THE HORSE.

Stable Management of Horses' Feet

Of all parts of the economy of the horse, the foot is universally admitted to be the most important. "No foot, no horse" is, from a utilitarian veiwpoint, as true as is trite; but, notwithstanding this, there is no organ that suffers so much from neglect and abuse.

In the preservation of the foot the horse owner and the groom have their responsiblities, no less than the shoeing smith. This, however, is not sufficiently recognised, the general impression being that all the health requirements of this organ are met and supplied by the latter; whereas, the success of the shoeing smith, whatever his qualifications may be, will be largely influenced by the condition of the material upon which he has to work, and from that the groom or horse owner is more or less responsible. So long as our system of horse management continues what it is—a mere routine of cleaning and feeding—so long will the farrier's name be linked with reproach and abuse, however expert he may become. If our horses are to have sound feet, and the full period of usefulness of our unsound ones is to be realized, more attention must be given to the foot in the stable. There is no department of horse management in which so much is capable of being effected as that relating to the "hygiene of the foot."

The great variation in conformation and character presented by this organ in different animals, and in the same animal under conditions of health and disease, calls for more than ordinary intelligence on the part of those under whose management it is placed. There are strong feet and weak feet in every degree, and it is very much within the power of the groom or horse owner to maintain or sacrifice the one and to strengthen or enfeeble the other, to ruin the best and render the indifferent useless.

Technical education can effect no higher or more humane purpose than to let light into the stable in the health interest of our horses. It is suprising how little really useful knowledge of the proper management of horse's feet is possessed by the average groom. We have often heard it said of horses lame in the feet that they have "done no work," as if confinement and idleness afforded immunity against disease. It is no part of the stable creed that inactivity and lameness stand in the relation of cause to effect, but this is too often the case. If we desire to keep feet sound, they must be brought into daily use and the nutritive activities stimulated and upheld. Healthy structure and perfect function can only be maintained by a reasonable amount of physiological work.

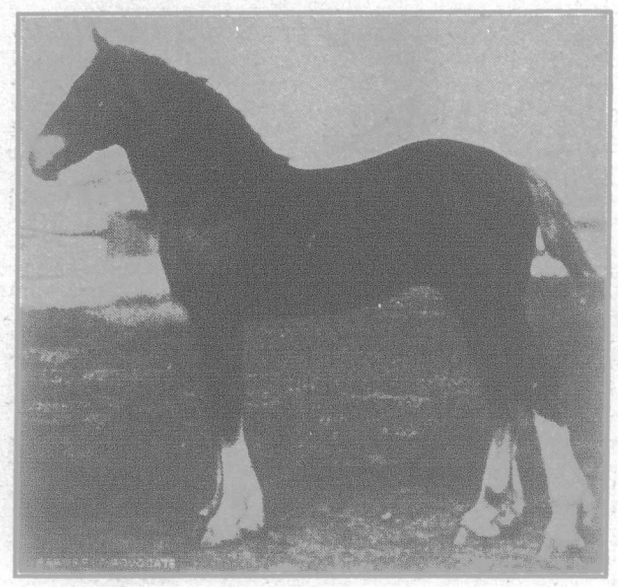
The long-continued forced rest, broken only at intervals by short periods of exercise, which some horses experience, is absolutely injurious. As the result of this kind of treatment the foundation is frequently laid for many of the worst forms of disease. Inactivity, and especially where accompanied by high feeding, sooner or later results in an abiding congestion of feet. This is followed by wasting of the sensitive parts, contraction of the hoof, and slowly increasing lameness, the cause of which is seldom suspected. Where animals must for any reason lead an idle life in confinement there are certain rules of health applicable to the feet as well as to the body as a whole which should be observed. The liberty of a loose-box or yard is indispensable. The shoes should be removed and replaced by light tips, so that sole and frog may be brought in contact with the ground as Nature intended they should. But "the ground" must be after nature's plan, and not the hard, unyielding pavement of our present-day stables. Four inches of tan, peat, moss or sawdust—perferably one of the two first named—form the most suitable protection to the feet of idle horses. By their spongy, yielding nature, too, they materially aid in keeping up the circulation by filling up all parts of the sole and imparting general and genial pressure to the entire bearing surface.

