

The Breeder and Breeder.

Sheep Clotting Their Wool.

(To the Editor of the CANADA FARMER.)

SIR,—Can you give the cure of sheep clotting their wool, and the cause and prevention of it? It is a very common occurrence and decreases the price of wool.

Wolfe Island, Ont.

J. F. C.

The trouble complained of is the effect of disease or neglect or bad management in some shape, probably of overfeeding and starvation alternately. No animal stands that kind of treatment so badly as does the sheep. Neglect shows itself at once in its effect upon the fleece, rendering it uneven in quality. Excessively nutritive food excites the wool producing organs and enlarges the fibre; insufficient food contracts these organs, and a smaller fibre and a disorganized state of the constitution is produced.

The way to prevent this is to remove the cause. Keep the sheep growing evenly. Let them have access at all times to salt. They will take very little if they can always get it, but will make hogs of themselves if salt be given to them only at intervals. A little flowers of sulphur would be beneficial. Observe cleanliness in their management. Keep the animals dry, especially under foot, and let them be well sheltered.

A Thorough-bred Bull for Thorough-bred Heifers.

(To the Editor of the CANADA FARMER.)

SIR,—Allow me to ask your advice as to my management of a pair of Short-horn heifers lately purchased by me from one of our leading breeders. I am very desirous that they should be served by a pure bred bull next season, and as there is nothing of the kind in this county, I can think of no other plan than to ship them to some stock breeder who has a good bull, as I cannot afford to buy one for myself. I then there is the expense and risk of shipping, and do you think it would pay? I am myself in favor of breeding to the best bull in the country, costly as it may be, but my friends and neighbors do not think I would be warranted in such expense, and advise me to breed to the best in the neighborhood. I am but a novice in stock breeding, and will be guided by your advice, which if you will kindly give in next issue, you will much oblige,

CONSTANT READER.

The use of a thorough-bred Short-horn bull for the improvement of even the common or "scrub" stock of the country is now regarded as one of the best investments a farmer can make. The increased quantity and finer quality of the beef thus produced, apart altogether from the admittedly improved milking qualities of the offspring of such a pair, make the question one of the most important that can possibly engage the attention of the agriculturist; and if an infusion of thorough-bred blood into the common stock of the country produces such admirable effects, how very important it is that stock already pure blooded should be still further improved. The offspring of a pedigreed and properly registered sire and dam will always command prices which a grade, however slight the impure cross may be, can never hope to reach, and the small, low and full bred or symmetrical the bull may be which our correspondent proposes to use, the offspring will rank as grades, and be valued accordingly. Another important consideration is, to what extent the use of such a bull may influence the succeeding progeny—a question we have not at present time to discuss.

We have no hesitation whatever in giving advice on this point. Let our correspondent weigh the matter carefully, and he will become more convinced than ever of the folly of putting thorough-bred heifers to other than a thorough-bred bull, and that the very best bred thorough-bred he can obtain

"Can't Afford it"

There is not a farmer in Canada who has had the opportunity of visiting the cattle sheds at our Provincial or Central Exhibitions, or who has attended the various sales of thoroughbred stock that have taken place within the past few years, but must feel fully convinced that the improvement of the live stock of the farm is one of the most important questions that can possibly engage his attention. Many farmers, however, who admit the desirability of improving their stock, fail to take action in the matter, on the ill plea of "Can't afford it." "Speak to

such a farmer about the desirability of breeding draft horses," says *The Western Rural*, "and he will tell you that Mr. Murray paid \$5,000 for the stallion Donald Dinnie; mention the demand for good driving horses and you will be told that the trotting stallion Smuggler sold for \$40,000; suggest the improvement that a well-bred bull would effect in the herd, and the sale of the 2d. Duke of Hilturst at \$14,000, or of the famous \$10,000 will be recalled; refer to the good qualities of certain breeds of sheep or swine and it will be said that common farmers cannot afford to pay \$100 or \$1,000 for a ram or boar. With a good deal of force it will be reasoned that such prices are merely "fancy," and that tested by intrinsic value the animals commanding them are not worth nearly so much.

"But what has this to do with the case in hand? No one claims that the average farmer can afford or should be expected to pay any such prices as those referred to, and fortunately there is no need that he should. Leaving, for the present, the question whether any animal is worth, for breeding purposes, ten, twenty or one hundred times its value for the butcher, it certainly is true that a well-bred animal of individual excellence is worth, in many cases, much more than its value judged by the butcher's standard. It is equally true, that, of every popular breed, good specimens can be obtained at prices which an average farmer, or at least a club of farmers, can well afford to pay.

Take cattle as an illustration. Short Horns command the highest prices, and it is certain that a farmer cannot afford to pay from \$1,000 to \$5,000 for a bull, but he can afford to pay from \$100 to \$150 for a good bull of this kind, for these prices good ones can be purchased. It is a safe estimate that calves sired by a good Short Horn bull are worth five dollars each more on an average than calves sired by a scrub bull, so at the prices last named a bull can be made to pay for himself in one year. Good young boars of any of the popular breeds can be bought at from ten to twenty five dollars each, often for less than twice their value for pork. So of runs of either fine or common wood breeds.

"When farmers consider that by the use of well bred males for three or four generations, a stock can be reared nearly equal, for all practical purposes to pure bred, and that good grades of any desirable breed will naturally produce more meat or other product for a given amount of food, and will sell for more in the open markets because of superior quality, than will "common" or unimproved stock, they will be prompted to secure these desirable results for themselves, and will not neglect to do so because some have paid prices higher than they can afford."

The "Horning" and "Knobbing" of Cattle.

