

is impossible to say much on this point. There has been much said about the decline in numbers, but nobody has precise information, as complete figures have not been published. What is definitely ascertained is that while millions of acres of land went out of arable cultivation from 1880 onwards, and much of it was allowed to tumble down to grass, the horses on agricultural holdings, which alone have a proper census, have been fairly well maintained. This is partly due to the more extended use of, under these circumstances, machinery in harvesting and other operations, which has necessitated the employment of many horses, so that while the arable area has largely decreased that which remains in crop cultivation needs for its working a larger number of horses. It is also due to the extension of horse-breeding as an industry. The introduction of motors has, of course, led to a large decrease of horses in towns in recent years.

It is unquestionable that the demands of the war have already largely reduced the number of horses in this country, as well as on the continent and elsewhere abroad. To what extent the numbers in agricultural holdings have decreased in England it will not be possible to state until the Agricultural Statistics have been published. There has been some decrease in progress for some years, and in Ireland the preliminary figures for 1915 show a decrease of 20.8 per cent. in the number of unbroken horses, one-year-old and upwards, while agricultural horses have declined from 393,000 to 356,000. It is to be feared that these figures are only indicative of what has occurred all round.

In view of the great demand that will spring up for horses of all classes, it is to be hoped that breeders will do their utmost to meet the requirements by extending their operations. The curtailment of shows and other aids may tend in the opposite direction, but the enhancement of values which has already taken place, and which will become greater, should serve as an inducement to persevere in the work. Under existing conditions, it is specially satisfactory to hear that stallion owners consider that the travelling season has been a very good one, a circumstance which shows that an effort is being made to maintain supplies as far as possible. The superior quality and good numbers in the breeding classes at the shows that have been held afford further proof of this determination, which is thoroughly justified by the existing state and future outlook for the industry. There is, in fact, every prospect that at the close of the war the demand for horses will be on an exceptionally extensive scale, and that their value will substantially increase.

### Fall Colts.

Many farmers are considering the advisability of breeding some of their mares this fall. This practice has much to recommend it, particularly on large farms where the brood mares do most of the work. On farms where from four to six brood mares are kept, if a pair are bred to foal in the fall, there is always a team fit for heavy work. On smaller farms where only two foals are annually raised, it is perhaps better to have both foal at the same season so that the foals may be company to each other while the mares are at work. A mare that has put in the summer at steady work under a careful driver is much more likely to produce a strong, lively foal than one that has spent the winter in comparative idleness. There is much more danger of abortion from accidental causes in the case of the mare that foals in the spring. Plunging through deep snow and slipping on ice often result disastrously to the mare advanced in pregnancy.

Early in October is considered the best time for the fall colt to arrive. The colt can usually be turned out to the fields for a few hours every day for a considerable time. Good aftermath or freshly-seeded clover makes splendid milk-producing pasture for the mare, and a short run each day on such pasture puts her in good condition for the winter. Throughout the winter both mare and foal should have a daily run in the yard. Bright, clean, clover hay, oats and bran make an excellent ration for the milking mare, particularly if roots, such as carrots or turnips, are added in moderate amounts. The same feeds are just as suitable for the growing colt.

The fall colt can be given more attention for the first few months than is usually given to his spring-foaled brother, but there is more danger of neglect during the following summer, as the younger colt should not be expected to rustle for itself entirely. Of course, it will do this and grow fairly well, but where maximum development is required it is better to continue feeding a little grain all summer. When flies are bad the colt will do better when stalled through the day.

### Annual Meeting of Dominion Percheron Association.

During the Calgary fair the annual meeting of the Percheron Horse Breeders' Association was held, at which the breeders were very enthusiastic, animated by the inroads that the Percheron breed has already made and by the apparent prospects of the horse industry, caused by the European war and the lack of confidence in tractor power.

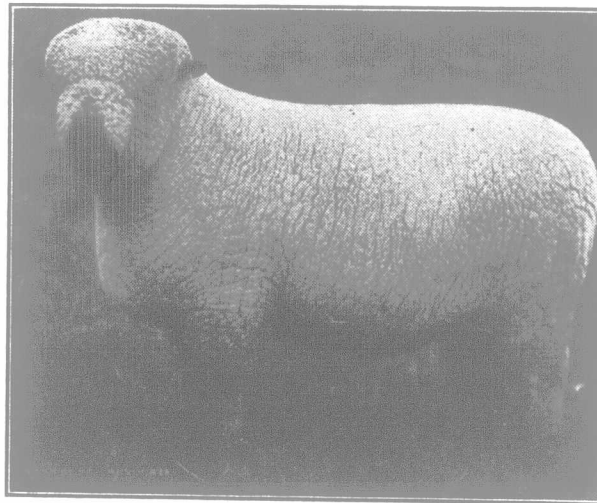
The officers selected were as follows: President, Geo. Lane, Pekisko, Alta.; Vice-president, A. E. Davenport, Acme, Alta.; Secretary, F. R. Pike, Pekisko, Alta. Directors: W. B. Thorn, Aldersyde; R. C. Upper, Calgary; Mr. Grant; W. H. Devine, Calgary; Allan Reid, Forrest, Man.; W. Thompson, Milestone, Man.; C. D. Roberts, Winnipeg, and E. C. H. Tisdale, Beaverton, Ont.

