

DEFECTS IN ACTION.

(Continued.)

Stumbling.—The tendency to stumble is a very serious defect, and it may truly be said that a stumbling horse has practically no value, except for slow work, as it is not only disagreeable but unsafe to either drive or ride him. My experience has taught me that a pure-bred horse very seldom stumbles. A stumbling Thoroughbred is almost unknown; so, also, is the defect rare in Hackneys, or other breeds of carriage or coach horses, or in the Standard-bred of good quality. The fault is more often noticed in horses of mixed breeding. I am, of course, referring principally to the lighter class of horses, as in the heavier classes, even where the fault exists, it is not of such importance, as the animals are not driven fast, and, being hitched to heavy vehicles, there is little danger to the driver, even though the horse may injure his own knees. Violent crosses in horse-breeding is likely to produce stumblers; for instance, the produce of a heavy, rough mare by a Thoroughbred. To some, this saying that a Thoroughbred can produce a stumbler may sound like "rank heresy," but observation tells us that it is a fact. The Thoroughbred is congenitally a low actor, and if bred to a mare of such cold blood that even his prepotency is unable to overcome, there is a great probability of producing an offspring that inherits neither a fair degree of the size and strength of the dam, nor the quality and activity of the sire; is fitted only for light work, and having to a large degree the sluggishness of the dam and the low action of probably both parents, is a stumbler, not valuable for other purposes. Crossing cold-blooded mares with sires of other light breeds frequently produces animals of the same characteristics.

Stumbling may be said to be due to three causes, viz., weak knees, low action, or sluggishness. Horses with weak knees, either from congenital conformation or hard work, are, unless of exceptionally active disposition, prone to stumble. Horses of quite low fore action are prone to trip or stumble over slight obstacles, hence are unsafe except on level ground. Horses that are lazy, sluggish, and inclined to loaf, are also usually inclined to stumble. From whatever cause, the fault is very hard to correct, and, we may say, cannot be corrected; but may be avoided by constant care on the part of the driver, by keeping the horse well in hand and overcoming sluggishness, where it exists, by compelling the animal to "drive to attention" at all times. This, to the average horseman, makes driving or riding a labor rather than a pleasure. The use of a tight check-rein removes to some extent the tendency to stumble, but many stumblers will stumble even under those conditions. Stumbling usually occurs when the horse is moving at an ordinary road gait, and if he is taken well in hand and driven smartly, he will go safe; but no horse can stand constant driving at such a gait. In some cases, shoeing heavily, with rolling-toe action, will prevent stumbling, but in most cases shoeing of this kind, while it causes high action while going fast, does not when going slow, but may even have a tendency to make the action more sluggish. On this principle, light shoes should correct the fault, and in some cases do. As in most defect in action, what will have a tendency to prevent stumbling in one horse may increase the fault in others, hence each animal must be treated according to his individuality.

Interfering.—By interfering we generally understand the striking of one hind fetlock with the shoe of the opposite foot. This fault is probably more often met with than any other defect in horses with good conformation. Horses which stand wide at the hocks and plant the feet closely together usually interfere, striking with the forward part of the shoe; while those that stand with the toes well turned outwards and the feet close together will strike with the back part of the shoe. Interfering is often noticed in young horses when first shod, and disappears when they become accustomed to the shoes and road work. Shoeing with light shoes that conform well to the shape of the foot will often check the fault, but the practice too often adopted of shoeing with a shoe thicker on the inside than on the outside, in order to change the position of the fetlock-joint outwards when the foot is planted, cannot be too strongly condemned. It places the foot and limb in an unnatural position, and predisposes to lameness from sprain of ligaments or tendons. Shoeing with the outside of the shoe a little longer than the hoof, with a low calk on it (but not raised higher than the outside), has a tendency to check that peculiar twisting outwards of the foot and hock so often noticed, and which favors interfering, and is unsightly. When a young horse interferes, he should be carefully shod, and an interfering boot worn until he has become well accustomed to the shoes; and if he continues to interfere, notwithstanding careful shoeing, the wearing of boots should be continued, as, if he continues to strike, even though he does not cut, the constant striking causes a chronic enlargement of the joint, which makes striking still more con-

stant, and will probably materially interfere with his usefulness.