A controversy is going forward in the columns of the English agricultural press as to the practice of "horning"—that is un-horning cattle, or depriving them of their horns. One set of contestants say that it does not hurt cattle much to saw off their horns—that, in fact, cattle rather prefer to have them sawn off—and that, anyhow, it is much more humane to saw them off than to let cattle wear them off by goring each other.

On the other hand, it is urged that the practice is a most inhuman and brutal one, giving the poor animals the most exquisite torture. An "Extensive Feeder" writes to the *North British Agriculturist* that "horning" is a very cruel operation, and he mentions a case which came before a court of justice lately. He says:—

The horns were cut by shears or some such instrument, and then immediately after this painful operation, and with the wounds fresh, the animals were driven along the road and trucked at a railway station, their sore heads coming freely in contact with one another, thus adding to the pain. I have seen animals days after their horns were cut, on their heads coming in contact with anything, spring round about, showing the most manifest symptoms of pain. Generally, whatever is said to the contrary, aged cattle with strong horns do little good for a month at least after the horns are cut; they often sicken to some extent, and although it is quite true what some say, that numbers of them chew the cud and begin to eat shortly after the operation, they eat very little for at least a week. Some die altogether, and others swell so much in the head that they are unseemly animals as long as they live.

This correspondent would not object to "horning" so much, were it only calves and yearlings that were operated upon, the animals carefully thrown and secured, and a very sharp, small-toothed saw used, the animals allowed plenty room in a warm sheltered place, and undisturbed for at least a fortnight afterwards; but the fact is that cattle of all ages are "horned" in a very cruel manner by tying the animals to loaded carts, pillars, &c., and then using such clumsy instruments as a shears with long handles, causing a rough wound, besides stunning the animal, and afterwards huddling them together in close confined quarters where they cannot but have the sores

come in contact with. But the whole practice, says the correspondent, is unnecessary, and the only way he recommends "horning" cattle is by crossing the cows with an Angus bull. The result will generally be hornless cattle.

Principal Walley, of the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons, of London, also says that the practice of "horning" is unnecessary and cruel. He prefers "knobbing," as he saw it practised on the farm of Mr. Thyne, near Longmiddy. He describes the *modus operandi* thus:—

The knobs used are large wooden ones (ash, beech, or elm), a specimen I forward for your inspection, through which are drilled two holes; one large and conical to fit upon the horn, one small for the passage of the nail (a specimen of which I also forward), which is used to secure the knob in its place. The nails are of wrought iron of the necessary ductility, with large, round, flattened heads and flattened points. The cost of the knob and nail, especially if obtained in tolerable quantities, is about 1½d or 2d. The *modus operandi* is as follows.—The animal is caught by a man, who should grasp one horn and the lower jaw, fix his back against the animal's shoulder, and curve the head towards himself, another man grasping the opposite horn and aiding his fellow. Mr. Thyne uses a rose round the horns. This I do not consider necessary. A hole is now bored through the horn with an ordinary gimlet. The point at which the hole should be bored will depend upon the age of the animal and the length of the horn. In young calves with short vascular horns half an inch from the tip is sufficient, in other animals, or those with longer horns the holes may be bored one or even two or three inches down the horn. A very simple procedure will decide the matter, i.e., the tapping of the horn with the handle of the gimlet, and noticing the difference in the sound. After the hole is bored the knob is affixed, the nail passed through and clenched. Twelve cattle, or sixteen, if a better gimlet for the purpose were invented, can be operated upon in an hour without the infliction of the slightest pain, and without having recourse to any more or even as much restraint as that necessitated by the operation of horning. If in the boring of the holes the sensitive structures are impinged upon, the animal at once evinces the fact by restlessness and struggling, and blood is seen to ooze from the hole. In this case the gimlet should be at once withdrawn, and the hole bored a little closer to the tip.

Principal Walley then reads a lecture upon the structure of the horn to Mr. Cowie, one of the gentlemen who think "horning" advisable.

Is Mr. Cowie aware, he asks, that the vascular structure of the horn is a continuation of the true skin, the horn being the analogue of the hair and the false skin; that the skin is one of the most sensitive structures of the body; that the slightest tap on the horn—a fact well known to the drover—gives rise to acute pain, and a heavy blow nearly stuns; that an animal with a broken horn does all in its power to prevent its coming in contact with any hard substance, and if the horn is struck evinces intense pain, that a very slight injury to the nail on the finger or toe of man induces unbearable suffering—the structure of the nail and the horn is identical—that cutting through the scalp in order to expose the brain produces pain; and that in the healing of even a small wound great soreness and inflammation are concomitants.

The practice of "horning cattle" is summed up by Mr. Walley as belonging to the same class of operations as the cutting of dog's ears and tails, the cutting out the haw from the eye of the dog, the cutting of cock's combs, the netting and over-stocking of cows udders, and the forcible extraction of the foal teeth of the horse; the same end is in view in each case—viz., the attainment of an imaginary benefit or the pandering to a barbarous and cruel custom. In conclusion, he wants to have six cattle "knobbed," and six "horned," and then the rapidity of their development compared.

It was announced that a Bill was to be introduced into Parliament by Messrs. Barclay, Fordyce and McComb, to put down "horning." The Strathearn Farmers' Club decided to oppose the measure. Since then, Mr. Barclay has announced that he never had any intention to introduce such a measure, and that he is of opinion that, in the circumstances in which, so far as he is aware, it is done, the "horning" of cattle is a disagreeable necessity. It is also stated that the other members mentioned do not intend moving in the matter. And that is how the subject stands at present.

On Breeding Horses.

An old breeder of Tennessee, George T. Allman, in the *Rural Sun*, gives his ideas of improving stock. He says:—

"I beg and urge each and all to patronize only pure bred males, and never a mongrel. 'Blood will tell' in every thing, from a chicken to a man. If you propose to breed trotters, or mules, you want a dash of blood to give the