In the case of weak feet, by which we mean such as are low at the heels, flat, thin in the crust, with horn of loose and coarse texture, the full benefit of this general treatment is best obtained when combined with local applications such as promote the growth and improve the quality of the hoof horn. With this object cold swabs should be applied to the feet for three or four hours a day, and a little weak cantharides liniment rubbed over the coronet twice a week. When systematically carried out and persisted in, the effect of this treatment on the health and strenght of the foot is very marked. The crust increases in thickness and in depth and loses its morbid brittleness and shelly character, while the heels open out in response to the growth and expansion of the more active and better-nourished frog.

Too little importance is attached to the preservative nfluence of water in the management of the horse's feet and its palliative effects in disease. The natural tendency of hard work on our hard roads is to render the hoof hot and dry, and deprive it of its elasticity and power of accommodating itself to the sensitive part within. Such a condition when long continued, and especially in naturally weak feet, cannot fail to be fruitful of mischief, for, besides favoring contraction, it materially augments concussion both of feet and legs.

To healthy feet, under the artificial conditions in which they are placed, a little moisture applied for an hour or two now and again is a distinct benefit, but in those numerous cases of disease where work is still allowable bathing or swabbing should be daily resorted to. The benefit to be derived from this practice is not only that immediately accruing to the animal, but as a result of the improved state of the horn, the untoward result of shoeing are materially diminished.

The question of stable management of horses' feet is an important one, and much too large to be exhausted here, It is one, however, deserving of closer attention from those under whose charge our dumb slaves are placed.—Live Stock Journal.



Keep the Foal Growing if You Would Have a Good Horse.

LIVE STOCK.

If convient to scales weigh the feeders when stabling them for the winter and then weigh occasionally during the feeding period so as to know accurately what use they are making of the feed.

The half-finished hog, lamb or steer may advisedly be held a little longer even though feed is high priced. Once ships are available for transporting meats across the Atlantic it should tend to straighten our market.

It does not pay to skimp the stock just because feed is high priced. An underfed animal usually turns out an unprofitable proposition. Better to keep less stock and feed them well than to have a large herd existing on light rations.

One of the most thrifty bunches of pigs we have ever seen for many a day made their home from the time they were farrowed until ready for market in an old log building that was covered with straw. An expensive building is not necessary so long as it is dry.

Fish meal is a concentrate little used in this country for feeding stock, but experiments show that it is a suitable feed for cattle, sheep and hogs. It contains over fifty per cent. of protein and is rich in phosphate of lime. Good quality fish meal fed with other meals and roughages is palatable and wholesome.

Keep a record of breeding dates and of the date when animals are born on the farm. These things have a way of escaping the memory, thus causing great inconvenience, and annoyance if a sale of stock is pending. A pocket memorandum is not enough; transfer the date and records to a book that is not liable to get lost.

The weather-man was kind to stock-men this fall and enabled them to leave the herds and flocks on pasture longer than usual, thus saving a considerable quantity of the stored fodder. However, the chill November breeze will not be held off much longer and preparation must be made for the comfort of the live stock during the months when the land is held in the grip of winter.

The Winter Fat Stock Shows are at hand. Plan to attend one or more of them and become more enthused with the possibilities of the Live Stock Industry. The International Live Stock Exposition at Chicago is held November 30 to December 7. The Toronto Fat Stock Show, December 5 and 6, and the Provincial Winter Fair at Guelph, December 6 to 12.

Winter the brood sows in the barnyard. A cheap building may be constructed to afford them protection. Put plenty of straw in it and the sows will keep warm in the coldest of weather. If a strong, healthy litter is to be farrowed next spring the sow must have plenty of exercise and a ration consisting of bone and muscle-forming material this winter.

How about those broken windows in the stable? Although glass is expensive we cannot afford to shut out the light by replacing glass with a shingle, nor can we allow the opening to remain and probably endanger the lives of some of the stock by the draft caused. Better measure up the windows and take home a few panes of glass the next time you are in town.

