

The Farmer's Advocate

"PERSEVERE AND SUCCEED." and Home Magazine. ESTABLISHED 1866.

REGISTERED IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE COPYRIGHT ACT OF 1875.

VOL. XXXVI.

LONDON, ONT., AND WINNIPEG, MAN., MARCH 1, 1901.

No. 521

EDITORIAL.

The Horse Breeding Outlook.

Horse-breeders who have growing or breeding stock are feeling well over the increasing prosperity of their business. While greater pains are being taken to fit horses for the market, buyers lament that first-rate animals are becoming more and more difficult to secure. These circumstances are having the effect of stiffening the price for such classes of horses as are especially in demand, which are confined to more definite types than the market demanded a few years ago. To be sure, the plug or the nondescript will sell for something if he can pull, but he is wanted only by the cheap buyer, so that he will not pay for raising. One commendable result of the passing of the horse car was the effect it had on removing the market for the cheap horse, and with that went the services of the scrub stallion, so that he should no longer be a menace to the trade. So surely is this felt by the horse-breeders, as was evidenced at the meetings in Toronto the second week in February, it was generally contended that the service fees for good horses should be raised in order to guard against excessive service, and also to warrant men in securing high-priced stallions. During the depression of the trade a few years ago, fees went deplorably low, and now the business has become prosperous the old charges for service should be reinstated. Besides that, it is felt by many horse-owners that for the benefit of the industry unsound or inferior stallions should not be allowed to serve mares, and to this end the inspection and licensing of stallions was strongly advocated by several members of the Horse Breeders' Association. It is not likely, however, that such an act will soon be passed, as it would be difficult to enforce, and is of doubtful necessity, since the produce of such horses is becoming less and less in demand.

Horse-breeding, from a farmer's standpoint, may be considered to have settled down to three main classes, the draft horse, the carriage horse, and the army remount. A high-class carriage horse, hunter or roadster will sell well, but their production is expensive and uncertain, while either the remount or draft horse can be raised with less skill, and therefore less risk of failure. The experience we have had in supplying remounts, and the reputation they have won in active service for the Canadian horse, should give us confidence in catering to that demand. The horses that stood the hardships of long marches on little food were built much on the pony pattern, with good middles and stout limbs, most of them coming from the farms of Ontario. They stood the task much better than the finer-bred English horses, but for mobility in an engagement, such horses are not sufficiently fleet and spirited to overtake the enemy, so that the remount horse is not confined to a steed that might be strictly termed a saddle horse. He should, however, according to Major Dent, who has purchased many remounts in Canada during the last year, have saddle-horse blood, and the more the better of the English or Irish Thoroughbred, if strong enough, as then he has the spirit, endurance and activity of a good soldier. Major Dent strongly condemns the Standard-bred sire and just as forcibly recommends the Thoroughbred for this purpose. Horses with long backs, weak back ribs, and small bones below the knee, are looked upon by him as entirely unfit for army purposes, and these weaknesses in many Canadian horses he attributes to the Standard-bred trotting sire. The Hackney, however, has a place in the army supply, as was shown at the last Canadian Horse Show, when both pure-bred and grade Hackneys won good premiums

in the cavalry, infantry and artillery classes. It is probable that British remount purchase stations will be established in various parts of Canada before long, as it is known that we can produce the right class of horses that will be so much needed as time goes on. Since the commencement of the Boer war, Canada has supplied some 3,750 horses, and the United States 21,000, so that Canada could easily have supplied more to this trade had she been in a position to do so. Now, if purchasing centers are established, they will be supplied from those of our horse-breeders that produce the right class of stock, so it behooves our farmers with mares fit to be dams of remounts to consider well the sort of stallion chosen for the other parent of the offspring.

The high-class harness or carriage horse is, however, the money-maker of the present day, provided he comes up to a good standard of excellence in conformation and action. It needs few faults to take him out of the high-class trade, but with these he may make a useful animal in many lines of life. Having a clean-limbed, active mare of handsome type and good size, it is quite safe to breed her with a carriage-horse offspring in view, for if she yields a good one, the price received for it may be more than two or three times that of an ordinary animal, even a remount. Mares with draft blood, or those inclined to pace, are not likely to turn out famous carriage offspring. Good results are being obtained from dams possessing English Coach, German Coach, Cleveland Bay, Standard-bred (if big enough), and Thoroughbred blood, when crossed with the Hackney especially, or any of these mentioned breeds, if good enough, in proper character. We have it on good authority that the offspring of the well-known Hackney stallion, Jubilee Chief, when from fairly good carriage mares, invariably sell for high prices. The same is true of the gets of other good Hackneys, and occasionally a German Coach is equally successful if possessed of the proper metal.