Forging.—By forging is understood the striking of the shoe of the fore foot with that of the hind one. This fault, while possibly not interfering to any marked extent with the horse's usefulness, is very irritating to the driver or rider, and very objectionable. While it is occasionally noticed in horses of all conformations, it is more commonly seen in those with very short backs. It is usually noticed at the ordinary road gait, and seldom heard when the horse is either walking or trotting at a smart pace. In most cases it can be corrected by shoeing rather heavily, and with rolling-motion shoes in front to make him pick more quickly and go a little higher; and shoeing the hind feet with shoes slightly shorter than the hoof, and without toe-clips. In other cases, a very light shoe in front gives better satisfaction. As with most defects, each horse must be treated according to his peculiarities of action.

"WHIP."

When a horse becomes frightened, it is a mistake to use the whip on him, or employ harsh language. If a horse is frightened of any object, and is whipped because he shows fright, he will always afterwards associate that object with whipping, and will, for that reason, fear it still more than he would otherwise do.

LIVE STOCK.

AN IMPLACABLE FOE OF THE DOG.

Editor "The Farmer's Advocate":

Will you allow me a short space in which to reply in a general way to the arguments of those who differ from me on the dog question. First, let me thank Sandy Fraser, and several others whose names have slipped my mind, for the hearty way in which they seconded my endeavor to draw public attention to what I consider the greatest drawback that the sheepman has to contend against, and the greatest nuisance to the public at large.

Now, I do not contend that a man has no right to keep a dog when he has paid the legal tax for it, but that he has no right to allow it to annoy other people or endanger their persons or property. Some people have queer ideas about things they keep for pets. A prominent society lady in New York has a tame python, 18 feet long, and capable of crushing a man to death in a moment's time. Sara Bernhardt, the great French actress, has a pet tigress. But they do not run about on the public streets, or the police would soon end their careers.

What right, then, has anyone to keep a dog (because he happens to fancy that kind of wild beast), and allow the same to run at his own sweet will, and harass and annoy everyone who does not and can not see any use for the miserable brute?

I think every reader of your paper will have noticed that in all the replies to my first letter (and opposed to my opinions contained therein), there runs this idea: "My dog is all right; the other fellow is the one that is wrong."

A word now with regard to the much-vaunted Collie dog. If there is a worst in an entirely bad lot, the Collie will take the cake; strong, savage, aggressive and bloodthirsty, he stands at the head. I can take anyone an hour's drive from where I live, in which time they will have been chased and yapped at by twenty different dogs, and every one of them pure-bred Collies, many of them having cost their owners a lot of money—good dogs, of course.

As some of my opponents have gone into the Scriptures for their arguments, may I take the liberty to follow them? It has been argued that in the destruction of Sodom, it was promised that if ten good men were found the city should be spared; but the ten were not forthcoming, and the cities were destroyed. I do not wish to be on the committee that goes out to find the ten good dogs; I should be gone too long. So let them all meet desserts (as one of my supporters puts it) in lead.

The dog had, I believe still has, a duty to perform in some parts of the world as public scavenger, particularly in Palestine and the other parts of the East where the people are careless and dirty. We have sanitary conditions in this land, and do not need them. The Scriptures use them to designate anything that is vile and worthless, and admonish to "Beware of dogs." Who will say they are wrong? R. L. HOLDSWORTH.

Wentworth Co., Ont.

DOLLARS' WORTH OF BENEFIT EVERY YEAR.

Enclosed you will find my subscription for another year. We have been taking "The Farmer's Advocate" now for five years, and find it a very valuable paper. I consider I get dollars' worth of benefit out of it every year.

JAS. A. ROWAN.

WHEN THE COW DOES NOT CLEAN.