A cold, damp, clammy atmosphere in the piggery is a direct cause of young pigs crippling. Dryness is essential to the health of the pigs. When the walls and ceiling of the pen are dripping with moisture it is unreasonable to expect pigs to be healthy and thrifty. Filling the loft with straw will help keep the pen dry and warm, as the straw absorbs moisture. If the ceiling is not too tight the straw provides a means of ventilation.

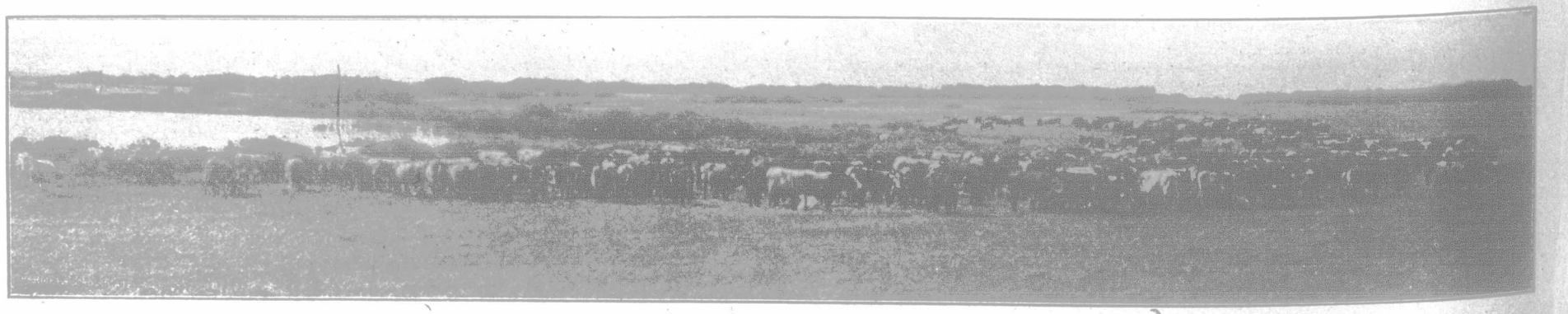
Sire or Dam—Which?

EDITOR "THE FARMER'S ADVOCATE":

In one of England's leading live stock papers a heated discussion has been raging as to the dire necessity of retaining much longer than is the usual custom, a bull which has proved his merit as a successful sire. The verdict of all the most thoughtful present-day breeders in Britain who subscribed to the newspaper debate was that if a bull proves a good getter he should be retained for years and a deaf ear turned to all the wiles of the export agent.

Yet, to my mind, as a keen observer of the trend of opinions expressed by these Britishers, many have overlooked the dam's part in the business of cattle raising. Most writers have forgotten the importance of the great part played by the original dams used by all our great breeders. It is quite true that there were some peculiar facilities possessed by breeders like Bates and Booth for so determining their arrangements as to give the proper bull to the proper cow, and for accordingly accomplishing, with thorough precision, their previous conclusions. The same thing occurred in the noted herd at Holker. That master mind, Mr. Drewry, noted a failing point in his cows. To the suprise of many breeders he selected a bull for use, well bred, but not such as his friends would have chosen. But the bull possessed in a more than ordinary degree the point lacking in the then Holker females. His use restored the defect, and then the former course was resumed. The future prices at Holker fully attested the wisdom of Mr. Drewry's procedure. The pre-historic Shorthorns—that is, the Shorthorns which existed before the institution of the Herd Book—consisted of many families, and these families naturally exhibited various differences, some being characterized by greater excellence than others. Past Shorthorns had their descent from various sorts, good, bad, and indifferent, and there was always the potent factor of atavism—the throwing back to undesirable ancestors—to contend with. In the case of the pioneers of Shorthorn breeding, the very best sorts were selected, and the very best individuals of the best sorts; there was no hesitation displayed in weeding out undesirables. That was the fundamental reason why the Shorthorns of Colling's day, and the time immediately succeding it, were generally good.

At the present day it is too much assumed that, given good foundation cows, the rest will necessarily follow, and that the primary care and selection of the early breeders can be neglected with impunity. How many breeders have awakened to their mistake in this respect we shall never know, but there can exist no doubt but that it has driven many from the ranks. Again, it by no means follows that because the Collings and



A Round-up on a Canadian Ranch.