The draft-horse men learned their lesson years ago as to the proper sort of stock to raise. While size and weight is an essential for long prices, quality is equally necessary. Where the thick-legged, short-pasterned horse could find a field years ago, his trade has gone, and few of this class ever start out on a route. In fact, such horses are shunned by every experienced draft-horse man. The coming season promises well for the draft class of horses, and as many good ones have been imported into Canada from Great Britain during the past year, there is little excuse for coupling a good mare of draft pattern with anything but a suitable stallion of Clydesdale or Shire breeding. In sections where a good stallion is needed by the farmers, and no one man or firm can afford to secure a registered stallion, the Canadian Horse Breeders' Association has set apart a portion of their funds to stimulate local agricultural societies to secure selected stallions for the purpose of serving in their district. The plan is practically the same as has done good service in Britain, where district societies pay certain premiums, usually from £200 to £500, and guarantee a certain number of mares at a specified rate, in order to secure the horse they want. Now the Canadian Horse Breeders' Association are undertaking to encourage this system from their funds, which have been swelled by the Government grant given them for educational purposes. Only a small number of societies can be aided this year, enough, however, to test the merits of the plan, and it is felt that if it proves successful the Government will willingly increase its grant to the Association. Viewing the industry from all standpoints, horse-breeders may feel assured that the outlook for their business is indeed propitious.

Use Only Pure-bred Sires of Good Quality.

The importance of using only high-class pure-bred sires in breeding all classes of farm stock has been so often and persistently advocated and urged in these columns that we realize the danger of its reiteration becoming wearisome to some of our readers; but, even at the risk of this result, we deem the subject of such vital interest to the success and upbuilding of the live stock of Canada—which is, by all odds, the leading industry of the country—that we venture a repetition of the injunction that mainly through the means of breeding from superior sires can our horses, cattle, sheep, swine and poultry take and hold a prominent and paying place in the markets—home and foreign—either as breeding stock or for consumption as meat; or, in the case of horses, as good sellers for the purpose of work or army remounts. There is not a doubt in our minds that the selling value of the great bulk of the live stock in the Dominion could be increased by fifty per cent. inside of three years were only pure-bred males of a good class used on all our farms for that period. The complaint comes constantly from buyers, dealers and shippers, that lack of good breeding and quality is the bane of the business, and that our people need to wake up to the fact that they are in large measure wasting food by feeding it to ill-bred, rough and scrawny stock.

There is now no reasonable excuse for this state of things, as there are plenty of pure-bred sires, of all the breeds and classes, held for sale or for service to supply all the needs of the country in this respect. It is only necessary to scan the advertising-columns of the *Advocate* to see that there are large numbers of such stock in the hands of breeders waiting for buyers, most of them being young and which can be bought at very moderate prices by private contract or by competition at the bidder's own price at public sale, a number of which are announced in this issue, and which will be worth nearly if not quite as much after the usual term of service in a herd, stud or flock as the original cost, so that the improvement made by their use will be practically pure gain. We invite and urge farmers to read and study the advertisements in this paper, and to avail themselves—to some extent at least, and to as great an extent as their circumstances will allow—of the use of the best males whose services they can command either by purchase or the payment of a fee, and thus advance their own interests and help to build up the reputation of the country for a good class of stock.

Dairying and pork-production is proving a profitable combination for the farmer under winter conditions, with the prices prevailing for butter and bacon hogs. The cow and the sow constitute potent factors in keeping the farm accounts with a balance on the right side, and if there is a mortgage to be reduced, will wear it out as rapidly as any other influence that we know of. It is fortunate, when current prices for grain on the market are comparatively low, that the products can be sold to advantage when transformed into meat and milk, and at the same time the fertility of the farm kept up by the manure which is made from feeding stock. When to the product of the cow and the sow is added that of "the business hen," which also works in well with dairying, we have a trinity of powers which can hardly be excelled as a combination in the hands of men of moderate means, in not only "keeping the pot boiling" and holding what they have, but of making a little headway safely. And after all, it is perhaps better to be slow and sure than to take large risks, and by making haste to be rich, to run chances of overdoing the effort.