unenlargable space at each step of the animal tends to cause more or less irritation and inflammation of the tissues, and consequent lameness.

The predisposition to sidebone is undoubtedly hereditary. Williams says: "High-heeled shoes are usually the exciting cause, first, because the shock received by the heels when the foot comes to the ground is transmitted to the cartilages;

second, because the pressure upon the heels is unnatural and excessive, the frog being prevented from bearing its proper proportion; third, because they are pulled inwards and downwards by the sensitive frog being pressed downwards, while its horny covering, being removed from the ground, forms no column of support."

While there may be a great deal of force in the above arguments, we frequently see sidebone in horses that have never worn high-heeled shoes, but whose frogs have been always allowed to perform their proper function by coming in contact with the ground.

Symptoms.—The formation of sidebone is usually slow, and often unaccompanied by symptoms other than the gradual enlargement and hardening of the cartilages, which, in hairy-legged horses, is not noticeable to the eye. In many cases, especially in heavy horses, no lameness is noticeable, even when ossification is complete; but, as lameness is liable to occur at any time, the presence of sidebone must be looked upon as an unsoundness. In horses used for fast work on hard roads, lameness is mostly always present when sidebone exists on the fore feet, but when the hind feet are the seat there is seldom lameness. In clean-limbed horses, the presence of sidebone can readily be detected by the eye by the visible enlargement over the heels. They usually exist in pairs, but it is not rare to notice but one. Many claim that the trouble may occur from an injury, as a tread or blow upon the cartilage. It is possible an injury of this nature might excite sufficient inflammatory action to cause ossification of a cartilage, and where but one sidebone is present we may be justified in giving the horse the benefit of the doubt, and not condemning him as unsound; but where there is a pair on one foot, or one on each foot, we must decide that they arose from other causes than accident. In examining the heavier classes of horses, especially those with hairy legs, it is necessary to feel for sidebones, as they may be present and cannot be seen on account of hair; and their presence should disqualify a horse from winning in the show-ring, or prevent a man from purchasing, except at a considerably reduced price. The action of a horse with sidebone, while in many cases not amounting to lameness, will be noticed to lack that elasticity which is so essential.

Treatment is often unsatisfactory. Little good results from blistering or other modes of counter-irritation. The diseased structures cannot be reconverted into cartilage, nor the space between them enlarged. Excision of the ossified cartilages has been practiced, but the results have not been encouraging. In cases where the lameness is severe, neurotomy may be performed (by which the nerve supply to the part is removed, and the lameness cured), but this is an operation that should be avoided, unless the animal be practically useless from lameness. In most cases the lameness is not severe, and the animal performs slow work with reasonable satisfaction; hence, it is usually advisable to avoid fast work on hard roads, and adopt no treatment.

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