Experience both as a farmer and as a veterinarian demonstrates that far too many farmers neglect the cows after calving, especially when they have failed to clean or get rid of the afterbirth in the natural way. In some stables visited a strong, nasty-smelling odor has been noticed, which on examination has been found to be produced by the decomposing mass of afterbirth partially or wholly retained by the cow. In many cases the cow shows signs of general ill health as a result of the retention of the putrescent material, such ill health being nothing more or less than a slow form of blood poisoning, during which time the milk is unfit for use by man or beast. This by-product of parturition should be removed within a few days after the birth of the calf, at least before decomposition is in evidence. Removal is not a serious matter if common sense and caution are observed, and in the majority of cases, where possible, it were better to purchase this by the employment of a properly-qualified veterinarian. If the help of a man so skilled is not available, the farmer should undertake the removal of the membranes himself, remembering the method by which the attachment is made to the internal surface of the womb. An examination of that surface by the hand reveals the presence, here and there, of little buttons (cotyledons) from which (it can be described no better way) the afterbirth must be gently unbuttoned, each cotyledon as it is come to being gently stripped of its abnormal (at that late date) covering. With one hand stripping the buttons carefully, and the other hand gently exercising traction, it is only a comparatively short time before the cow will be rid of this foreign irritant membrane, for such it has become. The hand of the person engaged in the removal should be free of cuts and wounds, and should be well smeared with carbolicized oil or clean unsalted lard, and on the job being finished, a thorough washing should be given in some antiseptic solution. If the membranes have been retained a day or so, it will be found of benefit to irrigate the genital passages of the cow with some solution made up from one of the coal-tar products, and by so doing remove any small pieces or disintegrated portions that may be left to poison the system and induce a feverish condition. We have known some careless and inhuman persons leave cows unattended for a week or more, causing suffering to the animal, as well as tending to induce a very dangerous state of things for the person, professional or otherwise, called in to remove the decaying mass. The annals of veterinary medicine are unfortunately not free from records of veterinarians losing a member (hand or arm) or their lives from blood poisoning, through what can only be termed criminal negligence on the part of clients—owners of cows. Delays in such matters are dangerous, both to the animal and the person seeking to relieve it. A. G. H.

SHEEP SHEARING.

While experienced sheep breeders and those who make it a practice to prepare sheep for show purposes have probably shorn most of their sheep unwashed before this date, there are doubtless many who still wait for weather warm enough for creek washing before shearing, and will be glad with the rest of us that at "long last" spring-time temperature has come, for occasional days at least. While we prefer and advise shearing without washing as being safer for the health and lives of the sheep, and while we believe that the difference in price paid by dealers in this country for washed over unwashed wool, or rather that the low price paid for unwashed is unwarranted by the difference in weight, we would rather accept a third less per pound than take the risk of injury to the health and life of the animals, and of the men who do the work in cold water. Besides, if time is of value on the farm, as it certainly is in these days of scarcity and cost of help, a reasonable allowance should be made for value of the time used in the process of washing. Presuming, however, that some will continue to wash before shearing, we plead for a merciful treatment of the animals while being driven to and handled in the water. They should be driven slowly and carefully to avoid overheating, should be confined in a pen by the river side where they can be conveniently caught, quietly led into the water, gently handled while being washed, and carefully led out and held for a minute or two to drip before being let go. The common practice of forcing the timid animals, which dread the water, to jump from the bank of the river, plunging head first under the water, is unpardonable cruelty, and should not be allowed, however amusing to thoughtless and indifferent boys or men. The writer can recall more than one case of sheep dying in the hands of the washer from the shock of being thus plunged into the water. The head of the animal need never, and should never be allowed to go below the surface of the water, and when washing is done, it might better be as well done as can be with cold water, by squeezing the wool between the hands to get the dirt out, instead of merely swimming the sheep through the water and out again, as is often done.

A week should intervene between washing and shearing, to allow the grease exuding from the skin to bring the fleece to its normal condition, which also adds considerably to its weight and keeping quality. A barn floor is generally the favorite