## LIVE STOCK.

### Digestive Diseases of the Ox V.

#### CHOKING.

Choking is probably more of an accident than a disease, but it is a pathological condition of the digestive organs, hence we may be allowed to class it in this series. It consists in blocking, or packing of the oesophagus or gullet with some foreign body. Symptoms similar to those of choking, however, arise from other causes, as injuries to the oesophagus from sharp bodies swallowed and also from disease of the pneumogastric nerve. Impaction of foreign bodies frequently occur in the ox, but not so frequently now that most feeders pulp the roots instead of feeding them whole as used to be done. Choking is usually caused by the lodgment in some part of the oesophagus of a portion of a turnip or other root or a potato, apple, etc., but may be



A Shropshire Nicely Covered.

by impaction of other food too greedily swallowed. When stricture of the oesophagus from any cause exists, choking is quite common, the bolus of food or piece of solid matter not being able to pass through the constricted tube, on the other hand, where dilatation of a portion of the tube exists choking is also common as the bolus when being swallowed, lodges in the dilated portion. This is followed by the lodgment of other boluses until the part becomes filled, when the symptoms of choking become well marked. Where no abnormal condition of the oesophagus exists, and reasonable care be taken to properly prepare solid foods choking is of rare occurrence. The foreign body that causes the trouble may be lodged in the pharynx (the cavity just behind the root of the tongue) or in the cervical portion of the gullet that portion of it that is contained in the neck) or in the thoracic portion (that portion that passes through the thoracic or lung cavity).

**SYMPTOMS.**—The symptoms are readily recognized, the patient stands with muzzle protruded, coughs, champs the jaws, and there is a profuse flow of saliva from the mouth. Appetite and rumination are suspended, but ineffectual gulping efforts are made to complete the swallow. The eyes project and become bloodshot, the patient is uneasy and in many cases faeces and urine are frequently passed in small quantities. When any matter is swallowed or given as a drench it is returned through mouth and nostrils. If the impaction be in the pharynx the coughing is the best marked symptom and respiration is

interfered with. If in the cervical region an enlargement can generally be located by sight or by manipulation on the lower margin of the neck in the channel. This may be large or small, hard or soft, movable or immovable, according to the nature and bulk of the material and the condition of the oesophagus. If in the thoracic region, of course the obstruction can be neither seen nor felt. If fluid be given it appears to pass to the stomach, but it simply fills the passage up from the obstruction and is then returned by regurgitation. Bloating is usually soon noticed, except in cases in which, on account of the shape of the obstruction, the whole calibre of the tube is not filled and liquid or gaseous matters can pass it.

**TREATMENT** must be directed to the removal of the obstruction, either by the mouth or by causing it to pass downwards to the stomach. If bloating be excessive it should be relieved by puncturing as in case of ordinary tympanites. Then if possible the seat of the obstruction should be located. If in the pharynx it can usually be removed by hand. The patient's mouth must be kept well opened by the use of a mouth speculum, a clevice or other device, an assistant hold the animal and the operator passes his hand down to the pharynx, grasp the object and remove it. If in the cervical region the operator should endeavor to move it by manipulation. If it can be worked a little either downwards or upwards the exercise of a little patience may cause it to be swallowed or coughed up. If it be grain either whole or chopped or hay or straw too greedily swallowed, the mass may be broken up by manipulation and will pass down to the stomach. If relief cannot be given as above or the obstruction be in the cervical region efforts should be made to force it down. For this purpose an instrument called "a probang" should be used. The too common practice of using a fork handle, broom handle, whip, harness trace, etc., cannot be too highly condemned, as the opposing surface of the obstruction is usually irregular in shape and that of the instruments mentioned either round or oval the latter is very liable to pass to one side of the former, and rupture the oesophagus. In this case it is often thought that the object has been forced to the stomach, but the patient does not get ease, will neither eat nor drink and in a few hours the neck and throat commence to swell by reason of gases and that the animal may swallow filling up the areolar tissue and the patient will die in a few hours longer. A probang is usually made of about 5 or 6 feet of spiral wire covered with leather or gum elastic and having attached to the end a metal or horn disk of a cup shape, so that when it meets the obstruction instead of passing along side of it, it practically grasps or encircles it and when force is applied it is exerted upon the obstruction in the desired way. Many probangs have stilletts of whalebone or cane to stiffen them. Where a probang is not procurable a piece of garden hose answers the purpose fairly well, the hollow in the hose acting as the cup-shaped disk does in the probang. The hose can be strengthened by using a whip handle or other material for a stillet, being sure to not pass it quite to the end of the hose. In order to pass the probang a wooden gag with a hole through the centre, or other device is necessary to hold the mouth open. The gag extends a few inches out of each side of the mouth and has straps attached to go over the animal's poll and buckle behind the horns. The probang should be oiled. An assistant on each side of the animal catches the gag in one hand and the horn in the other and holds the head in such a position as to make the mouth and the oesophagus as nearly in a straight line as possible. The operator then passes the probang through the hole in the gag and gently backwards until it enters the oesophagus and with steady pressure applies sufficient strength to force it downwards. In some cases the obstruction is so firmly implanted that it cannot be forced down in this way, in which case, if in the cervical region an operation called oesophagotomy may be performed. This consists in cutting through the skin and oesophagus and removing the obstruction, then stitching the oesophagus with carbolized silk or cat gut, then stitching the wound in the skin, feeding on sloppy food only for 10 to 14 days and giving the wound ordinary attention. None but a veterinarian should attempt the operation. When the obstruction is in the cervical region and cannot be forced down all that can be done is to leave the animal alone. If necessary to prevent bloating leave the canula in the stomach and await developments. In many cases the animal gets relief in several hours, the obstruction evidently becoming practically cooked and passes to the stomach. As choking is liable to recur if care be not taken, the animal should not be fed on food liable to cause the trouble for a week or ten days after the occurrence in order to allow time for the inflamed and dilated oesophagus to regain its normal condition.

#### WHIP.

There can be no excuses in many districts that the land is too dry to plow early this fall.